

MARITIME LAW ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES.

NEW YORK, November 20, 1905.

A Special Meeting of the Association will be held at the Building of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, No. 42 West 44th Street, on Friday, December 8th, 1905, at 3 o'clock P.M.

The meeting is called by the officers for the purpose of considering and taking action upon the following important matters:

I.—The International Diplomatic Conference reconvened at Brussels and adopted proposed treaties relating to collisions and salvage.

The officers of the Association are advised that the treaty relating to collisions provides for liability proportionate to the gravity of fault, where both vessels are in fault, but that by the protocols the right is reserved to the United States of confining its application to causes litigated in the Admiralty Courts.

The principle of joint liability to innocent parties is not affected, as far as claims for loss of life or personal injury to passengers or crew are concerned, but such joint liability is abolished for cargo losses and damage to baggage or other property of passengers or crew. The change, in our law which would be effected by the adoption of this treaty, is, therefore, of the utmost importance to cargo interests, and as the treaty will now come before our Government for executive and legislative action, prompt consideration of same and determination of the position to be assumed by the Association in respect thereto appears to be advisable.

II.—At the Conference of the International Maritime Committee, held at Liverpool in June last, the draft treaty adopted as a first reading at Amsterdam in 1904, regarding

Limitation of Ship-owner's Liability, was approved with certain modifications.

A copy of the original draft treaty was sent to you with the notice of the meeting held on May 5, 1905.

The principal modifications consist of amendments to Articles 1 and 6.

Article 1 of the original draft has been amended by striking out the first paragraph and substituting therefor the following:

“When any damage or loss
 “(1) is caused to any goods, merchandise or any
 “other things whatsoever on board the ship; or
 “(2) is caused by reason of the improper navigation
 “of such ship to any other vessel or to any goods,
 “merchandise or other things whatsoever on board
 “any other vessel; or (3) is caused to dykes, quays
 “and other fixed objects as well as to the removal
 “of wrecks.”

Article 6 has been amended to read as follows:

“The limitation of liability determined according
 “to the preceding articles is not applicable to the
 “case of personal fault of the owner. It is not
 “admitted for the wages of the master or crew.”

No change has been made in Article 4, which was expressly disapproved by this Association at the meeting held May 5, 1905.

A resolution was also adopted by the Conference approving the treaty as amended as an International Agreement.

III.—The Government of Great Britain has submitted to our Government, for consideration, certain proposed changes in Article 9 of the Rules to prevent Collisions on the High Seas.

When the revised International Rules were approved, Article 9 was held in abeyance for further consideration by the Maritime Powers, and the then existing article was temporarily retained.

A copy of the new article proposed by the British Government is sent under separate cover with the minutes of the May meeting.

IV.—The approaching Session of Congress renders it advisable that concerted action be taken to secure the passage

of the bills approved by this Association giving a remedy for loss of life, permitting Government vessels to be sued for collision, etc.

It has also been decided to have a dinner on the evening of the meeting. The place at which such dinner will be held has not yet been determined, and will be announced later. In order that the Committee in charge may make the necessary arrangements, you are requested to notify the Secretary, as promptly as possible, upon the enclosed card, whether you will attend same. The cost of the dinner will not exceed \$5.00 per person. It is hoped that there will be a full attendance at the meeting and that members who may be unable to be present will send an expression of opinion upon the questions to be considered.

LAWRENCE KNEELAND,

Secretary,

44 Pine Street,

New York City.