

West with other goods? A British Columbia broker about a year ago last March went to Kingston, Jamaica, and in nine months he developed a trade between eastern Canada and Jamaica amounting to \$180,000 for last year. He is trying to do business with the West. I had a letter from him only yesterday. We can export from the western coast oats, hay, lumber, shingles, fish, potatoes, and other such products and we can import the products of the West Indies. This line of ships is designed to do this trade between the ports of eastern Canada and of British Columbia via Jamaica and the Panama canal.

There you have a perfect trade route: part of your cargo from eastern Canada will be for the West Indies and part of it for British Columbia, and vice versa. I cannot see why hon. gentlemen opposite object to the construction of these two ships for the purpose of initiating that trade route. The member for Pictou (Mr. Macdonald) said this afternoon that we wanted all the tonnage we could get on the Atlantic in order that the products of the Maritime Provinces might be taken to Europe. I would point out that scores of ships have been taken from the Pacific coast to carry on that trade between the Atlantic seaboard and Europe. I do not dispute the importance of that trade, but there should be no objection to the building of a couple of small and comparatively cheap wooden ships to keep up the trade between the two coasts of Canada.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: The hon. gentleman tries to make it appear that I opposed any effort in the direction of developing the interprovincial trade to which he refers. I thought I made it clear that I was not against that, but I did say I would take other means to that end. I object to the purchase and operation by the Government of these wooden ships.

Mr. STEVENS: My hon. friend may be perfectly sincere in what he says, but he ridiculed the idea of trade between eastern Canada and the West.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: Just at present.

Mr. STEVENS: The hon. gentleman is wrong; a very extensive trade is being carried on now, in spite of prevailing handicaps, between eastern and western Canada. Even to-day we purchase from the manufacturing concerns of Seattle, Portland, San Francisco and other western cities very large quantities of manufactured goods which we could buy in Ontario, Quebec and

the Maritime Provinces. We feel that we would rather purchase those goods within Canadian territory, and we can do that if we get the transportation facilities.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: Would Ontario goods go over that route?

Mr. STEVENS: Certainly.

Mr. NESBITT: Would it be cheaper to ship via Halifax and the Panama canal from western Ontario than to send the goods overland?

Mr. STEVENS: Yes. The freight rate from Toronto in the winter time via Halifax around by the Panama canal to Vancouver is very much cheaper than the rate from Toronto overland. We secured reams of detail in this matter; the Board of Trade looked into it; a delegation came here and demonstrated beyond question the fact that transport by this proposed route would be infinitely cheaper than by rail. Even now we buy goods from the eastern States, take them to New York, ship them by an American line to Seattle, tranship to Vancouver, pay the duty, and beat out Canadian overland freight rate.

Mr. PUGSLEY: I have here a copy of the contract which the minister was good enough to lay on the Table, and I want to give a few particulars as to the specifications. The length of keel is set out as 225 feet; breadth of vessel, 44 feet; depth of hold, 19 feet. On the basis of \$230,000, the cost of the machinery, and plans, etc., was to be \$115,000; the rest would go for the hull. One half, therefore, would be for the hull and the other half for machinery and plans. It is proposed to pay \$300,000 for each of these ships.

Mr. COCHRANE: Oh, no, it is not.

Mr. PUGSLEY: That is what the minister is asking.

Mr. COCHRANE: That does not mean that he is going to pay it.

Mr. PUGSLEY: That would be at the rate of \$120 a ton. As the member for Halifax (Mr. A. K. Maclean) pointed out, that is nearly the cost of a steel vessel. At all events, the owners of shipyards in the eastern provinces ought to have an opportunity of tendering for these ships. The Minister of Customs says that the reason why tenders were not invited from eastern Canada was because it would cost more to build the ships there; that they had not the timber in eastern Canada.