

they can divert even a reasonable amount of the passenger traffic or the light freight traffic through Canada, it will be a very desirable object to attain even at considerable expense. I myself, however, speaking of course with the imperfect knowledge of a layman, fear that it may not prove feasible or attractive to the British investor, for I suppose it is in Great Britain that the project will have to be floated. We have had, as hon. gentlemen know, an offer of a very handsome subsidy on the statute-books for a good many years, to any company that would start such an enterprise, placing on the Atlantic a fast line of steamers, and it has not attracted capital. I presume, from the manner in which it is mentioned in the Address, that it is intended to supplement this amount with some considerable addition. It is doubtful if, even with that addition, it will be taken up, and, if taken up, whether the enterprise can be ultimately made a success. To shorten the time means a higher rate of speed. That would no doubt be a part of the contract—twenty knots an hour was what was discussed. Hon. gentlemen who have crossed the Atlantic must know that when you approach Newfoundland, and particularly when you come up through the straits, there are such things as fogs and icebergs met with at most periods of the year, and it is extremely dangerous under such conditions to run at a high rate of speed. It is very well known that the fast steamers that run between New York and Liverpool, and New York and Southampton, favour a route a long way south of the latitude of New York, and even then they occasionally meet with fogs, although not very often; and it must be remembered that the fast steamers can only be maintained, under our present system of obtaining power, by an enormous expenditure, and that heretofore the greyhounds, as they are called, have not paid except during a comparatively few months of the year. We know that these very fast steamers have been laid up in the winter when the extensive passenger travel is over. They run during the months of July, August and September, and therefore, judging from the experience of other Atlantic lines, we have to calculate whether, even with this short distance to be traversed between Halifax and Liverpool, under conditions so adverse to us, we can succeed in attaining that speed and attract a sufficient amount of travel in order to make it a remunerative enterprise. It has

its attractions, I must say, and no doubt, if it could be proved feasible it would be undertaken by some company. It is to be, no doubt, subsidiary to the steamers on the Pacific that are now running between Vancouver and points in Asia and Australia. We were glad to hear of the cordial reception to the hon. leader of the House in Australia and of his many efforts to develop trade between Canada and that country. Heretofore the trade has not assumed large proportions. It has not grown at all. It may be said that it has not had those facilities which are necessary. It is not attractive in itself. I quite appreciate the fact that in all cases of that kind, where a country is so distant, the attention of those interested in the products of either country has to be called to such a distant market, and it may be, and probably will be, that we shall find that there are articles in the products of both countries that can be mutually exchanged. Heretofore the quantities we have sent to them have been small and they have sent us, I believe, wool and cotton. Certainly, so far as these articles are concerned, there has been nothing to interfere with the growth of the trade, because they pay no duty. We have sent them lumber and fish and recently some agricultural implements, and I am glad to hear that the trade in the latter article is likely to increase. I can only hope that the foreshadowing of this trade may meet with results that probably some of us at present are skeptical of. It will no doubt lead to the laying of a cable across the Pacific. In that I should take a good deal of interest, as I think it will be probably the precursor of a trade that might follow. It would draw public attention, more particularly in the motherland, to the very great advantages that Canada offers for alternative communication with those remote colonies. Whether it will end, as some hon. gentlemen who are great federalists anticipate, in our making a fusion with these colonies is questionable. I very much doubt whether it is practicable or advisable. We can commercially be on the best terms with them. We can commercially have the freest trade, and I have no doubt that at this convention to be held here in June next, this subject will be duly discussed, and as we have now a federalist at the head of affairs in England, Lord Roseberry, who has very great faith in the welding together of the various colonies, it is quite possible that the project may be