

as the British post office, whilst paying the large subsidy of £104,231 a year to the line from Liverpool to New York, has so far rendered no assistance to the maintenance of a direct postal line between Great Britain and Canada."

These four resolutions express the desire of the Conference for a new line of communication between Great Britain and Australia via Canada. Already Mr. Huddart has, with great enterprise, started a line of steamships between Sydney and Vancouver. But at present it cannot be held to form part of a thorough communication, as the quick route for mails and passengers landed or taken on at Vancouver is via New York. This is clearly an obstacle in the way of the success of the line. The Canadian representatives laid before the Conference a scheme for thorough communication of an Imperial character by which mails and passengers could be carried from England to Quebec or Halifax, according to the time of the year, by the Canadian Pacific Railway to Vancouver, and from Vancouver to Australia by fast steamer, and *vice versa*. It was computed that this transit could be made from London to Sydney in 28 days.

Mr. Huddart is the author of this scheme, and his proposals may be summed up as follows:—

For a total annual subsidy of £300,000 four 20-knot ships could be provided to give a weekly service between Great Britain and Canada, and five of a speed of 16 knots to give a fortnightly service across the Pacific from Canada to Australia. This proposal, he stated, would require a capital of £3,000,000 (with the smaller capital of £2,500,000 three Pacific steamers, instead of five, could be provided, giving a four-weekly service, but it will be better to deal with the larger and more complete scheme). For this scheme it is suggested that the subsidy of £300,000 should be borne—£175,000 by Canada, £75,000 by Great Britain and £50,000 by Australasia.

The Canadian Government are already paying £25,000 a year towards the Pacific service, and have now agreed to pay, for a term of 10 years, £150,000 towards the Atlantic service—thus making up the appointed subsidy of £175,000.

At present the only subsidies received from Australasia in aid of the Pacific service are the sums of £10,000 and £1,500, paid by New South Wales and Fiji respectively. To make up the balance of £38,500 of the £50,000 required from Australasia would apparently not be an easy matter. South Australia and Western Australia are not materially interested in the Pacific route, and are satisfied with the existing service; no contribution therefore, it appears, can be expected from them. Any substantial assistance from Victoria, Queensland, and New Zealand, would be more or less conditional on the Pacific vessels calling at ports in those Colonies; but to call at all three is considered to be out of the question.

As regards Victoria, Mr. Huddart said: "There is not much good calling at Melbourne, seeing that there are one or two trains a day and steamship connection with Sydney. Any subsidy that the Victorian Government has hinted at would not pay for the coal you use, taking a ship there and back." Upon that statement Sir H. Wrixon observed: "That puts us in the position of not being able to say anything definite in regard to the particular sum which we will subscribe," though he thought that the Victorian Government would propose some assistance to prevent the line