

congress of the United States, in view of the reports made to them that miners were starving in that country and that there would be great loss of life, voted \$200,000 in order to purchase food to be sent to that country, chiefly for United States miners? There is no incident in history that can at all compare with that. That of itself furnishes the best possible proof of the absolute necessity for prompt action being taken.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—Is Major Walsh on the line of this proposed railway?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—No, he is down very much further according to last accounts.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—Will the railway remove the obstacles which are stopping him?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—No; what this railway will do will be to enable the stores that are brought up to Glenora to be moved on to waters that will carry the stores down to Dawson. That is what this 150 miles of railroad will do. It will remove unlimited amounts of stores for that 150 miles, which was the difficult portion to be got over. I understand the four steamers are now being built in the city of Toronto, in connection with this railway project, for the purpose of enabling them to carry stores from the mouth of the Stikine up to Glenora.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—Is not Major Walsh at the waters that these steamers are to navigate upon?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—No, he is much further down.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—He has to pass that route. On the road to Dawson the supplies have to pass the same difficulties he is contending against.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Yes, but there is this peculiarity about it, that the upper waters of the Yukon and the tributaries of the Yukon are open and free from ice about six weeks earlier than the ice leaves the Yukon opposite Dawson. The ice does not get out of the Yukon River towards its mouth until the month of June. The first steamers that will ascend the Yukon will not reach the international boundary before the month of July, and if the people who are threatened with starvation at Dawson and Circle City and other points, were relying on the Yukon vessels to relieve

them, they would be for two months without food, because steamers on the Yukon would not reach Dawson before the month of July, but reaching Dawson from the south, I am advised that towards the end of May the ice breaks up on the upper waters and the boats will go down with the ice. Some hon. gentlemen suppose that in that country it is possible to travel in winter. Any hon. gentlemen who were present at Mr. Ogilvie's lecture last night, will have had that view removed from their mind. According to the pictures that he showed us, which were absolute photographs—they were thrown by limelight on canvas—it was impossible to travel on the ice. He cited as an instance where a party wishing to make great speed, took three days to make nine miles. He said it was impossible to travel along the banks and on the river the ice had been thrown up in sections, and in that way you had simply to cut a trail through the ice before you could secure a passage. So that hon. gentlemen will see that the only way to get relief into that country was the course taken by the government. Hon. gentlemen are quite right in saying that the policy of the government, has been that no contracts, particularly of this magnitude, should be given out without public tender, and it was a great wrench when we had to ignore that principle, but we felt in the public interest there was no alternative for it. There were very few contractors in this country that had the plant and the capacity and the ability to undertake that work and put it through in so a short time. To build 150 miles of road in Ontario, or in some of the other provinces, with money and with materials ready at hand would be a very easy matter; but to build 150 miles of railway up in that country, and to encounter the difficulties that I have, in some measure, described in order to get your materials there is a very serious matter indeed. In addition to that they undertook to make a winter route along the Stikine River within six weeks. That winter route would be open to everybody to come in. Persons can leave now and be sure of access up to Glenora on the winter road.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—Without interference by the United States authorities.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Oh, yes. In speaking of the treaty with Russia, I should have mentioned one of the other features of it