

Fifteenth Day.
14 May 1907.

MAIL SERVICE
TO AUSTRALIA
AND NEW
ZEALAND *via*
CANADA.

(Sir
Joseph Ward.)

"all red route" which we prefer would have to be given up, and the alternative for New Zealand will be to go *viâ* America. The American service has only ceased at the moment because of the difficulties which cropped up consequent upon the earthquake in San Francisco. It is the fastest way we have from New Zealand. It is the shortest route under any conditions.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE : What knot service is it ?

Sir JOSEPH WARD : Only a 15 or 16 knot service. I went back myself from here to New Zealand and landed in New Zealand in 28 days, or rather, I should have done so if I had left here two days later. I went on two days ahead from England, and the mails were landed in 28 days by that route. Our alternative, in order to bring us close to the Old Country from the standpoint of the nearest route, is to join with the United States Government and to pay sufficient money to have an up-to-date line of steamers put on from San Francisco to Auckland. We would get a faster route than we are getting here, but as that service is at the moment stopped we ought to try and secure the "all red route" and help our people to come through Canada and help Britain to have that route through Canada, and on to Australia, and New Zealand. I say it is infinitely preferable for us to put our minds upon that and come together and offer a larger subsidy to have a fast route for mails and passengers across Canada and the Pacific, and if we do that we do one of the finest things for the Empire.

Sir JAMES MACKAY : A service once in four weeks ?

Sir JOSEPH WARD : The one across America has been a three-weekly service. I am suggesting now a fortnightly service.

Sir JAMES MACKAY : For 300,000*l.* a year ?

Sir JOSEPH WARD : 300,000*l.*, or whatever it may be. Speaking from the New Zealand standpoint we are not going to remain a fifth wheel to a coach in the matter of giving our money to support a line of steamers as is supported by Britain and Australia at the present moment, which are slow, for the purpose we desire; that is the 15-knot service out through the Suez Canal. That is used by our passengers very largely, and for mail services, but it is keeping us comparatively in the back woods, and we are not going to continue to give our money directly or indirectly to a slow service by the P. and O. and the Orient or any other line, and allow ourselves to remain in the position of being kept nearly six weeks from England, when, at this age of steam development, we know it is quite possible to get here, under improved conditions, in about three weeks. So, what I urge is, that we ought to achieve a really fast service by the best route of the lot, from the passenger point of view. The view was put forward by Sir Wilfrid Laurier that the service should also go to China and Japan. It is one of the finest things possible. They have a line of steamers now from Vancouver to the East—the Empress line—which has done a good deal to divert passenger trade through Canada from England. If you want a large diversion of trade go for larger and faster steamers on that route and you will change the direction of the traffic from the East, which is now filtering through the Suez Canal, with all its high charges and imposts. If you want to bring about a revolution and a complete reformation in the transport of people, then help Canada to get this fast service to the East, *viâ* Vancouver, and you get an "all red route" there also. But from the point of view of New Zealand, I only want to make it as clear as I possibly can that