

in such a case, it might be thought that the Cape route without transshipment must prove superior.

Even this, however, would not be the case; an examination of the details of the route and of its several component parts, would show the various circumstances that unite to favour its construction, and to render it economical. The calculations by which this point would be established cannot be entered upon here. It may suffice to state at present, that it has been shown, with reference to a route proposed by Mr. Asa Whitney * through the United States with a view to connecting the same extremities, that, assuming a high basis of computation, freight could be carried from Canton to New York for less than two-thirds of the cost via the Cape.

Its national independence is perfect. An *approximation* to this condition is considered so essential, that it was one of the four primary points required by the Select Committee of the House of Commons, "That the line or lines selected should be as free as possible from those political objections which necessarily attach to a line dependent on other countries for its communications."

The proposed route through British America would render the communications of Great Britain independent of the world; and India, if menaced, could be supported from the W., as well as from the E.

The completion of this great highway, so useful to the universe, though emphatically national, would tend greatly to the continued duration of peace.

The proposed route by British America would establish direct and mutual intercourse between—

1. Europe, Asia, and America,
2. England and all her Colonies,
3. And between the several Colonies.

The importance of connection has been so highly esteemed, as to have been pressed as deserving consideration even before a certain measure of time, speed, and distance, in the selection of the first Australian route to be established.

It only requires to look at the globe, and a very little reflection, to perceive how incomparable the British route is in carrying out this condition. It would essentially foster inter-communication between the several parts of the empire, and call into existence an illimitable commerce and intercourse with British America. Both by direction and rapidity it would bring the most densely populated regions of Asia, those at present most excluded from the world, into close and practical contact with Europe. The activity thrown into the Pacific would reach India, China and Japan, Borneo, the Burmese and Siamese Empires, and Polynesia.

These advantages are yet enhanced by contrast. The Central American Routes unite, as far as British interests are concerned, nothing but the extremities. If successful, they would seriously endanger the carrying trade and commercial power of England, as the United States Committee on naval affairs has elaborately proved.

If unsuccessful as a route, they would prove a waste of energy and capital, damaging the prospects of truly eligible modes by which to join the oceans.

The Cape route unites but little that absolutely depends on its adoption for intercourse.

The Indian route forms indeed a part (though but a small one) of the same connection, but is only applicable to postal purposes, or little more.

* See Volume XXI. of the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society.—Ed.