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Recollections
p. 225
Colonial Office,

DOWNING STREET,

11th November, 1895.

Sir,

A proposal was recently made that a Deputation of the Agents-General for the Australasian Colonies and the High Commissioner for Canada should wait upon the Secretary of State for the Colonies with the view of discussing the question of the Pacific Cable; but it was arranged at the beginning of September that, having regard to the meeting of Parliament and the consequent pressure of business, the interview should be deferred to a more convenient season.

Since then the position of the matter has been materially affected by the Grant by the Hawaiian Government to Colonel L.S.Spalding, subject to certain conditions, of an exclusive franchise for twenty years to lay cables for commercial purposes. It is reported that Colonel Spalding, on obtaining this concession, entered into negotiations having for their object the continuance to Honolulu of the cable laid by a French association between New Caledonia and Queensland. If the whole project thus contemplated is carried through, San Francisco or some other point in the United States territory will be placed in direct communication with Australasia, and it need hardly be observed that in that case the position of the British project from the financial point of view would be very prejudicially affected.

It seems therefore to Mr.Chamberlain to be highly desirable that no further time should be lost in considering the subject, and that some open step should be taken which will disabuse foreign promoters of the idea that no competition is to be feared from a British line as recommended last year by the Ottawa Conference.

For this purpose Mr.Chamberlain would suggest that the proposed interview should take place at an early date

The High Commissioner
For Canada.

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