

11th Day.]

BRITISH AND FOREIGN SHIPPING.

[19 June, 1911.]

Mr. MALAN—*cont.*

the aboriginal native—the Asiatic coloured population, and the comparatively small European population. So it becomes a matter of self-preservation for the Europeans, and therefore I think that the Conference will recognise that as far as South Africa is concerned this is a matter of life and death to us.

I am happy to say that after a great deal of difficulty in the different parts of South Africa we are now, I believe, on the point of coming to a settlement. The question has been fully discussed between the Union Government and the Imperial Government, and there is practical agreement as to the lines on which we shall legislate in the future. As regards Indians within the Union itself the Union Government has also come to an understanding with them, and all that remains to be done now is to give legislative effect to the agreement which has been come to, and I think perhaps the less we now say on the merits of the case the better.

As regards Sir Joseph Ward's suggestion of sending them back to their own zones, or keeping them in their own zones, we know that policy in South Africa under the name of the segregation policy of keeping each one segregated in his own area, so the idea is familiar to us. Probably Sir Joseph's first difficulty will be to define the zones, and to allocate them. He may be brought into historical investigations which would be rather disconcerting perhaps. That may be a question for the future, and I am not going to express any opinion about that now. I agree with Sir Wilfrid Laurier as regards the wording of this Resolution. I first of all wish to say that certainly I never, on reading this Resolution, thought, or could think for one moment, that it referred to an Asiatic labour difficulty in Australia. It is altogether too wide in its terms, I should think, and it also implies a constitutional disability to legislate, which, I think, should be avoided, and, therefore, if Sir Joseph Ward could confine his Resolution to the particular aspect of the question which he has in mind, I think he would certainly facilitate the passing of the Resolution.

CHAIRMAN: Lord Crewe would like to say a very few words on the subject of the Lascars. Mr. Sydney Buxton will be prepared to deal with the commercial aspect of the matter, but we shall take that this afternoon if the Conference will be kind enough to return here for that purpose.

Dr. FINDLAY: We will deal then with Resolution No. 12 and the following one.

CHAIRMAN: Yes, this afternoon.

EARL OF CREWE: I have merely a very few sentences to say on this subject, because Mr. Buxton will deal with the Resolution from the shipping point of view and the commercial standpoint. The general statement of the principles of this Indian question, with which I ventured to trouble the Conference before, applies, at any rate on one side, to this particular Resolution of Sir Joseph Ward, because I was careful, so far as I could, to make it clear that it was a two-sided question—that there was the question of the labour difficulty and the question of the racial difficulty, which, though often interwoven, were essentially separate in character. Now on this particular question of the Lascars in New Zealand and Australian waters the social objection does not in the main apply. This is no doubt principally a labour difficulty, but it will be understood, I think, that from the Indian point of view it does not make the difficulty any less, or from the Indian point of view make the case any better because of the absence of the social objection.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: But you will admit that if it is not racial then the India Office or the Indian people have no right to object on the score of race.

EARL OF CREWE: No; but it does not prevent the native Indians who are affected, or those who sympathise with them and speak on their behalf, objecting to the regulations on different grounds. In fact, as I say, they might even say that the position is worse, because some Indians might admit that the social objection to a large Indian influx into a particular Dominion had force, and they might be prepared to agree it existed; but where that does not exist they would merely say: "Oh! we are kept out because we are prepared to ask