

service, providing the time occupied in making each trip should not exceed twenty-one days—that is about four days less than is now occupied in making the trip from Australia to San Francisco. They intimated that it was impossible in the beginning of a service of this kind to accept less than £25,000. The Government, believing that this country is desirous of having a direct line between British Columbia and Australia with boats nearly if not quite equal to the Empress Line between Vancouver and Japan, came to the conclusion that if we could secure the services of this responsible and wealthy company for even a monthly line for twelve months, as an experiment, we would be justified in asking Parliament to change the Bill so as to allow us to give them the full subsidy of £25,000 sterling for the year's service. The proposition is simply this—that for one year the boats will be put upon the route, commencing in April next, and if it is found that there is a probability of the line paying, arrangements will be entered into with the company for three years at least. The House will, I think, appreciate the course which the company in self-defence is pursuing, and also the course which the Government proposes to pursue. If it is found that the route will not pay, even with the subsidy as large as that, it will be in the interests of the Dominion that we should cease paying the subsidy. On the other hand, if the company cannot make it pay with a subsidy of £25,000 per annum, it would be wrong to compel them to continue it for any number of years. These are the reasons which induced the Government to ask Parliament to consent to the amendment of the Act in order that we can make the trial of direct communication between Australia and Canada, and with a line of steamers that will make the trip in three or four days less time than that which runs between the Antipodes and San Francisco. With our facilities for carrying freight and passengers by the Canadian Pacific Railway, Canada will stand a fair chance to secure at least a large proportion of the trade between this continent and Australia. I may also add that the Canadian Pacific Railway Company have agreed to enter into arrangements with the steam-ship company to place at their disposal all the agents that they have in Australia and in Canada in order to procure freight both ways, and they pledge themselves to grant the minimum rate of

freight charged to United States lines by the Central, the Southern and the Northern Pacific Railways, so that the probabilities are, in case this line is put upon the route, as there is no doubt it will be if this Bill passes, that we shall have in a very short time a large portion of the Australian trade, and I am also in hopes that it will open up a market for the surplus products of this country which have not now a market.

Hon. Mr. ALLAN—You mean the coming April?

Hon. Mr. BOWELL—Yes, next month.

Hon. Mr. POWER—The original Act was a bad one, but the present Bill is worse. That is my humble opinion about it. This is a very fair specimen of the kind of legislation of which we have had a good deal in Canada of late years. There is no doubt the people of Canada are asked to pay a very large tax, and this is done with the object of securing an advantage which, as a general thing, never materializes. Now, Canada has sent agents to Australia on more occasions than one, for the purpose of making inquiry there as to the reasonable probability of securing trade; and I think that the general feeling amongst business men is that, up to the present time at any rate, we have not been given any reason to suppose that there is likely to be any valuable trade between Australia and Canada. Now the Government come down and ask us to pay \$100,000 a year on the chance that we may develop a little trade there. It is a proposition which should not receive the approval of Parliament, but it is a proposition which will receive that approval, and I do not suppose there is any particular object in talking about it except expressing ones dissent.

Hon. Mr. BOWELL—I hope the hon. gentleman will not object to the suspension of the rules.

Hon. Mr. POWER—No, I am not objecting: it will go through anyway.

Hon. Mr. BOWELL—I think the reason that no trade has ever been developed between Canada and Australia is because we have had no direct steam communication. A very large trade, the House knows, has developed between Japan and Canada, so large