

and buyers could rely upon, they would know where they stand. Now, this is very nearly on all-fours with the dealing by the Government by Order in Council, under the authority of Parliament, with the freight rates on the railways of the country; the same principle is largely involved. Of course, the ocean is not a monopoly, but under the circumstances of this trade the St. Lawrence route seems to be practically a monopoly; therefore, I think there is a great deal to be said in favour of an interference by Parliament in that particular. Then again we are talking here of granting \$750,000 a year for a fast steamship service across the Atlantic. There may be importance in that, but surely a matter like this which involves seven or eight millions of trade a year, in which the farmers of the country are directly interested, is quite as deserving of the attention of Parliament as that fast line service. Now, we assume jurisdiction in this Parliament to legislate against combines; possibly this may be a sort of combine; however, I do not think it could be reached by any existing law on the subject. At any rate, Parliament has dealt with combines in transportation already, and should do it again. For all these reasons I think the Government should not allow this session to pass without taking up the subject which has been introduced to-day.

Mr. IVES. I think one of the causes of the difference in rates from Boston and from Montreal last season, especially the latter part of the season, was due to the cattle men themselves. If I am not misinformed, a very large part of the space on cattle ships for the whole year was contracted for by buyers early in the season with a view to speculating on that space. Some one or more of the cattle men took practically the whole space from Montreal for the whole season, and then sold it out. It seems to me that if the hon. member for North York (Mr. Mulock) had directed his attention to making it illegal to deal in advance with cattle space in that way, he might, perhaps, have arrived at some grievance in regard to which Parliament might interfere with less difficulty than the way he has indicated. I think that the chief difficulty last year was that the more enterprising buyers thought they would corner the rest of the buyers and get the inside track and gobble up the space.

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) A Bill fixing the maximum rate would surely meet that difficulty.

Mr. FEATHERSTON. I wish to take exception to what the hon. Minister has just said. Last year the cattle men took what space they required, and they did not take any more. The year before last, and the previous year, they were in the habit of gobbling up the space, as he has said, but last year the space was regulated according to the market. In

Mr. EDGAR.

the spring the markets opened rather poorly for the steamship men, but as soon as the trade improved a little and a good number of cattle began to come forward, they increased the rates. I am in favour of the proposed Bill of the hon. member for North York. We want some legislation that will open up American ports to Canadian cattle. I do not see that we will endanger our trade with Great Britain in any way if our cattle are allowed to go through American territory to the seaboard, since American cattle are now coming through Canadian territory on their way to American ports. The great danger lies in bringing cattle through Canada from the Western States. They are passing through every day over our railways, coming from the west by the Michigan Central, the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway, and especially the Southern branch of the Grand Trunk Railway, by way of Buffalo; and there is great danger of our cattle contracting disease from the western cattle, and, of course, there is great danger of our cattle being made to appear before the British public as being subject to disease, even more so than would occur from our cattle being sent through American territory and shipped from American ports. We have received some information from England respecting the raising of the embargo on our cattle, and the statement has been made that such embargo is likely to be raised. I have been a very long time interested in our cattle trade, having been one of the first shippers from Canada, sixteen years ago, and I am glad to find that such feeling now exists in the Agricultural Department of the British Government. Whether we will be able to realize this hope, I cannot say, but I trust the embargo will be raised in the very near future. I feel that we should make every effort to secure the shipment of our cattle by American ports. I do so for this reason: we have very many good cattle this year, and we would have more if we could ship them during spring, in the cool weather. Our greatest trouble is due to the fact that our cattle are too fat and heavy to be able to bear the hot weather at the port of Montreal during the shipping months. Last year a large number of our best cattle were lost between Montreal and Father Point, and that is where we sustain our heaviest losses. If we had access to American ports during the latter part of March, April, and the beginning of May, we could ship a large number of our cattle and realize good prices, and the returns to Canadian shippers would be very much greater than they are at present. I hope, when the Bill comes down to the House, it will be taken hold of by the Government, as dealing with a business that is for the benefit of the people, and I shall be glad to give all possible assistance in order to further the interests of the cattle trade of the country, for, when our cattle men are suffering, our farmers must be suffering likewise. Last year our cattle men suffered losses, and