

Hon. Mr. TARTE. I am talking especially from the standpoint of the port of Montreal. The rates are about the same from the port of Quebec. At times they are a little higher, for the excellent reason that the port of Quebec has not been able to supply the same kind of freight that Montreal does, but as a rule the rates are the same. As regards Halifax and St. John, I cannot say, but I believe that I am right in stating that the Canadian Pacific Railway, now that it has acquired a fleet of its own, will be able to make through rates just as cheap as any American company. If we stand by our Canadian route, we will accomplish our object. The nations of the world, which have become great, were not discouraged at the first attempts. I have been reading lately a good deal of the history of the German empire, which to-day is second as a maritime power. How was that accomplished? Because it has not been afraid to spend money on its own waterways and in subsidizing its own navigation companies. Its trade now covers the world. There is no reason why, when we certainly have the choicest route, we would not be able to make it the best. Let us not forget that the St. Lawrence route, for perishable products, such as butter and cheese, is far superior to the American routes, as it is cooler and fresher. If the hon. Minister of Agriculture will allow me to make a suggestion, I would suggest to him that his officers, who have given a great deal of attention to the agricultural trade, could do more in Montreal. On the wharfs themselves there should be refrigerators to receive the butter and cheese from the cars. We know very well that to carry butter and cheese only a half a mile under a hot sun will damage these products very much. Therefore, I believe that it would be of the greatest advantage to the country to have on the wharfs at Montreal and elsewhere the accommodations which are found in all equipped ports of the world. It always surprises me to hear some of our friends complaining that we are spending money on our harbours. Why, we have scarcely begun to spend money. What is it to spend five or ten millions on a great national harbour, when other nations are spending thirty millions, fifty millions—any amount that may be necessary to make their harbours commodious, speedy and capable of handling goods to advantage? I apologize to the committee for having spoken so long.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. In answer to the hon. member who asked the question, I may say that the current rate from our ports to Liverpool is 5½c. per 100 pounds on wheat and other kinds of grain.

Hon. Mr. TARTE. That is during this season?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. At present. That is probably

Mr. COCHRANE.

the lowest rate ever attained, and I am advised that it compares favourably with the rate by New York.

Mr. COCHRANE. Has the right hon. gentleman the freight rate from Chicago and other points on cheese and butter?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. I cannot give the rate on cheese and butter. It varies a good deal. From such a point as Midland to Liverpool, the rate is 12½c. That would give 5¼c. to the steamship and 7¼c. to the railway.

Mr. KEMP. I would not take second place to my hon. friend from Montreal, St. Mary's (Hon. Mr. Tarte), in my enthusiasm about the St. Lawrence route. I did not design to bring about the discussion that has arisen as to the St. Lawrence route as a route for freight traffic; I spoke of the carriage of mails and the subsidy we are giving for the carrying of mails. I agree with a great deal of what has been said by my hon. friend (Hon. Mr. Tarte), and I should say further that this year, up to the present time, more freight has gone by the St. Lawrence route than in any other similar period in the past. This of itself must prove that the freight rates by that route must be favourable, at least so far as grain is concerned. As to butter and cheese, that is another question. The St. Lawrence route is the popular route for dairy products. Our Canadian shippers do not avail themselves of the facilities by American ports for these products. One reason is that ours is cooler and the facilities are better. As to the insurance rates, it is to be borne in mind that when the Canadian Pacific Railway bought out the Elder-Dempster Company, the insurance rates on the vessels bought were reduced. That will afford us some encouragement on this subject. We have a right to regard the St. Lawrence route more hopefully than at any time in the past. I believe that the grain of this great northern part of the continent will go by this route in increasing proportions year by year. What I wished to draw attention to is this: The Minister of Trade and Commerce has told us that the quantity of mail that went by the Canadian steamers, for which we pay \$150,000, was 68,000 pounds, or about 35 tons.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. That is one way only.

Mr. KEMP. Would there be as much coming this way?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Not quite.

Mr. KEMP. I quite admit that the Tunisian is a very fine vessel, and we are thankful that we have so very fine a vessel. There are one or two others that are creditable. But these vessels are not fast enough for a mail service. In the discussion that has taken place, it has been clearly brought out