

fitted up in such a way that we might expect a trade between Canada and South Africa to develop.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. The storage accommodation provided was, I think, intended, not so much for fruit, although that is, of course, an item that may be included, as for such articles as cheese, meat products and perhaps butter. If the hon. gentleman will look at the contract which has been laid on the Table, he will find the details there set out pretty fully.

Mr. CLARKE. Do we send butter to South Africa ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. We tried to do so, and were fairly successful. We send considerable cheese. Of course, these vessels have to cross the equator, where there is risk of injury to the products. I depend more upon cheese, meat products and canned products than upon such an article as butter. There is a pretty large demand in Johannesburg and all the adjacent regions of the Rand. The American trade with them amounts to a very considerable sum. That we hope to cut into.

Mr. BLAIN. I understand that these vessels carry American products as well as Canadian. Can the hon. gentleman tell us which are carried at the cheaper rate ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. The freight rate from New York is somewhat lower, I think, than ours, but not very much. That is scarcely to be avoided under the circumstances.

Mr. CLARKE. Do these vessels call at New York ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. No, they go straight to Cape Town, and then along the coast.

Mr. CLARKE. Do they come to our ports from New York ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. They are at liberty to go where they please on the return voyage. They may come from New York, but they do not take any freight from New York. They carry Canadian freight from the various ports between Montreal and Halifax.

Mr. KAULBACH. How many trips are made under this contract each year ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. There is one trip per month. We have the right to vary the ports from time to time, as we see fit.

Mr. KAULBACH. On the return voyage, the vessels could go to Buenos Ayres and get wool or tallow and to Rio for coffee.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Yes, they may go where they please. There is at present scarcely any return freight from South Africa.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). I observe that there is provision in the contract by which the government can establish a maximum of freight rates. Can the hon. gentleman tell whether or not any such schedule of rates has been established ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Not as yet. We have been waiting to see how this trade developed before we attempted that.

Mr. BLAIN. Does the hon. minister know whether the United States government pay any subsidy to vessels ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. I think they pay nothing.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). I understood the hon. minister to say that there had been some complaint with regard to the allotment to American shippers of too much cold storage accommodation. As a matter of fact, is there any considerable quantity of produce shipped to the United States by means of these lines ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. The hon. gentleman knows that the Canadian Pacific usually picks up a certain amount of American freight and takes it through to St. John. It has been from that quarter chiefly that any American produce has come.

Mr. ROBINSON (West Elgin). Where does the Canadian agent make his headquarters ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. He has been travelling all over South Africa, from Cape Town to Pretoria and Johannesburg, with an excursion into Rhodesia. It is a pretty large country, and his instructions were in the first instance to make himself acquainted with the whole of the South African territory under British rule. He reports regularly to my department, and his reports are communicated to the various boards of trade and commerce.

Mr. ROBINSON (West Elgin). What wages does he get ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Two thousand dollars a year and his travelling expenses.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). The minister speaks of the American traffic over this line as being largely by way of St. John ; that is to say, the shipments from Montreal and Quebec ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. I refer to what is carried in cold storage. I do not think there has been any large amount of the other kinds.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). Could the minister give us any idea of what proportion of the carryings consist of United States produce and manufactures, and what proportion of Canadian produce and manufactures ?