

Mr THYNNE I will second the Resolution put before us, and I will add to what Mr Ward has said that this question is becoming one which undoubtedly we will have to consider. I look of course to what Canada is doing in the matter for the purpose of establishing communication with Great Britain. After the Conference at Ottawa, the Dominion Parliament authorised the Government of Canada to enter into a contract for a subsidy of £150,000 per annum to any company to establish a line of steamers from Canadian ports to Great Britain. It will be seen from the report of the Ottawa Conference that the suggestion made there for that part of the work is: "That as the Imperial Post Office contributes towards the cost of the mail service between England and Australia *via* Brindisi and Naples the sum of £95,000 per annum, while the sea postage amounts only to £3000, and to the mail service between Vancouver and Japan and China £45,000, less £7300 charged against the Admiralty, this Conference deems it but reasonable to respectfully ask that assistance be given by the Imperial Government to the proposed fast Atlantic and Pacific service; more particularly as the British Post Office, while 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." Now, at the Ottawa Conference the following resolution was adopted, and at the time all the representatives of these Colonies were present, with the exception of the representative of Western Australia:—"That the Conference expresses its cordial approval of the successful efforts put forth by Canada and New South Wales for the establishment of a regular monthly steamship service between Vancouver and Sydney, and affirms the desirability of a reasonable co-operation of all the Colonies in securing the improvement and permanence of the same." I take it that the resolution which Mr Ward has moved, being a repetition of the resolution of last year's Postal Conference, is practically to the same effect as the resolution of the Ottawa Conference, and the representatives of the Colonies having adopted the principle there, we may safely follow their example. Apart from the monetary considerations which Mr Ward has so clearly put before us, there are even the wider grounds that these Colonies should find it to their interest as well as to their credit to take their share in developing all portions of the British Empire which fall under their control, and the first step to be taken is to try and facilitate rapid communication. I beg to second the Resolution.

Mr COOK: I am very glad Mr Ward has moved his Resolution in such terms, because if he had done anything further I might not have been able to subscribe to it. It is well known that New South Wales has already entered into an agreement with Huddart, Parker, & Co. to subsidise two boats running between Vancouver and New South Wales, paying £10,000 a year for three years. Mr Thynne made a reference to the mail aspect of this question, but that is a matter better left out of consideration. Our receipts from the mails carried on this line did not amount to very much at all. It seems to me that this matter of mail communication would not be very greatly facilitated by coming by way of Canada for many years to come, consequently we had better confine our view of the matter to the trade aspect. The other Colonies may take a more sympathetic interest in the matter than they now appear to do, but Victoria has made no move in regard to it, though at the last Conference they were very anxious, from a trade point of view to get communication direct with Canada. All I can say is that if these Colonies are anxious to promote trade on these routes, they had better represent to their Governments the desirableness of paying something towards its maintenance. Now we contribute about £4000 a year to the maintenance of the San Francisco mail. That is contributed directly through New Zealand. In addition we subsidise these boats to Canada to the extent of £10,000 a year. These two lines of steamers run right alongside each other almost the whole distance, and, I think therefore the other colonies ought to fall in with the idea, and induce their Governments to agree to some substantial contribution towards the maintenance of these boats.

Mr. FYSH. My recollection of what has taken place at so many Conferences on postal and other subjects brings it to my mind that rebellion against want of unity must sooner or later tend to union. Whenever I have read of the various conferences which have been held, I find there has been unfortunately in connection with the motions proposed a want of unity; the separate interests of individual states have cropped up, and members have found it necessary upon certain resolutions to absent themselves from voting and possibly from speaking. I have felt whenever I have read the result of these conferences that anything like union upon such subjects could not be brought about while we had separate interests existing. The time will come, however, and I hope speedily, when there will be no necessity for Postal and Telegraphic Conferences to consider separate interests, and that some power will be in existence to which reference can be made upon all subjects, which will do away with all insular reasonings and cause us to act in unity. But until such a power is called into existence we must retain that individual action which leads us to fly off from various resolutions as not specially belonging to the countries we may represent. And to-day I am in the unfortunate position, while listening with very much pleasure to what has been urged, of feeling that I have no special interest to represent. It is to be regretted that a service of this kind does not affect Tasmania directly, either as a matter of postal business or a matter of commerce, but I can see that it is of vital importance in the development of the trade and commerce of Australasia as a whole. I can see where we may increase the lines by which our trade and passenger traffic may continue, and by which we may draw to our shores a class of business we have not received before. I hold that with mails and mail routes it is as with railways and roads, the supply creates the demand—(hear, hear),—and the traffic between us and Vancouver will spring up by means of the supply. However, if I find in affirming the desirableness of establishing this service, and in expressing the