

ALSO PRESENT :

The Right Honourable D. LLOYD GEORGE, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

Mr. H. LLEWELLYN SMITH, C.B., Permanent Secretary to the Board of Trade.

Mr. A. WILSON FOX, C.B., Comptroller-General of the Commercial, Statistical, and Labour Departments of the Board of Trade.

Fifteenth Day.
14 May 1907.

The Right Honourable Sir EDWARD GREY, Bart., M.P., Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Right Honourable SYDNEY BUXTON, M.P., Postmaster-General.

Mr. H. BABINGTON SMITH, C.B., C.S.I., Secretary to the Post Office.

CHAIRMAN : Gentlemen, there are one or two notices which I have received, one of them from Sir Wilfrid Laurier, which Mr. Lloyd George has attended, in order to speak to. As Mr. Lloyd George has to leave, perhaps the Conference will allow that to be mentioned first.

MAIL SERVICE TO AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND VIA CANADA.

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Sir WILFRID LAURIER : Lord Elgin and gentlemen, on different occasions during the present Conference mention has been made of the idea of connecting all parts of the Empire, so far as it can be done, with an improved system of communication; and I said at the last meeting that I would be prepared to lay on the table a resolution, which I now read : " That " in the opinion of this Conference the interests of the Empire demand that " in so far as possible its different portions should be connected by the best " possible means of mail communication, travel, and transportation; that to " this end steps should immediately be taken to establish a fast service from " Great Britain to Canada, and through Canada to Australia and New " Zealand, and also to China and Japan; that such service upon the Atlantic " Ocean should be carried on by means of steamships, equal in speed and " character to the best now in existence, and upon the Pacific Ocean by steam- " ships of a speed of not less than 18 knots, and in other respects as nearly " equal to the Atlantic ships as circumstances will permit; that for the " purpose of carrying the above project into effect, such financial support as " may be necessary should be contributed by Great Britain, Canada, Aus- " tralia, and New Zealand in equitable proportions."

The resolution I have now the honour to submit to the Conference resolves itself into two parts : the part which affects the Atlantic Ocean and the part which affects the Pacific Ocean. At the present time Great Britain has a mail service between the United Kingdom and New York of a very high character. We have a mail service also between Canada and Great Britain not aided by the British Government. If we had on the Atlantic Ocean