

FOURTH DAY.

Monday, April 8th, 1907.

The following were present :—

The Right Hon. D. LLOYD GEORGE, M.P. (President of the Board of Trade), *in the Chair in the afternoon.*
 Mr. H. LLEWELLYN SMITH, C.B., *in the Chair in the morning.*

United Kingdom Delegates.

Mr. WALTER J. HOWELL, C.B.,	} Of the Board of Trade.	Mr. E. PEMBROKE,	} Shipowners.
Mr. R. ELLIS CUNLIFFE,		Mr. K. ANDERSON,	
Capt. A. J. G. CHALMERS,		Mr. H. FERNIE,	
Mr. H. BERTRAM COX, C.B.,		Mr. ROBERT J. DUNLOP,	
Mr. A. B. KEITH,	} Of the Colonial Office.	Mr. NORMAN HILL,	
		Mr. J. HAVELOCK WILSON, M.P.,	

Australian Delegates.

Hon. Sir W. J. LYNE, K.C.M.G.		Hon. DUGALD THOMSON.
Hon. W. M. HUGHES.		

Dr. H. N. WOLLASTON, LL.D., I.S.O., of the Australian Commonwealth Department of Trade and Customs, was also in attendance.

New Zealand Delegates.

Hon. Sir JOSEPH WARD, K.C.M.G.		Mr. WILLIAM BELCHER.
Mr. JAMES MILLS.		Mr. A. R. HISLOP.

Dr. FITCHETT, Solicitor-General of New Zealand, was also in attendance.

Secretaries.

Mr. J. A. WEBSTER.	} Of the Board of Trade.	Mr. J. HISLOP, Private Secretary to Sir J. Ward.
Mr. G. E. BAKER,		Mr. D. J. QUINN, Private Secretary to Sir W. Lyne.

AGENDA.

1. Classes of voyages to which "Australian conditions" should be applicable.

Motion by Sir William Lyne "that the law of any British Possession, which operates in regard to vessels registered, or usually trading in that Possession, shall also operate in regard to all vessels coming into a final port of destination in that Possession, or clearing outwards from any port therein."

Motion by Sir Joseph Ward "that coastal trade should comprise the carriage of cargo or passengers from one port to another on the coast of the Commonwealth or New Zealand, or between the Commonwealth, New Zealand, and the Islands of the Pacific."

2. Wages.

3. Manning.

Mr. Hughes's motion "that this Conference approves of the principle of a manning scale applicable to all British, Australian, and New Zealand ships."

4. Officers.

Motion by Sir Joseph Ward "that it be a recommendation to the Board of Trade to consider the desirability of altering the designation of 'officers and engineers' under the term 'seamen' in the Imperial Merchant Shipping Act to that of 'officers and engineers.'"

5. British and Foreign Seamen.

Motion by Sir William Lyne "that every possible encouragement should be given by legislation and otherwise to the employment of British seamen in preference to foreigners."

6. Bills of lading legislation.

Mr. LLEWELLYN SMITH : Mr. Lloyd George will be here, but I am afraid, as he is coming from the country, he won't be with us for some time, and he has asked me to take the chair till he arrives.

Mr. BELCHER : Before the formal business commences I beg leave to have the privilege of asking a question; it is one of urgency, and I trust that an answer will be forthcoming as soon as possible. I have reduced the question to writing, and it is in the following terms : Is it legal or otherwise to attach clauses to ships' articles of agreement when such clauses are in direct conflict with the statutory provisions of the Shipping and Seamen Act? I should like, if possible, to get an answer to that question from the Board of Trade officials as soon as possible. My reasons for asking the question are these : I am just advised from New Zealand that the

master of a British ship, that is a ship from the United Kingdom, has recently made an attempt at one of the shipping ports in New Zealand to deduct two weeks' wages from a man for being absent without leave.

Mr. LLEWELLYN SMITH : I do not want to interrupt you, but would it not be the most convenient thing to put this question in writing, so that we can consider it? You raise a legal question which does not arise on the Agenda to-day. If you could have it or we could get it in writing and consider it and bring up an answer, if we are in a position to do so, at the next meeting, I think it would be the most convenient way of dealing with it.

Mr. BELCHER : With all due deference, I may mention this is a matter of urgency, and if you will