

in about thirty-eight or thirty-nine days,† from the time when the order to start reached the officer in command in Halifax. Now it takes just thirty-eight days to make the voyage from England to Calcutta *via* Gibraltar and the Suez Canal. Thus we see that, as regards time, the two routes are in very much the same position, whereas the route by the Canadian railways has this great advantage, that the land portion of it passes entirely through British territory. As long as we keep command of the sea, it is perfectly safe from end to end. The canal may at any time be blocked by accident or design, but it is impossible to throw a barrier across the open ocean.

"Let us now consider the bearing of these facts upon the defence of our empire in Asia. If at the moment when it became necessary to throw troops into India there were no complications in Europe, we could send on at once the greater portion of our garrisons at Malta and Gibraltar But, if the aspect of affairs in Europe was so threatening that we could not withdraw any appreciable number of men from our Mediterranean garrisons, reinforcements for India would have to come direct from England, and a choice of routes would lie before the home authorities. Even if our European foes were too weak at sea to make any attempt upon our transports as they crossed the Mediterranean, the Suez Canal route would be dangerous because of the impossibility of obtaining complete security for an absolutely safe passage. The route across the Canadian Dominion would be perfectly secure; for the chances are a thousand to one against our being embroiled with the United States while we are fighting a great European contest. But, on the other hand, it would be longer by the eight or nine days needed to cross the Atlantic. Yet this disadvantage could be obviated to a great extent by sending on the garrison of Halifax in the manner described in the preceding paragraph; and it might be possible to send after it, within a few days, the greater part of the garrison of Bermuda. They would be the advance guard of a continuous stream of reinforcements from England, which would reach India at short and frequent intervals, till all the troops that were needed had been sent."

It may be pointed out that, of course, the Canadian Pacific Railway will be useful for naval as well as military purposes, stores and crews for the Pacific squadron being easily and ex-

† The steamers of the Canadian Pacific will deliver troops in Calcutta from Vancouver in 23 to 25 days, and from Halifax in 29 to 31 days, stopping if necessary at Hong Kong and Singapore.