

I believe, a proportionate sum from us and a proportionate sum from the British government, according to the amount of mail matter they carry. Of course, the hon. gentleman (Mr. Kemp) is aware that there is a vessel out of New York nearly every day, so, of necessity, the greater portion of our mail goes that way. We could not possibly confine the mail to a weekly service.

Mr. KEMP. Then, the larger portion goes by New York?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Decidedly the larger portion.

Mr. KEMP. And I understand the government pay these vessels no subsidy.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. No regular subsidy, but the post office has to pay them a certain sum. I rather think it is paid through the British government. The New York steamers do not carry the mails for nothing, but they do not charge a heavy rate.

Mr. KEMP. Where do we find the figures showing these payments?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. The payments are made by the post office. It is entirely outside of my department.

Mr. KEMP. It is not a very large sum?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. I believe not. Of course, the Postmaster General can give my hon. friend full information as to the amount paid.

Mr. KEMP. We seem to be paying a very large sum for carrying the Canadian mails to Great Britain and bringing mails from Great Britain by these twelve and fourteen-knot vessels, while, as a matter of fact, for very little expense the greater portion of our mails is carried by way of New York. What is the object, in view of the fact that we get so much quicker service by New York, of paying these large sums to old-fashioned and out-of-date vessels?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. As a matter of course, the hon. gentleman knows that faster vessels will be very much more expensive. We could have the faster vessels if we paid for them, but, up to the present time the sums demanded, as I have stated, have been very heavy, perhaps more than the House would care to pay. With respect to the use of this service, I may point out that the utility to Canada is very considerable in the winter season. These vessels go from St. John and from Halifax, and if the subsidy was discontinued there would be no service from Halifax to England. That service has been going on for a good many years, and I think the House would be loath to deprive the maritime provinces of the service of these vessels. This is an old service which, as the hon. gentleman knows, was established before confederation. In those days

it went from Portland and from Montreal; now it goes from Montreal and Quebec, and from St. John and Halifax. Without this, we could hardly maintain a service from the maritime province ports.

Mr. KEMP. I understand that this service is maintained chiefly for the maritime provinces. This service may have been going on since confederation, but I quite recognize that we have not kept it up to date, and it is a question whether the service is worth that much now. These vessels have fallen so far behind that they are slow as compared with the regular mail vessels that ply between this continent and Europe. In view of that fact it seems to me, unless these people can give a quicker and better service, the existing contract should be reconsidered.

Mr. SMITH (Wentworth). A copy was brought down last session of the agreement with the Donaldson firm, by which they carry the mail for \$750, the round trip between St. John and Glasgow. I was wondering whether the thousand pounds that is paid here is not partly a subsidy to these vessels in order to secure their running.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. It is paid as a subsidy to Montreal, but not in the case of the other ports, to St. John and Halifax. The £1,000 is only paid during the winter, and is only paid to two vessels. The other subsidy of \$750 is paid for a fortnightly service, and they only go during the winter season.

Mr. SMITH (Wentworth). It is paid for each trip, though.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. It is paid for each round trip. But these vessels are very much smaller than the Allan steamships.

Mr. SMITH (Wentworth). Still, I presume they carry all the mail that is offered. I would like to ask if, in this contract where a subsidy is given, it is stipulated that the vessels should be ventilated? These vessels all carry perishable cargoes, and it is necessary for the safety of the cargoes that the compartments in which they are carried should be ventilated.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. In a good many of them that is done. I think there are some thirty or forty steamers now sailing which do that, but they do that mostly under agreement with the Department of Agriculture, and not under the contracts they have with this department. There is one exception, the Furness Line, in which that stipulation is enforced; but with the majority of them it is done through the Department of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. TARTE. May I ask the hon. the Minister of Trade and Commerce what is the average duration of the trips made

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT.