

4th Day.]      COMMERCIAL RELATIONS AND BRITISH SHIPPING.      [2 June, 1911.

The CHAIRMAN : I would suggest that the matter of the Lascars should be dealt with on the day which is put down for the treatment of British Indians, when the Secretary of State for India will be here to deal with it especially from the Imperial and Indian point of view. That has been provisionally put on the Agenda for Monday the 19th.

Dr. FINDLAY : Sir Wilfrid Laurier's proposal is very closely related to the one which Mr. Pearce has put.

Sir D. DE VILLIERS GRAAFF : South Africa has also a suggestion in connection with shipping which will have to be discussed.

Mr. BUXTON : That is down for Friday, I think.

Sir D. DE VILLIERS GRAAFF : That is very closely allied with the discussion which has gone on this morning.

The CHAIRMAN : That is down for Friday, 16th June : "Concerted action for the promotion of trade and encouragement of British commerce."

Sir D. DE VILLIERS GRAAFF : Yes, it appears to me it all affects the same subject.

The CHAIRMAN : If the Conference would like to postpone the discussion until we reach those items, we could proceed with any further resolution that is on the Agenda for to-day.

Mr. FISHER : We will accept that resolution of Sir Wilfrid's as covering this point. I think we might dispose of that. We all seem to be in agreement. The draft motion read by Sir Wilfrid I think meets our views, and we will withdraw ours and pass that one without comment if necessary.

Dr. FINDLAY : Would it not be better to withdraw yours and for Sir Wilfrid to give us notice, so as to give us time to consider his?

Mr. FISHER : It seems so simple.

The CHAIRMAN : I am afraid we must ask for time to consider the motion.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER : The motion is one which, I am very glad to see, commends itself to the view of the Conference, but it is laying a duty on the Imperial Government and perhaps they would want to consider it. I think it is a reasonable resolution, but I would not press it upon you to-day.

Mr. FISHER : Would you please read it again?

Mr. BUXTON : I will read it : "That His Majesty's Government be requested to open negotiations with the several Foreign Governments having treaties which apply to the oversea Dominions with a view to securing liberty for any of these Dominions which may so desire to withdraw from the operation of the treaty without impairing the treaty as respects the rest of the Empire." As regards the general principle I feel confident that the Secretary of State, in whose department it comes rather than my own, would be in favour of the resolution. But I think the members of the Conference will feel that I ought not to commit him or myself until we have had an opportunity of considering it. May I say that, as a matter of fact, the Foreign Office since the last Con-