

of this bill and the desire of the government upon this question. Under the old tenders, and the law under which the tenders were asked for, provision was made that the fast line of steamers should go to an English port and then to a French port. After the ratification of the Treaty between France and Canada, it was deemed advisable, and absolutely necessary to my mind, that there should be a direct line between Canada and France to enable those exporting goods from Canada to that country to take advantage of the minimum tariff. That can only be accomplished by subsidizing a direct line of steamers. That being the case, it is not necessary to ask those who tender for the fast line to go to a French port. It is also correct that in the negotiations which took place between Canada and England upon this question the Colonial Secretary deemed it advisable to insist upon tenders being asked for from those who were in the trade and not to enter into any arrangement with a particular shipping company or forwarding company without competition. That is one of the conditions upon which imperial aid will be given, and a stipulation to which Canada could have no possible objection, because it is in our interest to have as good a line as possible and at as cheap a rate as possible. I do not know that I shall enter into a discussion on the hint thrown out by the hon. gentleman as to the advisability of reducing our tariff. The policy of the country has been in the past to protect our industries, and wherever we could receive reciprocal advantages from other countries by lowering the Canadian tariff, to do so proportionately to the advantage which any country will give us. I am satisfied that that will be the policy of the party now in power so long as it holds the reins of government. I cannot well understand what advantage Canada would derive from carrying out the suggestion of the hon. gentleman from Ottawa. We all know, who understand anything about the fiscal policy of France, that they have in that country what you might call a two column tariff—a maximum tariff and a minimum tariff. If we get the advantage of the lower tariff in consideration of making a certain concession to France, that is a reciprocal arrangement which might be extended to any other country that would give us similar advantages, but I cannot see how we would be benefited by lowering our tariff for the

benefit of countries that give us nothing in return. It would be adopting the principle of admitting into Canada the products of other countries which exclude our products. My hon. friend opposite smiles—I know he is a devotee of the Cobden principle of free trade, but I can safely predict that the time is far distant in Canada when we shall be prepared to adopt any such policy.

Hon. Mr. McCLELAN—The hon. Premier has referred to remarks which were made by the hon. member from Ottawa with regard to getting a *quid pro quo* for any concession that we may make. I cannot see why we could not, by reducing our tariff on British goods, induce the mother country to take off our hands something which we have to provide for now: that is to say, if we take 50 per cent more British goods, which would be the result of lowering the duty upon them, it would be profitable to Great Britain to provide the means of transit for carrying them. It would be a mutual benefit all round, and very great gain would accrue, because there would be more trade, and situated as we are alongside of the United States, Canada would have the benefit of cheaper goods, and it would be a great gain to the Empire, inasmuch as we would be drawn into closer relations with the mother land. Great Britain, I am quite certain, would be willing to relieve us of the expense which we now have to bear in paying subsidies to steamship lines. The lowering of duties on importations from Great Britain would lead to very beneficial results all round.

Hon. Mr. ANGERS—If we purchase 50 per cent more goods from England, what benefit will Canadian operatives derive from that?

Hon. Mr. McCLELAN—The farmers would derive a benefit.

Hon. Mr. ANGERS—I do not see that they would, and the Canadian operatives would lose the wages which they might have earned in producing that 50 per cent. My object in rising is to draw the attention of the government to this fact; last year, or the year before, parliament offered a subsidy of \$750,000 for a fast line, and one of the conditions imposed on the company to earn that subsidy, was that they should run from