

the attention of the ex-Controller of Customs (Mr. Wallace) to the fact that two years ago an order of this House was passed for a report of the investigation into the irregularities in the customs office at Winnipeg. The customs officer there was named Mr. Scott. I pressed for this return to be brought down. I urged it in the session before last, as well as last session, and it has never been laid on the Table of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER. The remarks of the hon. gentleman (Mr. McMullen) are not quite relevant to this question.

Mr. WALLACE. I altogether deny that there was any such order agreed to when I was Controller of Customs.

Mr. MACLEAN. Surely the hon. gentleman (Mr. McMullen) is not going to set up the doctrine that because something has been done in the past which is bad, it will be done in the future.

Mr. SPEAKER. The question is whether this item should be allowed to stand.

Mr. MILLS. I would like to draw the attention of the Postmaster General to the fact that the returns I have asked for, time and time again, have not been brought down.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. I think they have all been brought down.

Mr. MILLS. No. I have just received word from the proper officer saying that they are not there.

Mr. FOSTER. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Mulock) is too busy going over private correspondence to attend to the orders of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER. I think if the Deputy Clerk would read the head line, such, for instance, as mail subsidies and steamship subventions, and then go on, it would be better.

Mr. SPEAKER. The item stands.

Steam communication during the season of 1897, i.e., from the opening to the closing of navigation, between Baddeck, Grand Narrows, and Iona, daily; between Port Mulgrave and St. Peters; between Grand Narrows, East Bay and Irish Cove..... \$7,000

Mr. GILLIES. I wish to bring to the attention of the Minister of Marine (Sir Louis Davies), in the absence of the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright) some facts with reference to this service, which is being performed upon the Bras d'Or Lake, in the Island of Cape Breton, between the railway terminus at Port Mulgrave and ports intermediate between that and Sydney. I wish to impress upon the Government the necessity of having a contract entered into with the Bras d'Or Lake Steamship Company, as to the proper performance of this service immediately.

Mr. McMULLEN.

Formerly a written contract existed between the Department of Trade and Commerce and the Bras d'Or Steam Navigation Company, for the performance of a service daily from Mulgrave to St. Peters; the steamer continuing from there to Irish Cove, thence across to the Grand Narrows, and back again through the canal to Mulgrave. That is really the important part of this service, because these people living there are deprived of all communication with the outside world, and the only means within their reach to have communication with the railway is through this subsidized company. My hon. friend (Mr. Foster), who was in charge of that service in 1891, before the creation of the Department of Trade and Commerce, was about to reduce the subsidy to that company, because the service performed by them was so much less in consequence of the opening of the railway through Cape Breton, but, upon strong representations made to him by myself and other members on this side of the House that the service east of St. Peter's to Bras d'Or Lake would be diminished, and therefore the people would suffer great hardships, he agreed to continue the subsidy of \$7,000 to that company, in consideration of their performing the service in the Bras d'Or Lakes to which I now refer. Well, Sir, what is the fact? Although we are now entering the 1st of July, not a boat has gone down from St. Peter's through the Bras d'Or Lakes and no contract has been drawn up between the Government and the company.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES (Sir Louis Davies). Was there any money voted last year up to the 1st of July?

Mr. GILLIES. Oh, yes; voted every year since 1883.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. Was the contract a yearly contract?

Mr. GILLIES. Yes, entered into at the commencement of every season.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. Have the boats been running this year?

Mr. GILLIES. Yes, but the boat I speak of runs from Mulgrave to St. Peter's only, and the boats from the other end is running in a perfunctory manner up to the Grand Narrows and Whycocomagh, and sometimes to St. Peter's. But the boat running from Mulgrave to St. Peter's which should continue down—perhaps the hon. gentleman is not familiar with the geography there?

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. Oh, yes, I am quite familiar with the locality.

Mr. GILLIES. That boat should go down to Irish Cove and across to the Grand Nar-