

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE.

Could we not say, "as has been done by the amended Act?"

HON. W. M. HUGHES: That would not do it "by the amended Act," because the principal Act is also necessary for us in New South Wales where we have no Act at all. The only point about Sir William Lyne's motion is this—

THE CHAIRMAN: There is no difference, except that we want to make it perfectly clear.

HON. DUGALD THOMSON: You can say "the adoption of legislation is desirable with a view to extend the benefit of the Workmen's Compensation Act to seamen, as has been done in Great Britain and New Zealand."

HON. W. M. HUGHES: The only point I see about that is that a recommendation from this Conference to the Commonwealth Government would carry more weight through the House.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: I will accept your suggestion Mr. Thomson.

THE CHAIRMAN: But we only want to make it clear. Do I understand Sir William Lyne to say he will accept Mr. Hughes's amendment?

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: No, Mr. Thomson's.

THE CHAIRMAN: Then your resolution will read: "That the adoption of uniform legislation is desirable with a view to extend the benefits of the Workmen's Compensation Acts to seamen, as has been done in Great Britain and New Zealand." I think it is right to both New Zealand and Great Britain, that should be perfectly clear. Very well, that disposes of Workmen's Compensation.

MR. NORMAN HILL: We would like it on record that we believe the recommendations of the Home Office Report affords a much juster basis. The representatives of the British shipowners cannot support the resolution, and they desire to record their approval of the Report made in August 1904 by the Committee appointed by the Home Secretary, which advocated, in lieu of the extension of the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act to seamen, the adoption of some system of compulsory insurance for seamen, which shall provide the intended compensation with complete security without imposing an undue burden on the shipowners or seamen, and to the cost of which the State should contribute.

MR. HUGHES: That really does not actually state the case, "with a view to extend the benefits of the Workmen's Compensation Acts to seamen." We have no Compensation Acts in some parts.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is why Mr. Thomson's addition makes it perfectly clear. Now we will take the next resolution, No. 2.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: The resolution is:—(a) "That the North Atlantic mark should apply to ships leaving Australia, *via* Cape Horn; (b) "That it is advisable to have a light load line for ships in ballast."

HON. W. M. HUGHES: What line would you recommend?

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: Under the Board of Trade, a load line is prescribed for vessels in the North Atlantic trading to Great Britain. The same class of weather is met with around Cape Horn, and therefore I would like to see the mark that is adopted by the regulations of the Board of Trade. This is my proposal, to have that extended to vessels coming *via* Cape Horn.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: Leaving Australia.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: Yes, or New Zealand.

HON. DUGALD THOMSON: What is the custom in Great Britain now?

HON. W. M. HUGHES: Do they come back *via* the Horn or the Cape?

CAPTAIN CHALMERS: The application of the North Atlantic load line to the Cape Horn route was thoroughly considered by the original Load Line Committee in the

year 1884-1885. It was reviewed in 1898 by a very large Committee presided over by the late Lord St. Helier, and the report of the Committee was that it was quite unnecessary, and for these reasons. The addition for the North Atlantic load line is in the case of steamships 2 inches, and in the case of sailing ships 3 inches. With regard to steamers, the storm area in the neighbourhood of Cape Horn is contracted, and it leaves the distance between any Australian port and the storm area about 5,800 miles. In going those 5,800 miles, the steamer will lighten by the consumption of coal some 2 feet, so it is absolutely unnecessary for her to be lightened 2 inches before leaving Australia. With regard to sailing ships coming from Australia homewards, the Cape Horn route has always been chosen ever since I can remember as the better route, the more favourable route, and the safer because there we get what seamen call the brave west winds of the Southern Ocean—not necessarily gales—but west winds that blow with almost uniform force between the parallels of 55 and 60 South. And the only danger is from drifting icebergs. That is the reason that that route has always been chosen in preference to the Cape of Good Hope—and it is quite my own experience, I have circumnavigated that part five times; once from Fremantle I came back on a sailing ship *via* the Cape of Good Hope, and we wished we had gone the other way. The reason the Cape Horn route has its bad name is from ships outward bound going to ports of the West Coast of America, and there for a radius of about 100 miles you get what we call the "storm area." But even then the danger is confined to losing masts and spars. We have never had a record of any complaint from want of freeboard.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: You gave as a reason why steamships should not be subject to this provision that they used so much coal. Now, have you any other reason why steamships should be exempted? Because that does not apply to sailing ships, and therefore I do not see the argument has any effect in application to sailing ships.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: Your ship is leaving Australia.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: There is a provision in the New Zealand Act to allow it to be done.

SIR JOSEPH WARD: If in your Shipping Bill you make the same provision, you meet the same thing. Our Act says: (1) "The owner of every British ship proceeding to sea from a port in the Colony (except ships under 20 tons register employed solely in fishing, pleasure yachts, and ships plying within restricted limits) shall, before the time hereinafter mentioned, have marked upon each of her sides, amidships, or as near thereto as is practicable, in white or yellow, on a dark ground, on in black on a light ground, a circular disc 12 inches in diameter, with a horizontal line 18 inches in length drawn through the centre." (2) "The centre of this disc shall be placed at such level as may be approved by the Minister below the deck-line marked under this Act, and specified in the certificate given thereunder, and shall indicate the maximum load-line in salt water to which it shall be lawful to load the ship." We also make provision that we accept the Board of Trade mark as well, so that if you put in a provision of that character in your Act, you control the whole thing.

CAPTAIN CHALMERS: We think it entirely unnecessary, for Cape Horn vessels which run along between the parallels 55 and 60 are out of the storm area.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: Why should there be any objection to it?

CAPTAIN CHALMERS: Because you will handicap sailing ships to the extent of 3 inches of loading.

MR. FERNIE: Have you any records to show that there has been any danger or any losses of ships going round Cape Horn, because so far as we can find out there are none.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: No, I have not.

MR. FERNIE: What is the use of handicapping the trade?

THE CHAIRMAN: Sailing ships have been very hard hit, not merely by steam competition, but by the Workmen's Compensation Act of last year, amongst other things. They have had a bad time, and they are going