

He adds: 'But it was urged upon me so strongly that a trial might be given to the scheme, and it was received with so much favour by the Department of the Interior, that I did not feel justified in the circumstances in withholding such assistance as I could properly give to carry into effect the declared policy of the government.' Further on he says: 'I had no connection at all with the negotiations in connection with the first interchange of letters, the Department of the Interior having placed itself in direct communication with the company. While personally I could not approve of the proposed arrangements, I felt it incumbent on me, under the circumstances, to carry out the policy of the government, but at the same time I wish most distinctly to disclaim the direct responsibility attributed to me in the matter.'

On May 12 Lord Strathcona wrote Sir Wilfrid Laurier another letter, in which he said: 'My principal reason for not favouring a hard and fast contract with any body of individuals like the North Atlantic Trading Company was the fear that it might launch us in difficulties with some of the governments concerned. There was also the consideration that they would obtain the advantage, without any great expense of effort themselves, of the movement which was bound shortly to take place, as the result of our continuous educational work with the various agencies on the continent. My idea was that the agents who had been working on our behalf should themselves participate in the bonuses; and that we should endeavour also to secure the co-operation of the large continental steamship companies, which it would not have been difficult to arrange, judging from my interviews with the North German Lloyd directors, and Mr. Ballin of the Hamburg-American line—gentlemen of great prominence on the continent—as reported in my letters before referred to. Of course it would have been possible to gradually lessen the bonus payments, as the emigration increased the increase being the natural consequences of the work that was being done, and of the successful settlement of the people who were going out from year to year.'

Lord Strathcona's letter concluded as follows: 'I am sure you will understand, in writing this letter, that I only wish to make my own position clear, and that I have no desire whatever to reflect in any way either upon the Department of the Interior or its officers in connection with the arrangements made between the government and the company.'

Then he goes on to deal with the statement of Mr. Preston, which I would consider it unnecessary to mention in this connection were it not for the concluding observation which I shall read:

On May 19, 1906, Lord Strathcona sent a long cable to the premier in which he said: 'Preston, in his evidence as reported in the press, stated having said I admitted that certain papers stolen from his office are in possession of Griffith. I made no such admission. I was informed certain letters were in Griffith's personal possession, not with office papers, and Griffith absolutely denied they were stolen from Preston's office, which statement rests so far as I know, on Preston's assertion.' The cable goes on to say that Mr. Preston's evi-

dence as to what occurred at Hamburg in 1898 does not correctly represent what took place, and goes on to say: 'Count Hatzfeldt did mention it to Lord Salisbury and Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Chamberlain communicated conversation to me. I explained the nature of my visit to the continent, which had more to do with general questions and with the steamship companies than with German emigration in particular. My explanation was regarded as entirely satisfactory.'

'Preston's reported statement that I was aware of negotiations with North Atlantic Trading Company from beginning to end is only partly accurate. I knew of them, it is true as reported to me, but I took no active part in the negotiations which were conducted under the direct auspices of the Department of the Interior.'

In directing the attention of the hon. Secretary of State to these extracts from letters which purport to have been received by the government, I should like to inquire of him whether these documents were received before the 13th June of this year, when my hon. friend and his colleague the right hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce attributed a very large responsibility to Lord Strathcona in connection with this North Atlantic Trading Company contract. My object is to ascertain whether the government were at that time in possession of these letters, and cablegrams, and, if they were, I think it is due to the House and to the hon. gentlemen themselves to explain why they attributed so large a share of responsibility to Lord Strathcona as they did on the 13th inst. in this House.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—I do not think I am called upon to make any comment on the subject. Any reference I made to Lord Strathcona was simply reading one of his letters. I do not propose to be drawn into any discussion on the subject of the unfortunate and unhappy differences that have prevailed in the London office. The letter that was read from Lord Strathcona was, I think, in 1899 when the negotiations were first being brought to a head, in which the statement occurs that the information should be confidential. I do not think it seemly or right that hon. gentlemen should be drawn into a discussion on the points in dispute that have arisen in connection with this inquiry in another place. Certainly I do not desire to be. I have a very strong regard for Lord Strathcona, and I am quite sure he would not do anything that was not, from his standpoint at all events, consistent