

by the steamers which are carrying the mail between Quebec and Liverpool?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. I can speak better as to the trip between Moville and Rimouski. I presented this to the House the other day. The average duration is a little over seven and a half days in summer, and a trifle over eight days in winter, from Moville to Rimouski, and from Rimouski to Moville in the summer season, and from Halifax to Moville and Moville to Halifax during the winter.

Hon. Mr. TARTE. What was the duration of the fastest trips that have been made during this season?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. The fastest trip that was made, I think, was six days and sixteen hours, I think about ten hours less than seven days, from Moville to Rimouski.

Hon. Mr. TARTE. How many fast trips, if I may call them so, have been made under seven days?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Answering my hon. friend from recollection, I think there were eight under seven days. But I may observe that the contract calls for an average. If they make a little better trip one time, that can count against the longer duration another time. The service latterly has been considerably better than it was a couple of years ago, that much I can say. I think there has been an improvement on the average of about twenty to twenty-four hours as compared with a year or two ago.

Hon. Mr. TARTE. If I remember right, the mail service is being entrusted to-day to several companies.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. We have tried several.

Hon. Mr. TARTE. May I ask if my hon. friend has the names of the boats under his hand?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. The 'Pretorian,' the 'Bavarian,' the 'Tunisian,' I think are the boats stipulated in the first instance. In the event of a disaster occurring to these they are allowed to substitute the 'Numidian,' the 'Corinthian' and the 'Sicilian' and 'Ionian,' of course, under consent.

Hon. Mr. TARTE. May I ask whether steamers of some other lines have also been employed during this season?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Not during this season. Replying to another question of the hon. gentleman, I can give him the average time. From Moville to Halifax, it is seven days and twenty hours; from Halifax to Moville, six days and twenty hours.

Mr. CLARKE. What is the distance between those points?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. From Moville to Halifax it is between 2,300 and 2,400 knots; between Moville and Rimouski it is perhaps 2,500. It depends upon whether they take the south route or go via Belle Isle. But I think the shortest distance would be about 2,500 miles.

Mr. KEMP. I do not see the advantage of paying subsidies for carrying our mails from Rimouski to Moville. Letters from the district of Montreal and from the west will go to New York just as quick as they go to Rimouski; and they would go from the maritime provinces to some ports in the United States as quick as they would go to Rimouski. As long as these slow vessels are on, what is the use of paying subsidies?

Hon. Mr. TARTE. Is that the fact? Let us take things as they are. When the hon. gentleman speaks of slow boats, perhaps he will remember that the steamers which are being used now are a great deal better than those used in the past. The 'Tunisian' and the 'Bavarian' rank among the best steamers on the Atlantic ocean.

Mr. CLARKE. That is as far as seaworthiness is concerned.

Hon. Mr. TARTE. I quite grant that they are not as speedy as a great many of the steamers that are plying between the old country and American ports, but let us not forget that the St. Lawrence route is the shortest route between the east and the west by nearly 500 miles. Even if we have not steamers just as speedy as the fast liners that our American friends and the German empire possess we are still able to compete with them. I would like very much to have faster steamers, but I cannot forget that the St. Lawrence is navigated to-day by improved steamers.

Mr. CLARKE. If the St. Lawrence route is the shortest route, as it is, why do you not put fast steamers on that route to accelerate the carriage of mails and passengers? The great bulk of the people who go to England, as the hon. gentleman knows, go by way of New York, for the reason that they have better steamers there.

Hon. Mr. TARTE. I quite grant that during the winter months especially our Canadian route is not very much used, but if my hon. friend will look at the passenger lists of the steamers leaving the port of Montreal during the summer months he will find that there is not one available berth, not because our steamers are the fastest, but because our route has such magnificent scenery, which is a feature of the journey. I quite appreciate the efforts made by members of parliament who have given some attention to this question in