

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: Then our boat follows after yours, and they only take ten or twenty.

THE CHAIRMAN: The suggestion has been made that the wording should read in this way: "That care should be taken that these conditions should not be such as to differentiate to their disadvantage as compared with the colonial registered vessels."

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: That is more reasonable, but I want to know whether that in any way recognises or allows shipowners to ride through any provisions we may make and not pay their men while on the coast more than the ordinary payment of the whole voyage.

THE CHAIRMAN: It does not.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: Because I don't want anything put here that prevents action.

HON. DUGALD THOMSON: Might I point out this, that evasion of the law could be a reason for refusal of license, and you can only deal with a vessel that refused to pay its crew coastal wages after the vessel came back.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have been listening to the debate, and, so far as I can see, there is no objection to this. I do not know what the shipowners would say, but it would read like this: "That it be a recommendation to the Australian and New Zealand Governments that if conditions are imposed by local law on vessels incidentally engaging in the coasting trade in the course of an over-sea voyage, care should be taken that these conditions should not be such as to differentiate to the disadvantage as compared with colonial registered vessels."

HON. W. M. HUGHES: What can that mean?

THE CHAIRMAN: That is your point, Mr. Hughes.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: Yes, if they are placed on an equality, say, if you have to pay your men £7 and I have to pay mine £7. But Mr. Hill says, well that is really not so, because we have to pay all the men, when perhaps only 5 per cent. are engaged in looking after the casual passengers; therefore it is to our disadvantage.

MR. MILLS: These remarks have all been in the interest of one side. Would it not be well that they should not differentiate all against the locally-owned vessels?

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we can trust you to do that. (The resolution as amended was then adopted.)

SIR JOSEPH WARD: I beg to move the following resolution:—"That the Imperial and Colonial Governments concerned be requested to introduce legislation to give effect to the resolutions of the Conference in cases where legislation is necessary." I think that can be agreed to without discussion.

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: There is no objection to it. We may or we may not.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: I object to that word "Imperial." Say "That the British and Colonial Governments."

SIR JOSEPH WARD: I will make it British.

MR. LLEWELLYN SMITH: Shall we say "That the various Governments concerned"?

MR. DUNLOP: I think we ought to stick to "Imperial."

MR. COX: Mr. Hughes, don't your Acts very often say: Whereas by an Act of the Imperial Parliament, such and such has been done?

SIR JOSEPH WARD: I will make it "the Governments concerned." I would like an alteration made in the second line. Say "introduced legislation to enable effort to be given" instead of "to give effect." (The resolution was then unanimously adopted.)

SIR WILLIAM LYNE: With your permission, I should like just for a moment to refer to a resolution that was carried one day when I was not present. It was Resolution No. 3 in reference to desertion. My resolution as proposed was amended.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: There is my resolution on the business paper:—"That it be a recommendation to the Board of Trade that all vessels should be sufficiently

staffed with officers to enable the principle of four hours on watch and eight off to be rigidly adhered to. In vessels of small tonnage the regulations should provide that the master should keep a sea-watch of eight hours out of every 24."

THE CHAIRMAN: We are going back to manning again, it strikes me. This is not the resolution you gave notice of. When did you give notice of this?

HON. W. M. HUGHES: That was one of those I handed to you.

THE CHAIRMAN: This seems to me to be going back to manning again.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: No, it is not in the sense the other was, because this has nothing to do with a schedule. It does not say there must be so many or so few."

THE CHAIRMAN: This says "staffed with officers." I really think this is manning.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: I am entirely in your hands, but I shall certainly insist upon that resolution being discussed, and put unless you say it is out of order. And if that is out of order, then I want to ask what all these others have been about. I know, Mr. Chairman, very well that there is a desire on the part of delegates to jump things through just now.

THE CHAIRMAN: I don't like to rule anything out of order that comes from any of the delegates here. But, at the same time, this really ought to have been discussed under manning. We discussed wages and a sufficient number of hands, and I know perfectly questions were put to Captain Chalmers about it. We discussed all that, and I don't think it is fair to the Conference to go back to it again, and rediscuss the whole thing. I don't want to say it is out of order. As a matter of fact, I think it is. Having been discussed, we cannot go back to it; but if there is time at the end—

HON. W. M. HUGHES: I throw myself on the mercy of the Court, for one thing, and I call your attention too, to the fact that you definitely promised that this resolution should be discussed, owing to the fact that it had been mislaid.

THE CHAIRMAN: All I promised was this. I had ruled out all fresh amendments on the ground that notice ought to have been given. I said yours should be put on the agenda because I had mislaid it, but that did not mean all the things in it were in order.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: If you merely preserved this infant of mine for the purpose of choking it—

THE CHAIRMAN: That's it. We present it for execution.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: Then I insist upon it being tried properly before you do it.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid I must rule it out. I think it was an oversight on your part not to move an amendment to the manning resolution. You are doing your very best to make up now, but it is rather at the expense of my ruling.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: Will you allow me to say the principle discussed formerly was different to this. It was not whether ships should be sufficiently manned, but that a schedule, a principle which heretofore has not been accepted, should be adopted. Now this is entirely different, and this applies, I take it, to your vessels. The schedule applies to ours. The manning applies to us.

MR. LLEWELLYN SMITH: No ship should be unseaworthy.

THE CHAIRMAN: You look at this: "No ship shall be deemed seaworthy unless she is in a fit state as to number and quality of crew, including officers," &c.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: Let me ask you this question: Does that apply to British ships?

THE CHAIRMAN: I certainly thought so. We discussed it from that point of view.

HON. W. M. HUGHES: Then my resolution in reference to the manning schedule has never been discussed