

ment, I know it was never considered by the Colonial Office, and I do not believe the submission was ever read over by the Colonial Office. This is a strong statement, but, I have good reason for claiming that it is correct. I ask the hon. leader of the opposition and his first lieutenant can go about the country, stating deliberately and distinctly that they had made an arrangement with Her Majesty's government, which only required the consent of Canada to have it carried into effect? I think I am perfectly correct in what I say. I want to say one word more about this contract. I would very much prefer that I had not to draw attention to it, but it is forced upon me by the remarks made by the hon. leader of the opposition. It is reported in *Hansard* that he said that this government had made a waste of money by sending gentlemen across the ocean to negotiate a fast line contract. As I was the only gentleman that was sent on that mission, I feel, perforce, that I must defend myself in this House, and I think I shall not have much trouble in showing that there was very little waste of public money. It is quite true that I went three times across the Atlantic. I will not say that it was not sometimes at considerable personal inconvenience, but, I always went willingly, because I had a very strong desire that this project should be carried to a successful end. I think, as I said before, that, in trying to carry it out, there was little waste of public money. The question of waste and extravagance, of care and economy are mere matters of comparison, and it is necessary to weigh one expenditure with another before extravagance can be estimated. It is not necessary to dwell upon the comparison I will draw. The hon. leader of the opposition left London, carrying with him the high office of High Commissioner for this country in England. He came to this country, and shortly afterwards he accepted the honourable post of leader of the government. But, I find that he charged this country with no less a sum than \$1,762 for the expense of coming to this country. I want merely to state that the expense of the gentleman who went across the Atlantic, and he made six passages, was nothing like as much as the expense of the one passage made by the gentleman who became the leader of the present opposition. Therefore, I think he should be the last man in this House to draw attention to the waste of public money in the endeavour to carry out this fast line project. I will only say one word more about this undertaking. The hon. gentleman says that we have abandoned it. We have not abandoned it, but, to-day, the cost of iron and steel has increased, and the expenditure to be made on these fast line steamers is more than double what it would have been two or three years ago, and what I believe it will be in two or three years to come, or less. We shall have a great fall in the cost of materials.

Not only is the cost of material far too high to-day, to entertain such a project, but every shipbuilding yard is fully occupied building steamers, very largely, for Her Majesty's government, which prevents any reasonable attempt being made to carry out this fast line project. I believe there is nothing in this country that will bring such great credit, or will do us more good and establish us as a great commercial nation, more readily than having the very finest possible steamers we can put on the route from Great Britain up the St. Lawrence to Quebec, and Montreal. There was a statement made by the hon. member for York (Mr. Foster), which deserves more serious attention than the matter I have already spoken of. The hon. gentleman made a very extraordinary statement. He said:

But, if you will think it over, not a single work which they have commenced, not a single expenditure that they have made, has yet come to the point of completion.

This is one of these extremely irresponsible statements which sometimes is used by men to draw off the attention of the people from more serious subjects. In answer to such a statement, I need only call attention to the completion of our great canal system, and I believe, Sir, that if that work, which has been completed by the Liberal government in three years, were left in the hands of the Conservative government and carried on as they proposed, it would not have been completed for ten years, during which we would have been losing the interest on all the money that has been expended on these canals for many years. I need not refer to the many other public works which the Liberal government have carried out, but I will mention some as they present themselves to my mind. One is the completion of the telegraph system to the mainland opposite the island of Belle Isle; I believe that before the end of the summer we shall have a cable laid to Belle Isle itself, so that nevermore shall we have an accident in any part of our Dominion such as that to the steamer *Scotsman* where the passengers of a steamer could remain isolated and their hardships unknown and uncared for during a period of eight days. I have listened with some attention to the debate, and I have listened for five hours to one gentleman piling up figures upon figures, with the sole object of trying to mislead and to throw dust in the eyes of the people. I believe, Sir, with the rank and file of the people of Canada, that the proper appreciation to make of the prosperity we enjoy now, is much as in the case of that poor unfortunate man who was born blind, and whose sight was afterwards restored, and, when his friends began asking him questions as to the reasons, how and why, of the things he saw, his only answer was: All I know is that I was blind and now I see. So, Sir, Canada may see to-day. She was in darkness for eighteen years; she is