

cables having been destroyed. Though this may be true, no one can predict what may or may not be done in the future. This much may be affirmed, the tendency of the Empire Cables would be to prevent wars. But even if no such tendency should result, as the Empire Cables would be *supplementary*, we could not by any possibility be worse off in war-time *with* them than *without* them.

It is needless to say that care would be taken to lay the Empire Cables in the least vulnerable positions. Moreover, let us not forget that the complete circle of the Empire Cables would have an advantage peculiar to itself. If cut at any point on one side of the Globe, there would remain the possibility of maintaining communication by the arc of the circle around the other side of the Globe.

The Imperial scheme of Cables is designed for Peace. Its highest purpose is to weld together and build up a great commercial Oceanic Empire. War does not frequently occur. There may be no war for thirty or many more years. Would we be justified in refusing to take advantage of the tremendous value of State-owned Cables in consolidating the Empire, on the ground that it would be possible to cut them should war break out in the remote future?

CONCLUSION.

I trust I have satisfactorily met the criticisms which have been made. I am greatly encouraged to think that the political party, represented by the "Eighty Club," which, in the words of Lord Coleridge, "laid the foundation of our modern policy of a self-governing Empire," will perceive how helpful the scheme I have endeavoured to explain may become; unlike fiscal or kindred proposals it involves no political difficulties, its essential feature is to make for that knowledge without which attempts to organise the Empire may be fruitful of disaster if they in any way interfere with that complete local autonomy so jealously prized. I appre-