

HON. MR. OGILVIE—The mail steamers do not go to Boston at all; they go to Portland or Halifax, as the case may be, and the Government has no control whatever over the lines of steamers that are not subsidized.

HON. MR. HOWLAN—I can readily understand that neither the contractors nor the Government could control the freight. The contract with the Government is for carrying the mails, and not for freight, and the two would be entirely in opposition to each other. Suppose, for example, you had a contract for freight, it might interfere with the time of a vessel coming out, because the vessel will go where she can get the largest amount of freight. Another thing: a vessel cannot get cargo enough at Halifax, and must go for it to Boston. Take steel rails, for example: They are carried from Glasgow to London *via* New York cheaper than from Glasgow to London direct. Why? Because the vessels coming out must have dead weight to carry goods, and must also have dead weight to carry wheat back. I do not see how a line of steamers could contract to make freights cheaper to one port than to another; they must be governed by circumstances. The Allans or the Andersons, or any other steamship owners, would object very seriously to putting any clause in their charter requiring them to carry freight to any one port at the same rate as to another port. If a ship could get a full cargo at Halifax she could afford to make her freights less to Halifax than to Boston.

HON. MR. POWER—Does the hon. gentleman think it right and proper that a higher rate should be charged for bringing the same goods to Halifax, and dropping them there on the route to Portland, than is charged for carrying them to Portland?

HON. MR. HOWLAN—If I had the reasons which led to the fixing of the rates I would be in position to answer the hon. gentleman; but I presume that the gentleman who sits in the office at Liverpool and fixes the rate on freight knows better than either of us what is in the interest of his company.

HON. MR. POWER—The fact is, that there is more competition between Liver-

pool and Boston than there is between Liverpool and Halifax. The steamship company think they have a monopoly to Halifax, and they put on a higher rate. The hon. gentleman's distinction between freight and mails does not hold, because in the case I mentioned to-day the steamer brought freight both to Halifax and to Boston. She unloaded part of it at Halifax and went on to Boston, and the cargo which was landed at Halifax paid a higher rate of freight—not relatively, but absolutely a higher rate than the freight carried to the terminal point.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—Was this a mail steamer?

HON. MR. POWER—Yes. The particular instance that I mention occurred some time since, but I have been informed by merchants in Halifax that the same practice continued to other American ports. It is manifestly wrong and unfair. If we pay that company \$140,000 a year for carrying the mails, we have a right to stipulate that they shall not discriminate against our ports. I simply ask that they shall not be allowed to charge more for carrying freight to Halifax than they charge for carrying it to a point four hundred miles further away.

HON. MR. HOWLAN—I understand that the bargain made with the line of steamers to carry the mails has nothing to do with freight.

HON. MR. POWER—I mentioned the fact that in a contract with a German company Sir Leonard Tilley had a provision such as I speak of inserted.

HON. MR. HOWLAN—What I say is this: Where the Government contracts with a line of steamers to carry the mails, that is an arrangement by itself, and therefore cannot, necessarily, interfere with the freight. If it did, it might amount to this—the Government might have to offer a higher premium for the carrying of the mails. It is fair to assume that the gentlemen who manage those steamship lines will not intentionally injure themselves, and if they charge a higher rate to Halifax than to Boston there must be some good reason for it. Surely they cannot be supposed to have any wish to injure Halifax; they are looking for the best returns they can get. I doubt very much if we