

6-7 GEORGE V, A. 1916

Q. What are the rates from Halifax to Montreal?—A. The rate from Halifax to Montreal on fresh fish in carload lots is 26 cents per 100; less than carload, 35 cents per 100 pounds.

Q. Are these rates on the net weight of the fish? Or are they based on the gross weight of the package, including the ice?—A. The gross weight of the package including the weight of the ice that is in the package.

Q. We have had the evidence here of some express men, and the express rates they told us, are based, not on the gross weight, but the net weight of the fish. Has it ever been considered by the management of your railway whether it would not be a fair thing to base the freight rates on the net weight instead of on the gross weight of the package?—A. I think we have taken that feature into consideration when we have made the freight rates as low as they are. It is not the practice in the handling of any freight to make the freight rate apply to the net weight of the contents of the package: the freight is assessed on the tare as well as the net.

Q. What other class of merchandise reduces its weight during transportation by reason of the melting of ice?—A. I do not know. There would be very few commodities.

Q. As a matter of fact, there are none, that you handle?—A. None that I know of.

Q. And therefore fish is in a special class by itself?—A. Yes.

Q. Can you tell the difference between the net weight of the fish and the gross weight of the package in which it is shipped?—A. Including the ice?

Q. Yes.—A. It has been estimated to be anywhere from 25 to 40 per cent; that is the net weight is that much less than the gross weight, but that would vary, I imagine, according to the season of the year and the quantity of ice the shipper places in the package.

Q. That ice is largely gone by the time the fish reaches its destination?—A. I could not say as to that.

Q. The evidence of the men who have been heard is that such is the case. That being so do you not think it would be very reasonable on the part of the railway companies to take into consideration the loss in weight in framing the rates?—A. As I have already said, the railway has done that in making its freight rates as low as they are.

Q. In what way? To what degree are the rates on fish lower than the freight rates on any other commodity of anything like a similar character?—A. On the Intercolonial railway we have endeavoured to give as much encouragement to the development of the fish traffic as we possibly could. The through carload rate from Mulgrave to Montreal is 28 cents per 100 pounds. The less than carload rate which I have given as 38 cents would under the ordinary classification be 60 cents. These rates, which have been in effect for a great many years, were put in, as I understand, to assist in bringing fish from the Maritime Provinces into the Montreal and western markets.

*By Mr. Kyte:*

Q. Have the freight rates on the I.C.R. not been increased?—A. No, not on fish.

Q. The increases did not apply to fish?—A. No.

*By Mr. Sinclair:*

Q. They did not apply to the local traffic?—A. Do you mean the local traffic to Montreal?

Q. No, the local traffic along the route.—A. You mean in the Maritime Provinces?

Q. Yes, the Maritime Provinces.—A. There may have been some small increases made there.

Q. We were told by the Minister of Railways that the rates had been increased. A. There may have been some small increases.

Q. Are you not familiar with that?—A. I am not familiar with that. I am speaking now with reference to the rate to Montreal.

Q. The through rate?—A. The through traffic.

MR. C. A. HAYES.