

Mr. CLANCY. What was the value of the small fruits and the value of the poultry sent forward in cold storage?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. I have not got the figures of the exact quantities or values of either the fruit or the poultry.

Mr. CLANCY. I should think that the bulk of Canadian products that go in cold storage consist of butter. The shipments of other products are not large enough to be considered of great importance. I would like to ask the hon. gentleman how many new vessels were fitted up last year? I understood that there were in the service last year five vessels to Liverpool, six to London, six to Glasgow, one to the West Indies, three to Manchester, and three of the Furness line to London. Perhaps the hon. gentleman can tell whether all these were in service, and how many came under the new contract of fifteen shillings a ton?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. There were ten new vessels that came under contract last year—three of the Allan line from Montreal to Liverpool, two of the Allan line from Montreal to Glasgow, three of the Thompson line from Montreal to London, and two of the Donaldson line from Montreal to Glasgow. In addition, in consequence of the arrangements thus made, we continued contracts with seven others, the contracts with which had expired; but, as they belonged to these same ship-owners, they were kept under contract on the same terms and conditions practically as those new ships, although we do not pay for them.

Mr. CLANCY. Was that the Furness line?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. No, the Furness line contract expired last autumn; but the ships did not fulfil their contract last season, and we are now disputing the payment of the subsidy.

Mr. CLANCY. What guarantee has the government, after bearing one-half of the cost of fitting these vessels out with cold storage, that after the contract is completed they will continue? Is it proposed to be purely experimental, so that after the expiration of the contracts the vessels will maintain the cold storage system without any special charge on the public purse?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. When the cold storage propositions were first made here, that point was clearly laid down. The contracts were made for a stated term on the supposition that the system was a new thing for the trade of Canada, and that it was uncertain what its earnings would be. I think, therefore, it is right that the public purse should bear a certain amount of expense in order to encourage ship-owners to undertake this new experiment. It was expected that by the

end of the contract, the business would be so well established that the ship-owners would be forced to continue on their own account, and, as a matter of fact, this has, to a large extent, taken place. It is true that a few ships were taken, in consequence of being provided with that very accommodation, to carry supplies to South Africa, but several of these ship-owning companies have added to their Canadian shipping fleet, vessels fitted up with cold storage, without any subsidy from this country.

Mr. CLANCY. How many ships will be in the service this year fitted out with cold storage? I have seen it stated that some of those under contract intend discontinuing that service when their contracts have expired, on the ground that it does not pay. If there is any foundation for that report, it is a very serious matter.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. With the exception of two vessels of the Furness-Withy line from the maritime provinces, I am not aware of any ships fitted up with cold storage that are not going to continue it. I think I am safe in saying that there will be 37 ships fitted with cold storage accommodation sailing between Canadian and English ports this season, including those under contract.

Mr. CLANCY. One would naturally conclude from the remarks of the hon. gentleman that we had reached the time when public enterprise would no longer require government bonuses to assist in fitting vessels up with cold storage. If the experiment pays, the entire cost should be borne by private enterprise alone. I can understand the necessity of giving government assistance at the outset, but I would ask the hon. gentleman whether we may soon look forward to the time when such assistance will no longer be needed.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. While this vote is called the cold storage vote, it includes considerable more than cold storage. This year we are still under contract with 37 steamers to pay them subsidies. My first contracts were made to cover a term of three years, and half the cost of installation which is provided was payable over that term at the rate of one-sixth per year. But in the latter contracts, I was obliged to make the payments in two years, because the companies would not agree to payments over three years and complained that they had been too hardly dealt with in the first contract. The consequence is that last year and this we will have to pay one-quarter instead of one-sixth each year to each vessel. Besides, we are using a much smaller proportion of this vote for cold storage accommodation on steamships than when I first took the vote four years ago. We spent about \$70,000 the first year on steamships out of \$100,000, while this