

16 June, 1911.]

ALL-RED ROUTE.

[10th Day.

Mr. FISHER : Yes, I am speaking of trade of all kinds—goods and chattels and wares, and I go further and say from my point of view, it is hardly a practicable proposition to carry even passengers from the disadvantage of landing and transport across the Continent, and then re-embarkation at the other side.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER : That is the beauty of it—you escape the sickness there.

Mr. FISHER : Of course, I am not speaking of people with plenty of means who are touring, because I presume the proposal is not to meet the convenience of mere tourists but for our purposes, for the purpose of emigration, and for the purpose of getting the people we desire to get to Australia; we desire a convenient, safe, cheap, and the most speedy route we can get.

It is with some regret, of course, that I make these statements, not in any way hostilely to the proposition as a whole, but because I do not think it is practicable at the present time, with the limited amount of money we can afford to spend in an accelerated and improved steamship communication between the Commonwealth and the United Kingdom, to support the proposition. I repeat again, so far as the sentimental All-Red route proposition is concerned, it is no more All-Red than *via* South Africa who are now, we are all happy to say, entirely linked up with us and associated with us. Our destinies are inseparably linked up and bound up with each other, and there, of course, we have another All-Red through route. As to the other route, *via* the Suez Canal. I hope even that may be improved, at least cheapened and improved otherwise before the next Conference meets.

The PRESIDENT : That is your lowering of the tolls again.

Mr. FISHER : We are practically in the hands of the Government of the United Kingdom in that matter, and we shall not cease to press that proposition.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : The United Kingdom and France, too.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE : And much more France. We are in the hands of the shareholders of the Suez Canal, which is rather a different thing.

Mr. FISHER : I do not wish to compromise ourselves in any way by using any hard words about a company which is run in commercial interests; I expect to bring this up again, but I think even the engineer who constructed it made a statement to the public as regards what would be a fair interest on the outlay, and after that he said the rate could be reduced.

Mr. MALAN : Although these resolutions which are submitted to the Conference deal only with the one suggestion of an All-Red route through Canada, the discussion has brought up two alternative plans or routes. The one is *via* Panama and the other *via* South Africa, and we were very pleased indeed to hear what the Prime Minister of Australia had to say on the question of the route *via* South Africa. It therefore seems to us that perhaps we would be prejudging the matter without sufficient information if these propositions were definitely accepted here to-day. We have therefore thought whether it would not be advisable to refer these resolutions along with the suggestions which have been made to this Imperial Commission to which we have agreed this morning. That would be our suggestion: instead of formally passing these resolutions to refer the resolutions along with the suggestions which have been made to this Commission.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE : We had at the last Conference a resolution which committed us to the principle of an All-Red route. I was present at that Con-