

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

ROOM No. 301,

FRIDAY, March 3, 1915.

The Committee resumed at 3.15 p.m., the Chairman, Mr. Jameson, presiding.

Mr. THOMAS BINNS called, sworn and examined.

By the Chairman:

Q. Where are you engaged at present, Mr. Binns?—A. I am employed by Matthews-Blackwell, Limited, in charge of their fish department.

Q. How long have you been connected with that firm?—A. A little over four years.

Q. Did you have any experience in the fish business before that?—A. Yes.

Q. Where and for how long?—A. I was in Montreal in the fish business for 19 years.

Q. Were you in the wholesale business there?—A. Wholesale and retail.

Q. And you understand the distribution of sea food, I suppose?—A. Yes.

Q. How do you get your fresh fish in Ottawa, by express or freight?—A. We bring our fresh fish by express frequently, but mostly by freight at this time of year.

Q. Where do you get it from?—A. This last week we had fresh haddock chiefly from Lockeport.

Q. Do you order your fish direct?—A. Yes.

Q. Do you sometimes buy from the wholesalers at Montreal?—A. Yes, sometimes, and they are shipped direct from the coast.

Q. There are times, however, when your shipments come from Montreal?—A. Yes.

Q. And in such cases there is a local rate superimposed on the through rate to Montreal?—A. Yes.

Q. That would involve, I suppose, greater expense to the consumer, would it not?—A. Yes.

Q. What is the local rate by express from Montreal to Ottawa per hundred pounds?—A. 75 cents.

Q. That is three-quarters of a cent per pound?—A. Yes.

Q. That is exclusive of the weight of the ice in which it is packed?—A. Their rate is 60 cents and 25 per cent added.

Q. What is the freight rate between Montreal and Ottawa on fish?—A. It varies sometimes from 24 to 38 cents per hundred pounds on the gross weight.

Q. You mean the gross weight of the fish, the ice and the box?—A. The package and everything.

Q. What is the shrinkage in the weight of fish between the shipper's weight say at Lockeport, or any point in Nova Scotia, and the weight which you get here?—A. On fresh fish?

Q. Yes.—A. Well, it is round 15 per cent.

Q. Is there a further shrinkage in the weight after you have it exposed for sale and before it is sold?—A. Yes.

Q. About what is the average shrinkage in that respect?—A. Of course, we do not want to keep it any longer than necessary and, on the average, I should think it would be five per cent more.

Q. And is there a loss also in cutting the fish?—A. Yes.