

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: And agricultural implements.

Hon. Mr. BENNETT: Now, if I may resume, in your opinion as a shipping man do you consider that the rate will be paid to-day to tramp ships to carry a complete cargo, of, say, 200,000 bushels of wheat.

Mr. HARLING: There are ten of them fixed already from Montreal for the month of May, and there is a demand for more.

Hon. Mr. BENNETT: About what is the capacity of those vessels, in bushels?

Mr. HARLING: They generally run 4,000, 5,000, 6,000-tons, up to 8,000-tons, some of them. They run anywhere from 150,000 to 250,000 bushels. It is not profitable to have a vessel too small, neither is it always possible to secure a large quantity for one steamer. If you say round 150,000 to 250,000 you take in the minimum and the maximum of the general type of vessel.

Hon. Mr. BENNETT: Where would that ship be going?

Mr. HARLING: Direct to the United Kingdom or the continent. At present the demand is for Great Britain, for our English ports, but there is a demand at present for Rotterdam, Hamburg, Antwerp, Spain—a small quantity, Italy and Greece. We never did export to those latter ports before the war.

Hon. Mr. BENNETT: Now, coming to the big, vital question on which everybody differs, and what the Committee wants to know about, will the ocean line vessel, which has its passenger rates, its mail subventions, and its high-class freight such as cheese, bacon, and stuff that must go rapidly—can that class of vessel carry grain in competition with the so-called tramp steamer?

Mr. HARLING: Yes sir.

Hon. Mr. BENNETT: Approximately what quantity of grain, in bushels, will ships of that kind carry?

Mr. HARLING: You take the modern type of vessel that is being operated by the C.P.R. to-day, or by the Allan Line, or the Cunard Line out of Montreal—those are large cargo boats, what we call two-class passenger boats—the *Metagama* of the C.P.R. and the *Ansonia* of the Cunard Line—those vessels are bound to have a certain quantity of grain, because they cannot get a full general cargo. They will probably take anywhere from 100,000 to 150,000 bushels, seldom less than 100,000.

Hon. Mr. BENNETT: Can the complete grain-carrier—by that I mean a vessel carrying nothing but grain—compete in point of rates with that liner, that assorted ship, as we might term it?

Mr. HARLING: Yes, and no. I will have to qualify my answer. The regular line steamer is bound to sail and take a cargo, whether it pays her or not, because she is engaged in that service, and they have to take the rough and the smooth together. Sometimes she may go short of cargo; other times they may have more than they can carry; but that vessel is advertised by the line as a regular line steamer, and she has engaged passengers, and it does not matter whether she gets her grain or not, she has to fill the duty of sailing. Consequently the regular line steamer is in an entirely different position from the tramp steamer, which is not obliged to come for its cargo to Canada, even though the rate may be attractive, if she can get a better freight some where else. In that sense the attraction of the tramp steamer as against the regular line steamer is that the latter is a fixture; she has to take the current rate whatever it is.

Hon. Mr. BENNETT: And go on the date she is advertised.

Mr. HARLING: She is advertised, and she has got her passengers and her cargo, and she takes the business offered for the whole season or the part of the year in that particular line, whereas the tramp steamer comes to-day and goes to-morrow.