

19 June, 1911.]

BRITISH AND FOREIGN SHIPPING.

[11th Day.

Mr. BATCHELOR—*cont.*

to that that the petty official does not know whether it is a ruling prince or a coolie, and necessarily so. There is a simple way of getting over all these difficulties by intimating their desire to visit, and as far as Australia is concerned they at once get the permit which gives them free admission, and they are subject to no kind of restriction whatever, nor to any catechism. There is the permit, and that is an absolute guarantee to free right of admission. I do not know how else we could do it; you cannot expect the officials to be able to tell who their visitors may be.

EARL OF CREWE: I may say that your permit system is quite understood out in India, and I do not think any complaint has been made of it by Indians; but it does not apply all over the world, although I know it is the case in Australia.

Mr. BATCHELOR: Generally speaking, we are anxious to remove any kind of disability under which Indians may be suffering so long as it does not affect the economic and racial question which governs the whole matter.

Mr. PEARCE: I would like to say just one word with regard to shipping, as the Resolution deals mainly with that subject. We, in Australia, as you know, have dealt with this question from two sides; one in regard to our shipping law, on which we take up absolutely the same position as New Zealand, and for the same reason, and therefore I am not going over that ground again; the other is that in our mail subsidies, and in our subsidies of shipping for the purposes of trade with the Pacific, we do exclude the coloured races, and we do it for a definite purpose. We believe it is in our own interest and in the interest of the Empire also, to encourage the employment of Britishers on the shipping that carries that trade. We believe that is a sounder policy from an Empire point of view than it would be to allow that trade to drift into the hands of people who would be very little assistance to us in time of war. The other point not touched upon in this discussion, but which I think also should be considered, is that the Resolution says that we should be intrusted with wide legislative powers in respect of British and foreign shipping. It is that point that we in Australia at the present time are somewhat concerned with, because we understand that the feeling of the British Government is that we are in some cases going further than they think we should go, and interfering with British shipping and foreign shipping, also trading to our shores. We put the view that in all the legislative provisions in our shipping law we are only aiming at one thing, and that is this, that neither British nor foreign shipping shall have an advantage over local shipping in our local waters. That is the main desire, and it is the motive animating all our legislation, and we ask in the words of the Resolution, that the self-governing oversea Dominions have now reached a stage of development when we should be intrusted with that power. Surely it cannot be held to be a hardship if we only put British shipping, and for that matter foreign shipping, on the same footing as our own and ask them to comply with that requirement.

Mr. MALAN: I would like to add a very few words to the discussion. We have listened with a very great deal of interest and sympathy to the statement which Lord Crewe has made, more particularly from the point of view of the Indian Empire. There were two questions raised, or two aspects of this matter—(1) the colour pure and simple, that is, the question of races, and (2) the question of labour. Now, I understand from the speeches of Sir Joseph Ward, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and Mr. Batchelor, that in their own Dominions it is the labour aspect of this question which troubles them at present. With us in South Africa it is not so much a question of labour as a question of self-preservation. We have a very large, an overwhelmingly large, African native population to deal with, and we have peculiar colour questions as between the white population and the coloured populations in South Africa. Now, what is in the minds of the people in South Africa is that if you introduce, or allow to be introduced, another colour problem by having a large Asiatic population scattered over South Africa, you will have then the native of South Africa—