

Mr. FLINTOFT: Then:—

The officers and engineers of these ships are white men, approximately 265 in number, and over 200 of them are householders in Vancouver and vicinity. It has been the practice since the inception of the service to employ Chinese in the engine-room and victualling departments. White deck crews were employed on the original *Empresses* until 1913.

From the very beginning in the engine-room and victualling departments we employed Oriental labour, and on the deck up to 1913 we employed whites.

Mr. HOWDEN: And now?

Mr. FLINTOFT: We do not employ whites now.

Mr. NEILL: When you say from the beginning, when was that?

Mr. FLINTOFT: From 1891.

Mr. ISNOR: That was the year you made a new agreement.

Mr. FLINTOFT: Well, it was not on that account that we made the change. It is explained in the memorandum.

Mr. ISNOR: Previous to that you had white crews?

Mr. FLINTOFT: White crews on the deck, not in the engine-room or pantry, the victualling department.

Mr. ISNOR: In 1913 in British Columbia unemployment was rife.

Mr. FLINTOFT: I think the difficulty will be explained more fully by Captain Aikman. The difficulty was to secure satisfactory crews for the deck department.

We found it necessary to replace these white deck crews with Chinese because of the difficulties in obtaining and retaining satisfactory seamen. During the summer months when work was obtainable ashore at logging camps and elsewhere in British Columbia, many of the white deck crew left and the ships had to sail with deck crews that were unsatisfactory. Intemperance at this time had also something to do with the change.

While Vancouver is a shipping port of considerable magnitude, it is not to any extent a ship-owning or operating centre where oversea tonnage is concerned. Practically all overseas or deep-water tonnage which enters Vancouver, with the exception of the four *Empresses*, is owned in and operated out of British, European, and Japanese ports, where the majority of their crews originated. As a result the demand on the Pacific Coast of Canada for seamen, fireman, and stewards trained in the work of ocean-going vessels, and particularly first-class passenger vessels, is negligible.

There are practically no trained firemen capable of maintaining steam in coal-burning vessels, and only a limited number capable of successfully and with safety tending high-pressure water tube boilers on oil-burning vessels.

In dealing with the successful operation of ocean-going passenger vessels in competition with other ships of maritime nations, due consideration must be given to the temperament and mentality of the employees available, and their adaptability towards the class of work to be performed.

While the Chinese members of the crew are not worked an excessive number of hours per day, they are always willing to work as exigencies require, and do not demand stated times for work. As a result the convenience of passengers is met and the service is afforded as passengers desire it. This is really one of the attractions of the service. If Canadian crews were installed and they demanded, as is the case with the crews on United States and Australian ships, fixed hours for work and meals and other restrictions, the service would suffer.