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The Fast Atlantic Service.

As we intimated some time ago there is no doubt that there is a strong desire on the part of the Laurier Government and the Liberal party to throw cold water on the fast Atlantic service.

Mr. Tarte's paper, is strong evidence of this desire. That paper recently made the statement that there was no tender for the establishment of a twenty knot service between Canada and Great Britain.

It is stated that our proposition consisted in simply saying to the Canadian government: "If we succeed in placing our project on the money market within a certain time, we will accept your subsidy." This is incorrect.

Before tendering we satisfied ourselves that there would be no serious difficulty in completing the necessary financial arrangements. We asked, however, for a certain delay in which to negotiate with the Canadian railroad for the handling of through traffic, and to close certain other important contracts which could not properly be done before our tender was approved.

We indicated that if necessary we could dispense with this delay, but it was recognized by the government that such a request was a reasonable one and no exception was taken to it.

It is further stated that if rumor can be relied upon our tender was not in conformity with the specifications prepared by the Canadian government. Rumor cannot be relied upon, and our tender was strictly in conformity with the specifications.

In a letter which accompanied the tender, we pointed out to the government that the clauses providing for the reduction of speed during fog and snow-storms, or when in the vicinity of ice or other dangers to navigation, were not quite definite in their terms.

We stated that we assumed that we should always be at liberty to slow or stop in such circumstances without incurring penalties, as such freedom was absolutely essential for the safety of the ships and those on board.

This interpretation of the clauses referred to, which was accepted by the government as a matter of course, is the only circumstance which could possibly give rise to the rumor in question. When Le Cultivateur states that we did not offer to establish a 20 knot line of steamers between Canada and Europe for the present subsidy, it misrepresents the facts.

It is not to be wondered at that the Laurier Government and the Liberal party to throw cold water on the fast Atlantic service. The Australian boats cannot handle all the freight that is being consigned to them. The trade with China and Japan is flourishing, although there are five independent steamship lines now running between the Pacific ports of North America and those countries.

The superiority of the Canadian steamships is evident from the fact that Li Hung Chang has selected an "Empress" to cross the Pacific on his way home to China in preference to any of the American boats. Another satisfactory thing in connection with these Pacific steamships is the fact that they are now principally handling Canadian freight.

Their first business was obtained principally from American ports. The establishment of the lines, however, put Canada in touch with Japan, China and Australia, and the result has been the building up of a large and increasing trade between the Dominion and these countries.

The fact that they have a steamship line that will offer a superior service, as far at least as time is concerned, to that furnished by any other trans-Atlantic line. It is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that such a line will prove at least as successful as the somewhat similar ventures on the Pacific.

This is the strongest argument that could be brought forward in favor of the project. If the trans-Pacific trade could be diverted from long established lines, by a superior Canadian steamship line, there is no reason why the same thing should not occur on the Atlantic side of the Continent.

The fact that the Pacific line has been a success would be a large factor in accomplishing the success of the new line. It will be a serious blow to Canadian progress and advancement, if the present Government will place insuperable obstacles to the success of this enterprise.

A LOUD flourish of trumpets is made about the closing of the bar in the House of Commons. But we have had this thing before, and a closed bar is that while at the one the member stands up to drink, at the other he sits down to drink.

There was never really a bar in Parliament. But there is a refreshment room in the House, and there the members purchase what they please to eat or drink. If the so-called bar is "open" they may go up to a table or counter, and buy if it is "closed," they take a seat, he sits down to drink.

The shout about the closing of the bar is hypocritical. What is more, it is humiliating. The members of Parliament are gentlemen of distinction and discrimination, and if they are fit to make our laws they ought to know, and indeed they do know, how to conduct themselves wherever they may be.

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