

be capable of steaming twenty knots, but what are the limits of the voyage, and what is the length of time that you prescribe from port to port. How many days and hours are to be spent from the point of departure till you reach Quebec?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I do not wish the Committee to understand that we are limiting ourselves to 20 knots. That was the proposition in the contract, and when it was made, it was with the understanding that the vessel should be capable of steaming 20 knots. We understand that a vessel fit to do 20 knots on the measured mile in calm water, could not maintain that average speed across the Atlantic. The steamers running to New York making that average time, are running far under their capability, and, if we succeed in obtaining from a 20-knot vessel an average speed across the Atlantic of 18 knots, or something less, that is what we expect to obtain. All we desire is to have a steam line across the Atlantic so fast that the mails and passengers will not avoid the line and go to New York, but that we will have a first-class line, which, both as regards passengers and mails, will be sought by the people going across the Atlantic, and a line which will fairly compete with the steamers going to New York, in such a way that it may be considered we are fighting the battle of transportation across the Atlantic on equal terms.

Mr. BLAKE. With the advantages the New York lines now have, and the enormous competition, and the magnificent vessels that have come out within the last two years, if the hon. gentleman proposes to enter into competition for the passenger travel with the New York steamers, the proposition is something wilder than any scheme I have ever heard him propose.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. If I have judged the hon. gentleman too harshly as to the character of this proposal and some other proposals, I may remind him that he has made over and over again promises to the House of a very extravagant character, to the non-fulfilment of which we have adverted more than once. It does not lie within the mouth of the hon. gentleman who made the statement as to the population he would throw into the North-West, as to the results of his land policy in the North-West and a good many other matters I could cite, to become very indignant because we hesitate to believe that his sanguine temperament has not again misled him in the matter of the ocean service. All who have crossed the Atlantic a good many times know very well there are very considerable practical difficulties and a most enormous increase of expense in attempting such a fast line as the hon. gentleman has described. I know I am within the mark in saying that in order to get a vessel capable of steaming twenty knots as against seventeen knots if not eighteen knots, you have practically to pay twice as much. I may remark to the hon. gentleman that the New York craft, with which he expects to compete, do maintain over a great part of the voyage an average speed of over twenty knots, as an examination of their records will show. So if he proposes to compete with them, he must not merely obtain vessels capable of doing twenty knots, but vessels capable of maintaining that speed during an ordinary

Atlantic passage, at all events during the summer season.

Mr. FOSTER. I should like to ask the hon. member for West Durham (Mr. Blake) if his remarks have reference to a seventeen-knot line? He did not state whether his attention at that time was directed to a vessel or a line of vessels of seventeen-knots capacity, or whether he proposed an average voyage of seventeen knots from port to port?

Mr. BLAKE. I think a seventeen-knot voyage is the highest you can talk of on your line.

Mr. McNEILL. I think there is perhaps some little misapprehension on the part of the Committee as to the freight which is carried by these ocean greyhounds. When the subject was up for discussion before, there were a good many conflicting statements made as to this matter. I took occasion to ask the junior member for Halifax (Mr. Kenny) early this Session to ascertain for me what was the freight capacity of these vessels. The hon. gentleman wrote to the agents of some of the companies, and he supplied me with the information. I find that in place of those ocean greyhounds not being able to carry more freight than 600 or 700 tons as suggested, the *Majestic* and *Tetric* are capable of carrying something like 2,000 tons of freight.

Mr. BLAKE. Certainly; they are vessels of 8,000 or 9,000 tons.

Mr. McNEILL. The impression in the House last Session was that the ocean greyhounds were capable of carrying not more than 300 or 600 tons of freight. It was so stated broadly.

Mr. BLAKE. It depends on the length of your ship.

QUEBEC HARBOR IMPROVEMENTS.

Mr. BLAKE. The Minister of Public Works some time ago had his attention called by way of a question to the earlier portion of the interesting relations which are from time to time enlivening the pages of *Le Canadien*. On that occasion the hon. Minister acquiesced in the suggestion that it was proper to bring before the House such information as existed in the archives of the Department in respect to the matters which are touched upon and alluded to in these earlier publications. They become more interesting as they proceed, and this last batch of three letters, themselves obviously left incomplete, themselves obviously, from their context, only parts of other correspondence, do afford ample warrant for that view of their meaning attached to them, by the hon. member for North Victoria (Mr. Barron). They do not indeed implicate the Minister, and the Minister has told us, as we might expect and hope a Canadian Minister would always be able to tell a Canadian Parliament, that he knew nothing whatever about it. But they have been public property for several days, and I know not whether any kind friend may not have anticipated the efforts of my hon. friend the member for North Victoria (Mr. Barron), to put the Minister in possession of the fact that such letters had been published, at an earlier date. Although the Minister knew nothing about the matter, I should have been glad to know from him distinctly if the reading of those letters by my hon. friend the member for

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