

Canadian West to England, that existing lines of steamers would be driven out of business, and that instead of a national ocean service there would be a subsidized service, admittedly of the best in point of equipment, controlling the British Atlantic trade prejudicially both to other steamship lines and to other railways. To remove these fears the C.P.R. authorities have asserted that the subsidy will apply only to the fast passenger and mail service and not to the freighters, the new line being in this respect on an exact level with the others; there would be competition, but on perfectly legitimate grounds. An official of the Grand Trunk Railway, which must also be reckoned with in the matter, is reported as saying that the Canadian Pacific, while a competitor of the Grand Trunk in the land-carrying traffic, would in its steamboat service be compelled by the force of business circumstances to encourage the co-operation of other railways in order to secure as much freight as possible.

The Canadian Pacific Railway is undoubtedly in a position to establish and maintain an Atlantic steamship service the equal of any now in existence. It already operates excellent services on the Pacific and the Great Lakes. The question is, however, whether it is well to put so important a franchise in the hands of a private corporation, railway monopoly being the very bugbear which was feared in the case of the Morgan combine. Two conditions seem absolutely necessary in the interests of fair dealing:

1. No contract involving Government expenditure should be signed without giving an opportunity to existing lines to tender.

2. If granted to any private corporation the Government subsidy should carry with it the right of controlling the rates, in order that other steamship and railway lines should not be prejudicially affected, and that the rights of the public at large should be protected.

The matter is now in the hands of the

Government. The Canadian ministers have consulted with the representatives of the various interests concerned and are fully open to the dangers to avoid and the advantages to secure. Definite action has not yet been decided upon.

The Colonial Conference

The practical results of the Colonial Conference, which closed August 11, must be looked for in the future. No definite action on the more important of the topics discussed was decided upon, and the colonial premiers were undoubtedly somewhat disappointed because of their inability to secure the hoped-for benefits. It does not follow, however, that the Conference accomplished nothing. On the contrary, the premiers and ministers themselves profess to believe that very important progress was made. They claim that public opinion in England is favorable to imperial federation and that a sure result of their consultations with the British Government will be the hastening of the day when federation will be possible. And if no other benefit had been derived, the fact that the representatives of the various colonies had made each other's acquaintance, and thus established warmer feelings which might eventually lead to more tangible results, shows that some gain was made by holding the conferences. So satisfactory were they from this point of view that they are in future to be held every four years. There was much eloquence and good, sound, colonial sense expressed on the floors of the Conference, and on public platforms, during the stay of the ministers in England, and a favorable impression was left with the English public.

The thread on which these discourses were gathered was this: From England's point of view it has been for some time desirable that the colonies should bear a part of the burden of imperial defence; but from the colonies' point of view they