

have a right to put a clause like that in the contract. The rates vary from week to week, and must be settled altogether in the interest of the shipowner himself. I do not think the Government have any right to interfere in the matter.

HON. MR. MILLER—I cannot agree with the hon. gentleman from Alberton. He is quite at variance with the hon. leader of the House, who has expressed his views on the subject in a manner satisfactory to every one who heard him. There is no reason why the Government, in making a contract for the carrying of the mails, may not stipulate that there shall be no discrimination against our ports and in favor of foreign ports. I do not see why that could not be done. The hon. gentleman from Halifax states that it has been done by Sir Leonard Tilley in a contract with a German line, and if it has been done in one case I do not see why it should not be done in others. The leader of the House tells us that the Government have made enquires as to this line discriminating against Canadian ports, and have failed to find that any such discrimination is practised. From the fact that they made the enquiry we must presume that the Government thought they could find some means of remedying it, and I should judge further, from the hon. gentleman's statement to the House, that they intend to see that in future contracts no such discrimination against our ports shall be allowed by vessels subsidised by the Government. The hon. gentleman from Alberton is at variance with the leader of the House on this subject. For my own part, I listened with the greatest satisfaction to the explanation given by the leader of the House.

HON. MR. DRUMMOND—The enquiry of the hon. gentleman will do good by attracting attention to the subject, but it is not an easy question to settle. Take the Allan line, for instance: they have twenty-five or thirty steamers, six of which are engaged carrying the mails. Would the hon. gentleman hold a line over the freight of all the steamers of the company?

HON. MR. POWER—No; I refer only to the mail steamers.

HON. MR. DRUMMOND—Now, that question of freight is beset with anomalies

which arise every day, and which are perfectly well known to every commercial man. Sometimes you find arrangements made by which freight is carried a long distance for less than a shorter distance. Sometimes the rate on freight landed at Montreal is higher than on freight which is carried to points in Ontario. It is a vexatious thing, and I admit that the merchants of Halifax have good reason to feel irritated when such a case occurs, but I doubt whether, as a practical question, the Government of Canada, by any means they possess, except the indirect power of giving or withholding a contract, could exercise any control over the Allan or any other steamship line with reference to freight rates. It would be something like the Inter-state Commerce Act, which makes a difference between the long haul and the short haul, and I do not see how it could be dealt with on the high seas, which do not belong to Canada. I think the hon. gentleman from Halifax should be content with having elicited from the Government the assurance that the subject will meet with every consideration in the making of any future contract.

GAS INSPECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

The Order of the Day being called,—Third reading Bill (137) "An Act to amend 'The Gas Inspection Act,' Chapter 101 of the Revised Statutes," as amended.

HON. MR. ABBOTT said: I have discussed the suggestions of my hon. friend from Rideau division with my colleague, and there are one or two amendments which I think should be made, and there is one also which the discussion yesterday suggested, and which I desire to make—that is to say, with regard to the penalties for allowing the presence of sulphuretted hydrogen, in respect to large numbers of customers, not to increase the rate of the penalty, but to increase it when the number of customers is greater than already contemplated by the Act. For these reasons I move that the Bill be not now read the third time, but that it be re-committed to a Committee of the Whole House for the purpose of making these amendments.

The motion was agreed to.