

Q. Then, take the big buyer in England of from one to five million bushels of grain, can he hope to get as close a rate from the head of the lake, or from any point west, through to England by a thoroughly Canadian system as if he took it to Buffalo and then over different railways and ship companies?—A. I think he would prefer it every time.

*By Hon. Mr. Webster:*

Q. Would it not be to the advantage of the farmer as well as to the people of Canada that a system of through rates might be arranged and enforced so that Canada would benefit by the through railways, through their harbours and through their steamers, for the carrying of this grain?—A. Yes; I think that every fraction of a cent that you can save in the cost of transportation, either on the railways or on the ocean, is going to benefit the Canadian farmer, because it comes right back to him. It is a question of the cost of transportation, and that of course affects the amount that he is to receive. I maintain that even a cent a bushel or half a cent a bushel saving by making our Canadian routes the cheapest would not only make it cheapest to maintain them, but if we can handle this grain in Canada why should we let it go down to the States? I think we can handle a great deal more, and I don't think it would be detrimental to the country even if we lose a little by the railway and by having the steamers on both sides of the Atlantic. If you want to ship the grain you can ship it not only from St. John and Halifax, but also Vancouver. I have always been a very strong advocate of the shipment of grain to Vancouver. Ten years ago I wanted to go to Vancouver to start business there, because it was only 700 miles to the west, and all the year round, and having the advantage of the Panama Canal, but they would not build an elevator.

*By Hon. Mr. Bennett:*

Q. Assume that two boats are put in commission for the whole season for carrying grain from the head of the lake, one carrying grain for export to England all summer through, or when it is available, and then by rail; the other one being placed for shipment to Georgian Bay ports; the one that plies between Fort William and Georgian Bay ports will make two trips in comparison with those at Buffalo, on account of the detour?—A. Yes, I remember it quite well.

Q. In the fall of the year not only is there a delay to the boat for Buffalo on account of the slowing down from Sarnia to Detroit by the narrow channel, but by reason of fogs and all that sort of thing, big fleets are held up there altogether?—A. Yes.

Q. Have you ever heard the difference—I think they make three trips as against two?—A. Yes, I have not only heard it but I have done it myself, because I started a line of lake steamers one season that ran from Depot Harbour to Fort William in preference to running to Montreal and Quebec on those steamers.

Q. And it proved itself?—A. Well, it stands to reason; it is very simple for you or anyone else; you have the distance from Fort William to the Soo and from the Soo to Midland or Depot Harbour, which is a fixed distance, and which can be made, say, within 24 and 48 hours; and you have only to go through one lock, and you have the open lake from Fort William to the Soo, and the open lake—except the St. Mary River—from the Soo to the Georgian Bay port. A boat that comes down to Port Colbourne has got to come through the Detroit River. Now, the delay and the danger of coming through there lengthens the time of the boat; she cannot go full speed; the result is that the time is longer in making that voyage. If she wants to make the maximum number of voyages she will naturally go where there is the least resistance. The boat that comes through to Montreal, when she leaves Port Colbourne, comes through the Canals, which takes her nearly as long to come down to Montreal from Port Colbourne as it does to come down to Port Colbourne, because she is canalling nearly all the time.