

treme desirability—an opinion I still entertain—of having some one attached to the British Embassy, who would directly represent Canada—having a diplomatic agent in Washington in connection with the British Embassy.

Mr. MONTAGUE. Has that been decided on by the Government?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. No.

Mr. FOSTER. I am not opposed to a grant for commercial agencies, providing that the money is spent really in fields which show some prospect of being remunerative in the way of increased trade. But if this vote is merely to give jaunts to these who have rendered party service to distant fields, that will not be the intention with which it was initiated. There is one remark made by my hon. friend which I would ask him to think over and that is as to the use of this money for travelling expenses to and from Washington. It was not the intention, when this vote was inaugurated, to ask it for that purpose, but for commercial agencies, pure and simple. These trips are in the way of treaty making, and I think the expense should come under a separate item and not be taken out of this vote.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. The Auditor General is extremely careful in his construction of any votes of the kind and very apt to bring us up short.

Mr. FOSTER. The trouble has been that heretofore—I do not know how it is now—the Government were successful in having a very tolerant Minister of Justice.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. We may have to use some portion possibly, in the absence of a distinct appropriation.

Mr. FOSTER. On the face of it, this is not meant to be used for Minister's travelling expenses.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. In anything connected with the promotion of a trade treaty, it seems to me it would be appropriate.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. If a Minister goes to Washington on a trade matter, it is pretty hard to charge that to his travelling expenses.

Mr. FOSTER. It is not charged to his travelling expenses in connection with his department, but is charged against him for the specific purpose for which it was used. It is shown as the expenses of the Minister, but for such and such a purpose. It is very easily arranged. I know my hon. friend (Sir Louis Davies) is somewhat sensitive on this subject, since his European trip.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. I think I am quite right in being sensitive. If I am travelling in the

Dominion on the business of the department, I charge my expenses to travelling expenses of the Minister. But suppose, as was the case the other day, I am sent outside of Canada to represent my colleagues in a matter not having to do with my department more than any other. I do not see that I should charge my travelling expenses in the same way. It would not be fair to the Department of Marine and Fisheries.

Mr. FOSTER. Does not the hon. gentleman know that it has been done before? It would appear as the Minister's travelling expenses on his trip to Washington.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. I would draw a distinction as between a matter relating to a matter of trade, a settlement of a boundary or something of that kind, which could not be charged fairly to commercial agencies.

Mr. MONTAGUE. The hon. Minister (Sir Louis Davies) has given us a statement we are all delighted to hear, that we are to have a commission, probably sitting in Quebec, to deal with these international questions. The hon. gentleman will have to have a vote for that, I suppose?

Mr. FOSTER. I see that the vote here has been increased, and reads: "commercial agencies, including expenses in connection with negotiations with treaties or in extension or commercial relation." I see that what I said was not strictly germane.

Mr. MONTAGUE. Is this increased vote intended to cover the expenses of that commission?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Some portion of it might be applied to that purpose. Of course the expenses incurred in a matter of that kind would depend entirely on the length of time the commission happened to sit. But hon. gentlemen, I think, will agree with me in one thing and that is that any commissioners who come here as guests of the nation should be properly and handsomely entertained.

Mr. MONTAGUE. I am sure we would all agree to that. It was in no spirit of criticism that I asked the question.

Mr. GILLIES. I happened to be absent from the Chamber, but before we pass from the Department of Trade and Commerce, I would ask the hon. Minister a question. I may not be here when the Supplementary Estimates are being discussed, and I desire some information on the subject. I would like to tell the Minister—perhaps he may not be aware of it as he is necessarily not so familiar with the matter as I am, that this service was performed for some years by the Bras d'Or Steam Navigation Company. That company have gone out of business, and the route of this service has been taken up by some other people. I