

16 June, 1911.]

ALL-RED ROUTE.

[10th Day.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: They are thinking of it, but they have not got it yet. We hope to have a similar service with 22 knots, and we are prepared, in Canada, to have a higher kind of service going as fast as 25 knots. The Canadian Government would be prepared, on the lines of the resolution which has been moved, to contribute its share with Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand. Whether we can induce Australia to come in is a question as to which I have not yet had satisfactory information. New Zealand has been more enterprising in that respect, if I may say so without offence. On the Pacific Ocean there is a difficulty, so far as I understand, between Australia and New Zealand, which, I am sorry to say, has not been solved, and, so far as I know, is not in process of solution either. If it is to be different, we will know by and by from Australia, but there again we are prepared to contribute our fair share to the best service that can be organized. Sir Joseph limits himself to 16 knots on the Pacific Ocean, but I think it is not too ambitious to say that we might go to 18 knots on the Pacific Ocean.

Mr. FISHER: Twenty.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: I say 18 for the present, and I have no objection to 20 in the future, but for this year or next year we can easily provide for a service of 18 knots on the Pacific Ocean plying between Vancouver and Australia and New Zealand. Sir Joseph mentioned a moment ago in his remarks that the Canadian Pacific Railway service was slow. Knowing the Pacific Railway Company as I do, I know they would be prepared at any time to give the very best service that could be put on the Continent of America. Without boasting at all, I say that Company have shown such great enterprise that I am quite sure they will make my words good, and be prepared at any moment, if such a scheme were to be realised, to give, I will not say the fastest, but as fast a service as is to be found to-day on the American Continent.

The question of Panama is one which is not to be overlooked. What will be the effect of Panama is still an uncertainty. In so far as the passenger traffic is concerned, I have heard—I give the information for what it is worth—that Panama will not compare with the Canadian route. The discomforts of the heat will be such on the Panama route as will make the Canadian route far more available. Coming from Australia to Canada, crossing the heated zone, you cross it from north to south, but by Panama you would cross it from east to west, and therefore would be subjected to much greater inconvenience in point of comfort than the northern route.

The PRESIDENT: That is for passenger traffic.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: Yes, I said for passenger traffic. I have only to add that if we can get the co-operation of His Majesty's Government, and of the Australian Government, Canada will back New Zealand as far as we can go.

With regard to Newfoundland, the suggestion made by Sir Edward Morris, that the steamers might call at Newfoundland, is a thing which I think might be left to the Company which undertakes the service. If they can do so without inconvenience they will surely do so, but I think Sir Edward Morris will find it more conformable to his own interests if he confines his efforts to obtaining a better system, a better line of navigation than now plies between Canada and Newfoundland and Newfoundland and Canada. We have not a very large trade with Newfoundland from Canada but it is an increasing trade, and we hope it will continue to increase, and in this also I have only to say to Sir Edward Morris that we would be happy to respond to any call that is made upon us.

Mr. FISHER: As I read the resolution and understand Sir Joseph Ward and Sir Edward Morris in this matter, it is based on the principle of an All-Red route. That is the sentimental side that he wishes to impress upon this Conference.