

heartily as any other Member of the House at that time, but, unfortunately, being rather new to parliamentary life, in the course of the remarks which I made, I stated that I did not think the inconvenience with reference to the mails would be so great as was supposed, but that the inconvenience in other ways would be very great indeed. I believe that the disadvantage arising from the loss of the mail service would be considerable, and the loss in other ways, very serious. I understand that the Imperial Government have withdrawn their half of the subsidy; and if the Canadian Government do not feel in a position to double the amount they formerly paid, no company can be got to perform the entire service for less. I hope that the Government will make some arrangement by which the fortnightly service can be continued during the summer months, when the weekly mails are landed at Rimouski.

Hon. Mr. KAULBACH—I understood the hon. gentleman to say last Session that the inconvenience would not be felt in the loss of the mail service, but was confined principally to passengers and freight. Now, the only ground on which the Government could continue the subsidy is the accommodation which the mail service affords.

Hon. Mr. POWER—I shall read what I said upon this point last year. In the course of the first remarks which I addressed to the House I said: "The practical result, so far as the mails were concerned, would not, I think, be very serious." Afterwards, in explaining my view, I said that "I had not stated it would not be an inconvenience to have the mails withdrawn, but that it would not be a very serious one." I made a mistake last year in belittling the importance of the mail service, but it was not a very serious one, and one which I should have thought might have been overlooked.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—The circumstances that existed at the time this joint subsidy from the Imperial and Canadian Governments to this fortnightly steamer was given, were entirely different from those which exist to-day. At that time it was a matter of importance that the mails for the Maritime Provinces should be sent in that way. It was then the most expedi-

Hon. Mr. Power.

tionous mode of delivering them at Halifax and other points in the Lower Provinces. Since then Halifax has been furnished with a weekly mail for nearly six months in the year. Of course it could not be contended that during that time there was any possible inconvenience. During the other portions of the year, when the steamers of the Allan Line come up the St. Lawrence, I am advised—and I think it was generally admitted last year—that the great bulk of the mails for the Maritime Provinces would go as quickly by the regular weekly service as by the fortnightly steamer, inasmuch as the mails could be landed at Rimouski and rapidly conveyed to all points East by rail. As was admitted in the debate last year, the Government would not be justified in keeping up the subsidy for any other reason than for the delivery of the mails. No doubt it would be an advantage to the Halifax merchants, if the fortnightly steamers, carrying freight, were subsidized by the Government, but that is not a principle which the Government can adopt. It was quite understood years ago, that the subsidy was to continue only to the opening of the Intercolonial Railway. The British Government frequently called attention to the fact, and as soon as that railway was completed they withdrew their aid. During the current year, if I am rightly informed, the steamer has only received \$7,500; that was paid by Canada, the British Government having, in June last—the end of the fiscal year—withdrawn their portion of it. In answer to the question put by the hon. Senator from Amherst, I may say I do not think it is probable that the subsidy will be continued during the next year.

Hon. Mr. DICKEY—Perhaps the Hon. the Secretary of State will allow me to correct him on a matter of fact, in which he seems to be strangely misled. His answer is given under the impression that the arrival and departure of the mails at Rimouski will accommodate the people of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island just as well as if delivered at Halifax, and he says he derived that impression from the debate last year. There may, possibly, have been some color for it by the solitary statement of the hon. Member from Halifax, but he has taken the opportunity to-day to correct that