

ment made this treaty, for which some official bungler ought (of course in a metaphorical sense) to be hanged. (Laughter and cheers.) The officials never revealed this system of plundering to Parliament. They quietly deducted the amount from receipts, and returned the balance as the actual revenue, without a word about the appropriation of 60,000*l.* Well, here is 60,000*l.* towards the required 75,000*l.*

AN ALTERNATIVE.

Now, we might either send our mails to the Mediterranean, *via* Salonica, avoiding France and Italy altogether, or we might increase the speed of the vessels which perform the voyage from our shores, past Gibraltar and Suez, to India and Australia. At present, those vessels under contract must cover the distance in thirty-four days, and are bound to a speed of only $11\frac{3}{4}$ knots per hour; as a matter of fact, they often do the distance in four days under contract time, and last week, without difficulty, they delivered the letters in seven days under contract time. Now, it would be a good stroke of business for us to pay half of the 100,000*l.* appropriated by France and Italy to the steamship owners, exacting, in return, a greater rate of speed—say, 16 or 17 knots per hour—which would be agreed to immediately, and we should have our mails carried all the way by sea in less than the