

ment of the Session. We have been discussing important measures all through the Session. We have not had a large number of Bills thrown upon us near the close of the Session; and therefore, however just my hon. friend's complaint might have been in former Sessions, I do not think it is justified this year. I am sorry to appear to make an opponent of my hon. friend solely, but there is another point in his speech to which I might just make a short remark. My hon. friend is one of those, I think, who advocate increased facilities of trade with the United States, and who deprecate the diminution of our foreign trade. Now, what is the position he has taken to-day on this Bill? That there is no use in assisting in promoting foreign trade with Australia or with France. He does concede, in a grudging kind of way, that something might be done in the East Indies, but as to Australasia and France, what is the use? That France is a country under a protective *regime*, that we cannot buy or sell anything there, and that there is no use in subsidizing a steamship line that is to call at any port in France. It seems a little inconsistent that he should object to our taking the steps which naturally occur to us all for the purpose of increasing our foreign trade, and at the same time object to the policy of the Government as having produced and producing a diminution in our foreign trade. Which does the hon. gentleman desire? That our foreign trade should increase or decrease? If he does not open the door for foreign countries to deal with us—if he does not allow us to do what we think would encourage and foster foreign trade, he should at least abstain from reproaching us because our foreign trade does not increase as fast as he thinks it ought to do; and if he is opposed to the increasing of our foreign trade, and thinks that a merit for which he finds fault with us, then he would be consistent in opposing those subsidies which I think now he is inconsistent in doing. The fact is, with regard to France, though we have not nominally a large trade, we have a much larger trade in reality than appears in our returns, because a large portion of the French goods imported into this country come to us from England. England receives them free; the transportation of them from England is cheaper than direct

transportation from France, under the system which has hitherto prevailed, and therefore a very large amount of the French goods which are displayed in

every shop in the Dominion is imported from England, and they appear among the imports from England, and not as imports from France. The fact, therefore, that France is a country under the *regime* of protection does not prevent our trading with it, as my hon. friend thinks in principle it ought to do, although it strikes me as singular that my hon. friend does not think that the United States, being a protected country, should not prevent us using every possible means of increasing our trade with that country.

HON. MR. McINNES (B.C.)—It is not 3,000 miles away.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—The fact is, we can trade to an enormous extent with the United States, although that is a country as highly protected as France but my hon. friend thinks that because France is a protected country therefore we cannot deal with France—that we cannot deal with any other protected country but the United States. That also appears to me a little inconsistent, and the argument does not strike me as being at all forcible. Just another word in the same direction. We have had from my hon. friend behind me (Mr. O'Donohoe) a strong expression as to the uselessness of this House, and of any debate in the Senate on measures affecting the public interests. I think the debates in this House on matters of public interest—that is to say, apart from mere questions of politics, in which I don't think this House has any ambition to excel—the debates upon business matters and on legislation, I venture to think, are creditable to the Senate in as great a degree as debates on similar subjects in any other House in which I have ever had the honor of being present. I have heard debates in several legislative bodies, and, to my view, the debates on serious questions are as forcible, as clear and as exhaustive in this House as in any other that I have ever been present in; and I would say this much more, if I had the opinion of this House, and of the value of its debates, and of the influence of its members that my hon. friend has, I