

## A TRANSCONTINENTAL MAIL SERVICE

### PROPOSED NEW IRISH PORT

According to a cable message, substantial progress has been made with the scheme for establishing an express mail service between Great Britain and Australasia, *via* Canada. Several British ship-owning firms who are interested in the service are treating with a Canadian syndicate for the purchase of 400,000 acres at Cape St. Charles, Labrador, to establish an ice-free port there. From this port it is proposed to construct a transcontinental railway to the Pacific. It is claimed that the journey from London to Winnipeg can be performed in five days, and additional 16 to Sydney. Blacksod Bay, which will be the headquarters of the service on this side, will have connection by special railway to the main service at Sligo. The promoters are now in Ottawa to enlist the support of the Canadian Government.

There has been much controversy in the Irish papers as to the relative merits of Galway or Blacksod Bay (Sligo) as the headquarters of the service in Ireland. Mr. McAndrew, C.E., representing the promoters of the Blacksod route, in the course of a recent lecture, said that the men behind the scheme were of the highest financial standing in Great Britain and Canada. The promoters of the scheme had got their Act of Parliament, not alone for the Blacksod port, but for the construction of railways and harbors for the same purpose at Halifax from the Canadian Government. The promoters had already spent about £40,000 in getting the necessary Acts of Parliament, and in other preliminary expenses, and now have got the whole of their capital, and intend starting the work at an early date.

After referring to the unsuitability of Galway as a port for the accommodation of the big vessels of the present day, Mr. McAndrew went on to say: 'The

entrance to Blacksod Harbor and up to the head of the new pier is absolutely clear of any obstacle, and the largest vessel afloat can go full steam ahead from the pier, where there will be seven fathoms at low water spring tides, and absolutely free from any swell. It unquestionably will be the finest and safest harbor probably in the world, and that is why it was selected. The proposed railway goes along the coast from Collooney to Blacksod Bay, and skirts the Killala and other important little harbors along the route. This is of the greatest importance to the Imperial Government, because if there was an invasion of Ireland at any time they would land somewhere or at various points along this coast. This railway would enable the troops to be put down at each landing place with the greatest dispatch and prevent the enemy landing or proceeding inland. Then once the entrance to Blacksod Bay is fortified the British navy could get all their supplies across from Canada direct in the event of any shortage or difficulty occurring in the country. So that the Blacksod project is of a great national and Imperial importance, and will be the salvation of this country. It will also open the tourist districts in the west and north-west of Ireland, which are equal from a scenic standpoint to any on the Continent, and will develop the fishing industry along the whole coast, in which considerable traffic will be made.

'The Blacksod line,' said Mr. McAndrew, joins the Midland line, the first junction being at Killala, coming from Blacksod. The next is near Ballina, and the third at Collooney. Their express route to Dublin would be via Collooney, and they could, by slip carriages, drop off at Killala the passengers going to the west and midlands along their system, so that their line is bound to get a large amount of traffic from the Blacksod route. The Great Southern, too, can run from Collooney to Limerick, Cork and Waterford, and the Great Northern will serve the North of Ireland and North of Scotland, while the Midland Great Western Railway will deliver for Dublin, Holyhead, London, and the South of England.'

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