

the \$50,000 which we are giving to the French line direct. There would be no object at all in having a vessel run from an English port, where she would have to break bulk, to a French port because that would deprive us of the advantage of the minimum tariff. It would subject us to the surtax. If we have vessels going from Canada direct to France we then get the benefit of the minimum tariff.

Hon. Mr. WOOD—In my remarks I asked if the government could make any definite statement as to whether there would be a condition in this arrangement that these steamers should make their final port of call on this side in Canada, or whether they would be allowed to go to United States ports.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—One of the conditions of the contract will be that vessels shall ply between England and Canada and nowhere else, and I might state, so far as the ports are concerned, it says from some port in England—they can select what port they please—to Halifax in winter, with permission to go to St. John or any other Canadian port, and the same conditions will be made in reference to Quebec, and Montreal in summer. If the steamers make the trip in the proper time to Quebec, and have a sufficient number of vessels to enable them to proceed to Montreal to receive cargo, they will have the right to go there.

Hon. Mr. DEVER—You mean to say, it would be optional with the contracting company?

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Yes.

The motion was agreed to and the bill was read the second and third times and passed under a suspension of the rules.

THE FLOODS IN QUEBEC.

THE SPEAKER—Although I am not in order, I desire to draw the attention of the government to the fact that in many places in the province of Quebec we are now suffering from a great calamity. The inundation, in a considerable part of the province, has been very great this year. The fact is, that for some years we have had

these inundations annually, and they are becoming more and more serious. The flood this year is the greatest of all. In many places the water has reached a considerable height, not less than two or three feet higher than it ever touched before. I need not say, hon. gentlemen, that this causes a great deal of distress. Sometimes the flood is attended with loss of life; always with a great loss of time and valuable property of all kinds. Houses, barns, stables and cattle are swept away. Every spring the loss is enormous, and I really believe that one million dollars would not cover the losses sustained through the inundations this year. There was, I know, an investigation made some years ago. I do not know precisely if the government considered that investigation incomplete or unsatisfactory, but one thing is sure, we have never heard anything more of it. I, therefore, would suggest that it is very important that there should be a new investigation, and a very minute study of the whole case should be made and without delay. To the Province of Quebec, it is one of the most important measures that you can deal with at the present moment. There are different ways to prevent a repetition of this calamity. If proper care were taken it could be prevented to a large extent, and there is most urgent reason why it should not be postponed. I therefore would beg the government to take this matter into their most favourable consideration and devise means to relieve that very important part of the country from this annual calamity and the great losses occasioned by the flooding of a very large and most fertile part of the country.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—There can be no question of the importance of the subject brought under the notice of the Senate by His Honour the Speaker. How far the government should go in the direction indicated by him is a question that would require a good deal of consideration. If, however, any scheme could be devised by which these floods that occur occasionally, not only in the province of Quebec, but in the province of Ontario and other portions of the Dominion, could be prevented, it certainly should be done at anything like a moderate cost. I can only assure the hon. gentleman that the suggestion which he thinks should be carried out will be brought