

SAY NOT ENOUGH BUSINESS FOR ALL

Shipping Men's Views in Regard to Government Steamers Entering Newfoundland Trade.

(Halifax Chronicle) Strange to say, the recent announcement that the port of Halifax is to have another steamship service to St. John's, Newfoundland, commencing the 18th of this month, has been received with regret by some local shipping men. It strikes the uninitiated as rather odd that there should be any objection to an addition to the steamship services out of this port.

But when these shipping men state their reasons for opposing the establishment of the Canadian Government Merchant Marine's Halifax-St. John's service, some may think that they have "made out a case."

"It's all very well to say that 'competition is the life of trade'" said one shipping man to 'The Morning Chronicle' yesterday "but when there's virtually no trade to compete for, it seems like a silly stunt to add to the 'competition.' There are now four steamship services from Halifax to St. John's. These are the Furness-Withby fortnightly service to Liverpool, taking part cargo to and from St. John's enroute; the Red Cross fortnightly service from New York to Halifax and St. John's; the Nova Scotia Steamships ten day service from Boston to Halifax and St. John's; and the Farquhar Company ten day winter service from Halifax to St. John's. This makes a total of ten trips a month to and from St. John's. And now the C. G. M. M. proposes to add another four trips a month."

"Well, isn't it a case of the more the merrier" the newspaperman inquired.

"Not at all" was the reply. "There is

not enough freight offering to Newfoundland now to keep going the services already established and if more bottoms come into the trade, there'll be still less proportionately. As for freight for the return trip, there's practically none to be had."

The newspaperman suggested that this additional competition would force freight rates down, but the shipping man replied that they were at about rock bottom now and that lower rates would force the steamers to suspend service. He contended that the C. G. M. M. boats were intended for the development of Canada's foreign trade, not for semi-coastal service in competition with established and well conducted private lines.

The shipping man added that these C. G. M. M. steamers were of the ocean freighter type and not suited for the Newfoundland service.

It was suggested to him that the C. G. M. M. was forced to break into this trade in order to get business and it was pointed out that there were already ten or more of these Government owned steamers here, some of which were without cargoes and apparently without good

prospects of getting any freights in the near future.

"That's just it," said the shipping man. "Freights are so scarce that it does not seem fair for these Government owned and supported steamers to attempt to take what little there is from private firms. Anyhow, I predict they won't last long in the Newfoundland service."

When seen in reference to this new service Mr. Hector, Port Agent for the Canadian Government Merchant Marine, said that the new service would be inaugurated and they hope to fill their ships. The schedule was not definitely arranged but there would be two or three sailings a month. He said that the C. G. M. M. could not help what competitors said regarding this new service.

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