

calling for tenders, we are going to ask them to make provision for the carrying of butter, or frozen meat of any kind, then the Colony of Tasmania and the Colony of Victoria should pay more. Of course, I can understand my honourable friend Mr Wynne so warmly supporting the clause, because Victoria is able to use about double the space New South Wales has been able to use, but I do not say that is going to last very long. The position I have taken up with regard to the question is that it is more far-reaching than what I at first thought. At Brisbane the subject was brought hurriedly forward by the President, the Hon. Mr Ward, and, strange to say, of course he has no interest in the matter whatever, neither has he any interest in it now. He is the representative of Tasmania at this Conference, and no doubt will support this resolution. One can easily afford to be broad-minded when they have not to pay for it. No doubt the clause will be carried, and I can only enter my protest. Further than this, I consider that it will be necessary to revise the subsidy altogether. The Imperial authorities are not likely to agree to pay 50 per cent more on the £95,000 they are paying now for the purpose of enriching the producers in two or three colonies at the expense of the other colonies and the Imperial authorities. The subject has a far wider range than what I at first thought of at Brisbane. I thought it was a very wise thing to get the companies to make as ample accommodation as possible for the carriage of the frozen produce of these colonies. The exportation of frozen produce has become such a large thing now that I think we should not hamper our mail-contracts with any conditions, stated or implied. I might point this out, that Tasmania and two of the other colonies are likely to use the accommodation beyond their fair share, and, in connection with the subsidy, their portion of the subsidy will have to be allowed to count to cover the expenses necessary. It is not likely that Queensland is going to give anything to benefit Tasmania. Queensland is undoubtedly the most hard-headed of any of the colonies. You can never get any advantage from them. They will agree to this, but they will take very great care not to be a party to paying anything beyond what is absolutely necessary to carry the mails. England will not and could not agree. As I pointed out before, the business is becoming so great, that I can see in the future we will require a good many "Gothics" to take the produce away from New South Wales alone. One company in the valley of the Hunter is now treating 600,000 sheep per annum, and we have to get rid of something like ten millions. We have to get rid of our surplus produce, and that will require a great many liners like the "Gothic" to carry the produce away from Sydney alone, therefore it would be too paltry a thing to put this clause into a mail-contract which would only carry a very small portion of the produce we shall have to send away. The shipping companies will find it to their own interest to carry as large a quantity of produce as they can find space for. I must enter a strong protest against this portion of the clause being adopted by this Conference.

Hon. Dr COCKBURN (South Australia) I think the last speaker has over-estimated any increase which is likely to be required from the subsidy on account of this clause being inserted. If I thought that the colonies which would avail themselves of any benefits would be required to pay more than otherwise would be required from them, I would not support the clause. Can any one say that the vessels tendering for a mail-service would not be up to date? If not, they would not be fit to carry our mails, and, being up to date, they would have a large amount of cool-storage.

Hon. Mr KIDD (New South Wales) If you are satisfied why make a condition?

Hon. Dr COCKBURN (South Australia) Because we can make better terms acting here in Conference. We know what we are doing, and it places us in a more advantageous position making an agreement. I am sure there is no feeling amongst the representatives voting for this clause that it would considerably increase the subsidy. If there were I do not think they would support it. I think, as a matter of business, the contracting companies will know their friends and accept the position. It is far easier for the delegates assembled here, in dealing with the question, to ascertain exactly the terms upon which they can get their produce carried, and afterwards they can make their arrangements accordingly, and by inserting this clause we can probably arrange a little earlier than we could in the ordinary course of business. It is purely a business affair, and I am sure any steamers carrying our mails will provide ample storage-space for their own interests, because if they did not they would know what the necessary result would be. Then, it will enable us to have definite information before us. I am sure the Conference will agree that the honourable gentleman who has brought the matter forward would be the last, with myself, to hamper the colonies with any unnecessary expense.

And then the question being put, That subsection (h), proposed to be struck out, stand part of paragraph 2, the Conference divided, and the votes were taken down as follow:—

Ayes, 5.

Victoria
Queensland
Western Australia
South Australia
Tasmania.

Noes, 1

New South Wales.

So it was resolved in the affirmative, New Zealand abstaining from voting.

Subsection (i) read and agreed to.

Paragraphs 3 and 4 read and agreed to.

Paragraph 5 read.

Amendment proposed. To omit "Thursday," in line 1, and insert in lieu thereof "Friday if possible or, if not, Thursday" (Dr Cockburn, South Australia.)

Hon. Mr PARKER (Western Australia) I regret to have to ask that this recommendation be not approved. It will be observed that, if the steamers leave Adelaide on Thursday, they will reach Albany on Sunday morning. Although the time is stated to be seventy-two hours, as a rule they run about sixty-eight or seventy-two hours, therefore these steamers will probably reach Albany on