

cussed which have a vital bearing upon the welfare of the Empire. The plan of thus conferring with the colonial representatives is an excellent one and a radical departure from the "little Englander" policy. As the representative of Canada, Sir Wilfrid Laurier was to be consulted especially upon the question of a fast Atlantic steamboat service, such an enterprise being felt in both countries to be a necessity for the development of the English-Canadian trade.

Two Steamship Combines

This question of the steamship business is a very live one in England, where the Morgan combine, referred to in our last issue, has wakened much alarm. It is feared, and certainly with some reason, that the control of the Atlantic carrying-trade will pass into the hands of American capitalists unless some active measures are taken to offset the remarkable aggressiveness now being manifested by Mr. Morgan and his associates. The "merger" was virtually a complete purchase of five different Atlantic lines, with the understanding that for the present the British vessels should continue under the British flag. It is impossible, however, to convince the people of England that this is not merely an entering wedge and that the ultimate purpose of the combinesters is to acquire and monopolize the carrying-trade of the Atlantic, thus endangering not only England's commercial supremacy but her naval auxiliary resources as well. Much concern and anxiety was expressed. However real or unreal these fears may be, it is certain that the combine would receive the greater portion of the freighting between Canada and England and, as alluded to in another article in this number, it was felt that the time had come for the establishment of an independent all-British line to meet this danger and also to meet an existing need regardless of the combine. The Canadian Pacific Railway Company were first mentioned as the promoters of this new enterprise, but more recently a partial arrangement has been made by the Cunard, Allan and Beaver steamship lines with the British Government, whereby a regular fast service

of six boats will be maintained to Canada, subsidized by both governments. This new combination will be in a position to compete with the other and will at the same time provide a service that has been long needed. The Colonial Office warmly approves of the plan, but final arrangements were postponed until the Conference. It is this matter which the Canadian Premier will help decide.

European News in Brief

The visit of President Loubet to the Czar, in May, has been followed by expressions of very good feeling between France and Russia. It has also had results in popularizing the democratic idea in Russia and in convincing Germany that she is somewhat isolated. On M. Loubet's return the Premier, M. Waldeck-Rousseau, retired from office, and the president appointed a new ministry, with M. Combes as premier. It is the intention of the new Government to economize, making reductions in all the services.

Spain's boy-king attained his majority (sixteen years) and the throne on May 17th. He is said to be well trained, intellectual and energetic. He is in favor of the Reform party and it is believed that a period of progress is ahead for Spain. The labor troubles, however, still continue. In Portugal, the sister kingdom, King Carlos is said to be contemplating abdication because of the bankrupt condition of the country and the threatened revolution.

Italy's finances show a slight improvement, though still at a low ebb. King Victor Emmanuel, however, is possessed of great personal wealth and he has been investing some of it in America, having recently paid \$8,000,000 for a tract of coal land in West Virginia. His intention is to sell coal to his Government at a profit.

Germany is taking measures to strengthen the German element in Poland. The policy of the Government is to keep the rights of the Poles restricted by maintaining a German ascendancy. This appears to be an effort chiefly aimed at the customs and manners, for a larger measure of