

Mr. HARLING: Yes.

Hon. Mr. TURRIFF: The rate from Winnipeg to New York is 30 cents; the rate to Quebec is 36 cents, which seems to be an extortionate railway rate; so that if the railway rate from Winnipeg to Quebec was cut about three and a half cents or four cents, so that instead of being 36 cents it would be 32 cents, you could ship wheat from Winnipeg to Liverpool via Montreal or Quebec as cheaply as at present by New York?

Mr. HARLING: Yes, provided your inland rates are equal.

Hon. Mr. WEBSTER: It would absorb that difference of insurance.

Hon. Mr. TURRIFF: Yes, it would absorb the difference between Winnipeg and New York and Winnipeg and Quebec, plus a cent a bushel of insurance.

Hon. Mr. WEBSTER: And furthermore, we would have this advantage: there would be less handling, there would be more direct shipments; whereas going the other way, it would have to be re-shipped two or three times and go to New York, which is a very extensive port. From the railway point of view it should be cheaper. In fact, when you say 32 cents, it might be possible that 30 cents would be quite sufficient to carry it, in comparison with the New York route.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: But steamers have a better chance for cargo going west to New York than they have going to Montreal and Quebec?

Mr. HARLING: There is a larger amount of westbound cargo naturally available from American ports than from Canadian ports.

The CHAIRMAN: Do I understand you that if cargo could be brought to Quebec and Montreal you have the steamers to take it from there?

Mr. HARLING: Provided we are prepared to pay them the rate of freight which is competitive with American ports. An owner will not come to a Canadian port unless he can get that extra rate of freight to cover the extra cost, and also the extra risk, so you have to pay a slightly higher rate.

Hon. Mr. BENNETT: You say that in 1896, 50 per cent of the cargo was in other commodities than wheat or grain of any kind; now, if to-day there is no live cattle shipping, and no lumber shipping, what commodities would go to complete the cargo, assuming that the vessel could be filled to the extent of 50 per cent with wheat?

Mr. HARLING: They would take an increased quantity of grain.

Hon. Mr. BENNETT: Then would it be possible, in your opinion, for a vessel to be filled completely with wheat at Montreal and get a paying freight?

Mr. HARLING: Yes, certainly. The regular liners never carry full cargoes of grain unless there is no general cargo available. There are hundreds of steamers available for full cargoes of grain and nothing else.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: Tramps?

Mr. HARLING: Tramp steamers.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: Liners won't?

Mr. HARLING: No.

The CHAIRMAN: And they have to come empty to get that grain?

Mr. HARLING: Yes. They are coming now, as a matter of fact; there is a demand for them to-day.

Hon. Mr. WILLOUGHBY: Do you want the mixed cargo because the rate is more profitable than on cargoes of grain?

Mr. HARLING: Yes, the general cargo pays a slightly higher rate. Of course if you take the rough freight—lumber and grain—you might get a higher rate of freight for lumber than grain, but the expense in handling, and the space occupied by lumber, is so great that the grain would probably pay you just as well. But if you go into the high class of freights, such as butter, cheese and provisions, you get a much higher rate.