

Hon Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—I have a pretty good memory of the rest of it. The whole story has not been told.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—The hon. gentleman, among other things, finds that no reference is made to the fast line of steamers, and I think he quoted some remarks made by the Premier in another place, in which he said that the late government had taken an equally long time to make up their minds. The first legislation on the fast line was in 1889. Nothing came of it. The Act remained on the statute-book offering to give at that time half a million dollars towards establishing a fast line. In 1894 a new bill was introduced increasing the amount to three-quarters of a million dollars, but coupling with it the duty of calling at some port in France. Nothing came of that. The year 1895 passed over, and in the session of 1896 another bill was brought down which relieved the company from calling at a port in France, a clause having been added that the government of the day was empowered to also subsidize a line to France, and dispose of the necessity for the fast Atlantic vessels calling at France, as between Liverpool and Quebec or Halifax. There is a good deal of difference of opinion in this country as to the benefits of a fast line. If, as my hon. friend contends, it would have been wise to close with Mr. Allan,—and it is a long story to go into, because there were a good many qualifications,—the service had not been approved, if my memory serves me, by Mr. Chamberlain, who was then, as now, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and his approval was necessary, as it was absolutely essential that the Imperial government should contribute their share to the fast line—apart from that there were many reasons why it could not be acquiesced in, and so the subject was dropped for the time being. There is a broader question apart from that, that many people do not believe in a fast line as contemplated. A fast line is a term that changes rapidly. The fast line as contemplated in the bill to which I have referred was 20 knots an hour. We know very well now that such a service would not do. Take the 'Kaiser William,' for instance; I think her speed is 24 knots an hour, and there is no doubt we are just in that transition state when faster vessels are being built from time to time

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when a power different from coal probably may be used, oil or some other substitute which will not occupy the space which coal does, because we know very well that what are called the greyhounds of the Atlantic, while they carry many passengers cannot carry freight. Now, the wealth of this country is the products of the country, and we must have vessels that will have sufficient space to carry those products abroad. Had we entered into the contract for the fast line, to which my hon. friend refers, in 1896, the vessels were to be ready in 1898, and we would have now spent three million of dollars as a subsidy to a fast line for that part of the ten years' service. Do the hon. gentlemen think it would have been of that particular value to this country? It was to be a weekly service. Six days of the week, our letters go by New York steamers. No merchant would ever think of holding his correspondence for six days in order to send it by a Canadian steamer while we have equal facilities to send by New York. I suppose nine-tenths of our mail-matter has for 10 years past been carried via New York—because it is a quicker route. It is a daily route, and for us that is a convenience and advantage that no weekly steamer could possibly furnish. Then, again, the great wealth of this country is in its products. I venture to say that the \$38,000 a year given to the Manchester line of steamers years ago has been of greater benefit to this country than the expenditure of three-quarters of a million towards establishing a fast line. The Manchester line of steamers have carried our grain, our meats, our cheese, butter, fruit and all our products to a market where there are seven millions of people waiting to receive them, and that is really one of the secrets of the great export of this country—how the export of Canada has enormously increased. I have here the figures which I shall perhaps quote just now, and which are worth knowing, and it is all due to the increased facilities for transportation. The greater facilities given to farmers and to others who are sending their goods abroad have given a stimulus to our exports and really add more materially to the wealth of this country than a fast line could have done.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Do I understand from the hon. gentleman's re-