

whether the Cunard steamboat service in connection with Halifax, Nova Scotia, is to terminate this year, and if not, what arrangements exist for its continuance, and up to what period.

And in rising to make these inquiries, he would take occasion to say that it was now nearly 30 years since the service in question had commenced, and it was not therefore surprising that the people of the Maritime Provinces should feel a deep interest in knowing whether it was to continue. They were largely interested in shipping, and their sails might be said to whiten every sea. The service of these steamers had been so punctually performed, that the arrivals of the vessels might almost be calculated to the hour, and by these means, and the improved land communications, the owners could receive intelligence of the whereabouts of the ships, and what they were doing. But a report had got abroad, he did not know how, that the contract had expired, and the service was soon to cease. Such an impression had certainly got abroad, and he hoped that Ministers would be able to answer, and set the fears at rest.

Hon. Mr. Campbell replied that the service in question was not under the control of the Government of the Dominion, but they had been informed by the Imperial Post Office that so far as Liverpool and New York were concerned, it would cease at the end of this year. It would, however be continued with Halifax until the 30th June next, by which time the Government of the Dominion hoped and intended to have arrangements perfected for its perpetuation (hear, hear).

TRADE WITH THE BRITISH WEST INDIES

Hon. Mr. McCully, with reference to his next enquiry, said that not long ago a delegation had been sent to the British and other West Indies, to inquire into the feasibility of expanding the trade of the now United Provinces with those Islands, and the Commissioners had made an elaborate report, but he had not heard that any action had been taken upon it. He hoped, however, that a line of steamers with those islands would be established at an early day. He knew that since then the Government had many important subjects to occupy their attention. This subject excited a deep interest in the Maritime Provinces, and if steamers were put upon the route he had no doubt a very large and

profitable business would be done. He would be gratified to hear that it was the intention of the Government to take the matter in hand and to prosecute it with vigor. The honourable member then asked, whether any and what measures are proposed to be taken on the part of the Government to open a line of steam navigation between this Dominion and the British West India possessions?

Hon. Mr. Campbell said that no measures had yet been taken to establish such a line of steam communication, and for the reason that the Government could not do so without any appropriation of money by Parliament, which could not be made until this session. It was now proposed to ask Parliament for an appropriation for carrying the mails to those Islands, and the Government would then have power by way of subsidy to encourage the establishment of the line. After the return of the Commissioners two weekly mails had been established, and they were still subsisting. With the new powers which the Postal Bill would confer, he hoped a better communication with the British West Indies would be arranged and maintained.

RECIPROCITY

Hon. Mr. McCully then inquired whether the Executive Government of Canada have committed to them the power to initiate negotiations or to entertain negotiations submitted for the renewal of a Reciprocity Treaty with the United States of America? In proposing this question the honourable member said, he had understood that some time before the termination of the Reciprocity Treaty power had been conferred upon the Government of Canada to treat with the American Government, either directly or through the Ambassador at Washington, for its renewal. That Treaty while in existence had been mutually beneficial to the several countries interested, and its renewal was generally desired. If the Government had not the power in question it seemed desirable that they should take measures to acquire it. He did not know but that he was treading upon forbidden ground, for he was aware that the treaty making power was a prerogative of the Crown, yet he hoped it was not impossible for the Crown to confer upon the Government of the Dominion the facilities necessary to obtain a renewal of the Treaty. The Lower Provinces had carried on a large and always increasing business with the United States, under it exporting thither coal