

ance of Legislators and Judges free of charge over railways."

The bill was read the first time.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—I call the attention of my hon. friend to a question that may possibly arise when that bill comes up for reading the second time. He will notice it is a bill involving the expenditure of public money, and does not come within the purview of this House.

HON. MR. MCINNES—I have enquired into the subject and have taken advice, and I think I am prepared to show that similar bills have been allowed and bills of a similar character that have come up from the House of Commons here have been amended in the Senate, and the amendments have been allowed by the House of Commons.

NATURAL PRODUCTS OF THE NORTH WEST TERRITORIES.

MOTION.

HON. MR. SCHULTZ presented the first report of the Committee appointed for the purpose of collecting information regarding the existing natural food products in the North-West Territories, and the best means of conserving and increasing them. It recommended that leave be given the Committee to appoint a shorthand writer to take down the evidence.

He moved that the report be adopted.

The motion was agreed to.

STEAM COMMUNICATION BETWEEN BRITISH COLUMBIA AND JAPAN.

ENQUIRY.

HON. MR. DEVER enquired :

Whether the Government can give reliable information to this House as to the time steamers will be placed on the route between British Columbia, Japan and China, for the purpose of carrying freight and passengers from these two latter places, into Canada, and *vice versa*.

He said: The question of which I gave notice is one that speaks for itself. In fact I may say it speaks with the commercial voice of Canada to-day. Seeing that our great Pacific Railway is constructed from ocean to ocean the next project that naturally arises in the commercial mind is that a line of steamers be placed between British Columbia and Japan and China. I am fully aware that our Government and the Pacific Railway Company are doing their very best to accomplish this desired end, but I regret exceedingly that they are not met in the same spirit by the British Government. As my object is not to discuss this question, but simply to elicit from the Government a reply to my enquiry I shall simply put it as meeting the wishes of the Canadian people to-day.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—I regret that the Government is not in a position to state that arrangements have been made for such communication as my hon. friend asks about, but it has no official intimation of any line of steamers being placed on this route. I may say that it is a matter of public notoriety, and generally understood, that a certain number of steamers have been placed on the route by the Pacific Railway Company, and it is also a matter of common knowledge, and the Government is aware, amongst others, that negotiations have been going on for some time with the view of putting on a more efficient and important line of steamers between those two points.

THE NEW PUBLIC BUILDINGS AT OTTAWA.

INQUIRY.

HON. MR. TRUDEL enquired :

To whom has the Government awarded the contract for the construction and erection of the iron work intended to support the roofing of the new public buildings in course of construction on Wellington Street, in the City of Ottawa, and at what price?

2. Whether this contract should not have been executed in the course of last autumn, and if it has not been executed, what is the reason thereof?

3. Whether this contract was awarded after tenders had been duly asked for, and