

issue was this—that where they would charge a rate to a merchant all the year round from New York, Boston, Philadelphia or any port, and give them a floating policy, and permission to ship by any steamer or line of steamers, that policy was good for all the cargo that was shipped at any time, almost to any value, whereas in Canada there are very few companies that have got the rate even for the whole season. For instance, they may have a rate that will run from May to the end of July or August, or they may have an average rate over the season; but if they take the average rate over the season I think I am within the mark if I say that the premium is 50 per cent more, on the average, than it is out of New York under the most favourable conditions.

By Hon. Mr. Bennett:

Q. What is the percentage of increase over what we call the normal rate when the vessel plies up the St. Lawrence?—A. When we pay the base rate out of the syndicate, of 6 per cent, we pay 2 per cent more if we exclusively deal in St. Lawrence. I am now paying 9 per cent insurance on a steamer trading between Sydney and Montreal because she makes two or three voyages a month when she is running in that trade. That vessel alone pays on her valuation \$20,000 or \$30,000 for the season's navigation, extra insurance.

By the Chairman:

Q. Extra?—A. Extra.

By Hon. Mr. Bostock:

Q. What do you mean by extra insurance?—A. The extra premium that is charged over the base. Take a steamer that wants to travel all over the world. We will insure that vessel for 6 per cent; but if that vessel enters the St. Lawrence or any Canadian port, she is entitled to pay an extra rate. If she makes one voyage to the St. Lawrence and does not come again they will probably charge her one-half of one per cent for that special trip. If she makes a voyage after the 1st of October it will be one per cent for one single trip. If she is trading during the whole season up to the close of navigation, it is two per cent on her value. That is quite a large amount, for of course the value of a steamer is very considerable.

By Hon. Mr. Webster:

Q. Is there any reason why there is no united effort to get our basic insurance on a more equitable footing?—A. It is a question of effort. No one has ever tackled the subject with a view to securing it. We have all kinds of plans from shippers and merchants, and I have had them from shipowners, and have thought this question out myself, but there has never been any decided effort to abate the disadvantages.

Q. In the interests of the Canadian trade could not the Government be asked to co-operate, take some part?—A. Yes. Mr. Brodeur at that time went with us to Lloyds, and he naturally had not studied the subject and could not discuss it very well. They told him, "When your accidents are reduced, then we will reduce the insurance." We said, "But, gentlemen, we have done exactly what you have asked us to do in the way of buoying and lighting; is there anything else you can suggest that we should do?"—and they had to admit there was nothing to suggest whereby we could improve the navigation. The only thing they suggested we might do was to dispel the fog and the ice, and thus make the navigation safe.

Q. From your experience the record of the Canadian traffic is fairly free to-day from those difficulties that may have existed some years ago?—A. Oh, yes, absolutely.

Q. Therefore the matter ought to be taken up?—A. 25 years ago, when I made three total losses in one year in Canada, there was some justification for it, but at that time our lighting system was inefficient, and our buoying system was very inefficient, whereas now it is as good as it can be made.