

2 June, 1911.]

UNIFORMITY OF LAWS.

[4th Day.]

Sir WILFRID LAURIER : What do you propose ?

Dr. FINDLAY : That a patent might be granted in prescribed cases with valid rights throughout the Empire. Take the cyanide case : it was contested here, it was contested in Australia (in Victoria, in New South Wales, I believe in Western Australia), and in South Africa, where it was upset. In New Zealand it was maintained; in England it was maintained; but it failed as often as it succeeded. Still, it was the same process directed to the same purpose, and it seems to me, in such a case as that, thousands of pounds are wasted. That company must have spent half a million in defending their patents; and it seems to me that, if a patent is good, properly examined, and properly given, it ought to have Imperial currency.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER : There is a good deal to be said in favour of what you say, Dr. Findlay; but I think if you adopted Sir Joseph Ward's suggestion for uniformity at the present time, that is as far as we could go.

Mr. BUXTON : As far as His Majesty's Government is concerned, we certainly accept this resolution, being strongly in favour, as far as we can, of uniformity both as regards copyright, patents, trade marks, and companies, I think Sir Joseph Ward used the right expression, and it is a question really of "more uniformity." I do not think in any of these cases we can get absolute uniformity, but at the present moment the confusion with regard to matters of this kind is so great as to be a great disadvantage to the persons concerned. It places in the one case the patentee in a position of difficulty, and the same is true with regard to trade marks and companies; and certainly it is a great disadvantage to the public, and therefore any step we can take in the direction of uniformity would certainly be very advantageous.

I do not know that I can quite go into any of the details raised by Sir Joseph Ward. We discussed them to a certain extent informally the other day; but so long as we are generally agreed that the direction we desire to proceed in is "more uniformity" I shall be glad, as I say, to support this resolution.

CHAIRMAN : I suppose, Mr. Batchelor, I may take it that the New Zealand resolution covers certainly that of Australia, which comes next ?

Mr. BATCHELOR : Yes, the two resolutions are quite to the same effect.

CHAIRMAN : The Government having accepted this resolution, it seems to be a matter which will ultimately go to the Standing Committee of the Conference, and which might be satisfactorily dealt with by that Committee. It could equally well be dealt with by the existing Secretariat, if that is the final decision of the Conference hereafter.

COINAGE AND WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

"That with a view to facilitating trade and commerce throughout the Empire the question of the advisableness of recommending a form of the present units of weights, measures, and coins ought to engage the earnest attention of this Conference."

Mr. BATCHELOR : On the question of facilitating coinage, the Prime Minister, who has been looking into this matter, is absent just now, but what we feel is that the practical difficulties, which I know are very great, in the way