

Having in mind the great interest you have always taken in this subject, your frequent expressions in favour of a rapid and adequate service, and knowing that generally you are devoted to the promotion of anything tending towards the betterment of the commercial conditions of the Dominion, I place this request before you as being the desire of the business portion of the inhabitants of our northern city.

It is my opinion that such an important matter should not be allowed to stand aside solely on account of the subsidy question. This factor in the upkeep of a suitable service must always play the most important part, and I think, after the experience of recent months, the opinion of commercial men throughout New Zealand (apart from those of this city) must be that a fast and reliable service should be encouraged, although the required subsidy may exceed any hitherto given.

The position has now reached such a stage that it is felt something must be done to relieve it, and I therefore forward this opinion and request to you, trusting that with your able and guiding assistance a very early and satisfactory solution will be arrived at.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.
[Van. Conn. 07/65.]

I have, &c.,
N. ALFRED NATHAN, President.

No. 107.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington, to the PRESIDENT, Auckland Chamber of Commerce, Auckland.

SIR,— General Post Office, Wellington, 24th October, 1907.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, on the subject of mail communication between this Dominion and the United Kingdom and Europe.

In reply, I have to inform you that correspondence between the Governments concerned for a fast service *via* Vancouver is still proceeding; but until it is further advanced it is necessary to regard the details as confidential. Your chamber may, however, be assured that I shall not relax my efforts to obtain speedy mail communication between New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

I have, &c.,
J. G. WARD, Postmaster-General.
The President, Auckland Chamber of Commerce, Auckland.
[Van. Conn. 07/70.]

No. 108.

The HIGH COMMISSIONER to the Hon. the PRIME MINISTER.

Westminster Chambers, 13 Victoria Street, London, S.W., 3rd April, 1908.

SIR,— *All-red Route.*

I beg to enclose herein an article which appeared in to-day's *Times* from the correspondent of that paper at Ottawa, giving a report of a speech in the Canadian Parliament on the 20th ultimo by the Honourable Clifford Sifton, relating to the all-red route, which will doubtless be of considerable interest to you.

The Hon. the Prime Minister, Wellington.
[Van. Conn. 08/41.]

I have, &c.,
W. P. REEVES.

Enclosure in No. 108.

EXTRACT from the *Times*, London, 3rd April, 1908.

ONE of the most interesting personalities in the Canadian House of Commons is the Hon. Clifford Sifton, ex-Minister of the Interior, whose name has become familiar to Englishmen through his advocacy of the all-red route. Mr. Sifton retired from the Laurier Ministry in February, 1905, on account of differences of opinion with his colleagues over the education clauses in the Bill creating the new Provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. Since that time the member for Brandon has not taken a very active part in the debates of the House. His speech on Friday (20th March), however, is regarded as a new departure in Canadian politics, and has completely overshadowed every other utterance, including even that of the Minister of Finance in the present Budget debate. The part of his speech of most general interest was that devoted to the all-red steamship project.

Mr. Sifton cited the resolution passed at the Imperial Conference as the basis of the scheme, and interpreted it as meaning that Great Britain, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia were committed to an improvement in their means of communication as great as reasonable expense would permit. His business, he said, took him to England last autumn, and before going he had had some conversations with the Prime Minister, and it had been arranged that he should do what he could informally to carry out this resolution. He had discussed the matter with Mr. Lloyd-George and Mr. Asquith. These conferences, which could not be reported, were in no way official, and could not be the basis of any engagement. But he had received assurances that "when Canada, Australia, and New Zealand come to Great Britain with a definite proposal, it will receive serious and sympathetic consideration." The definite scheme, which was before the Imperial Conference, proposed to establish between Great Britain and Canada a steamship service equal to the best on the Atlantic, and of twenty-four-knot speed; across Canada a railway service as fast as possible; and from Canada to New Zealand and Australia a 9,000-ton steamship line with a speed of eighteen knots. At present mails from London to New