

China by the Canadian Pacific steamships. Imperial interests are amply protected and encouraged by these lines, so that when we talk of establishing an All-Red route over precisely the same ground all that is meant is that faster vessels should be employed. The Cunard contract brought the subject to the front again at the Colonial Conference of 1907, and Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Lord Strathcona have been pushing it with energy, the argument coming to this, that as England is doing so much for the United States or for New York, she is in duty bound to do something for her own Empire by co-operating with Canada and the Australian Colonies in establishing a faster All-Red service than now exists. Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd-George apparently acquiesced at the Conference, and the matter is now engaging the attention of the Imperial Government. During the Chamberlain campaign for preferential duties within the Empire, some Liberals contended that Imperial unity could be promoted at less cost and with less risk by the creation of fast steamship services; but, of course, the Government is not bound by what may have been said by individual members of the party when in Opposition.

The weak points of the scheme are briefly these. First of all, while sentiment is an excellent thing in its place, it is a poor foundation by itself for this or any other project involving a large outlay. As material considerations usually prevail in the long run, a scheme of this magnitude, if it is to be successful, and failure would be disastrous from every aspect, must rest, not on sentiment merely, but on a sound business basis. This granted, it is obvious that nothing could be gained, to begin with the outlying parts of the programme, by putting 25-knot steamers on the Pacific Ocean between Vancouver and Australia. A vessel of that speed would burn well on to 15,000 tons of coal, costing about \$60,000, on each single voyage. This, to go no further, stamps the scheme as impracticable. No freight goes from England through Canada to