

Mr. BLAIN. Is the quantity of mail matter going by the Canadian route increasing or decreasing ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. I think it is about stationary, that is to say, relatively.

Mr. TAYLOR. I think the minister was to bring down a statement showing the amounts we paid to the American boats and to the Canadian boats.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. What we pay to the Canadian boats does not come in my department. What is paid to the American boats, I understand, is so much per pound. It is fixed by the Postal Convention.

Mr. TAYLOR. Some one ought to know how much we pay per year for carrying the mails via New York.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. If my hon. friend wants that information, I will ask the Postmaster General to make a note of it and bring it down. For what year does the hon. gentleman want the information ?

Mr. TAYLOR. For this year or any year.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. The weight of letters despatched via New York was 92,530 pounds. The weight of other matter was 663,000 pounds. About one-seventh part goes by the Canadian route and about seven times as much goes by way of New York.

Mr. BLAIN. Has the mail matter going by way of New York increased or decreased in volume ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Speaking from recollection, I think they maintain about the same ratio from time to time.

Mr. TAYLOR. The right hon. gentleman has not got the cost ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. No, that is wholly a matter concerning the Post Office Department.

Mr. BLAIN. I think the right hon. minister should give the committee a statement of the different negotiations that were entered into by this government in respect to the fast Atlantic steamship service.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. I have already stated what was done.

Mr. BLAIN. The right hon. gentleman has stated what was done with the last contract. I am asking the right hon. gentleman to give the committee a statement of the different negotiations, correspondence, &c., that were engaged in by this government since they came into office in 1896 up to the present time—just briefly ; I do not ask for a detailed statement. I would

like the right hon. minister to give us a statement as to the amount of money that has been expended for negotiating the different services that have not matured since they came into office.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. I may answer the last question first by saying that I do not think any amount of money has been expended in negotiating for the fast service. The only amount of money that has been brought into question in regard to the matter has been the \$50,000 which was deposited by Messrs. Petersen, Tate & Company and afterwards returned, or to be returned by vote of this House. As to the progress of these negotiations it has been briefly this : A couple of propositions were made in 1896 to the late government, but neither of them came within the form of a regular tender. After that Mr. Petersen, as the committee is aware, proposed to give the service required for \$750,000, \$500,000 to be paid by us and \$250,000 by the imperial government. The negotiations were spread over a period of three years, and as hon. gentlemen are aware the Boer war took place and the cost of the construction of shipping went up to such a figure as to render it practically impossible to make any bargain at all. Since that there have been no negotiations except those with which the House is acquainted and which are contained in the papers that were laid on the Table the other day, and having reference to the two tenders submitted by the Messrs. Allan and by another company.

Steam service between Halifax, St. John's, Newfoundland and Liverpool, from July 1, 1903 to June 30, 1904, \$20,000.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. This is the usual vote which we have been giving for several years for this service. The vessels sail once every 17 days. The present contract is with Furness, Withy & Company.

Steam service between St. John and Glasgow during winter of 1903-4, \$7,500.

Mr. CLARKE. What is that for ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. This is for ten round trips during the winter between St. John and Glasgow. This is performed by the Messrs. Donaldson, of Glasgow, represented by the Robert Reford Company, of Montreal. We pay them only \$750 a trip and they give a fortnightly service. Representations have been made from the merchants and the people using this service to the effect that this is a growing trade and they are very anxious to obtain a weekly service in place of a fortnightly service during the winter. Probably we will have to submit a further sum in the supplementary estimates for doubling the service, but I am at present only asking the regular vote which has been