

Mr. CLARKE. Where does this fruit come from ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. It is supplied us by the railway systems chiefly. Some come by the Grand Trunk Railway and some by the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Mr. CLARKE. Where do we get our supply of American freight ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. The only trade we get is what comes across our lines of railway, the Grand Trunk Railway and the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Mr. BLAIN. I understand that there are three companies, each getting a portion of this \$146,000. Did any of the vessels call at Canadian ports before the government entered into this contract ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Of course, the Allan Line did.

Mr. BLAIN. Did the others ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Also the Elder-Dempster called at Canadian ports, but they did not go to South Africa.

Mr. BLAIN. Were any vessels put on after this contract was entered into ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. New vessels were put on certainly by the Elder-Dempster Line. The Furness-Withy I am not sure of. The Allan's have a large steamship fleet, and they relegated some of their vessels to this South African service. Several vessels formerly employed on other routes were put into the South African service.

Mr. BLAIN. Has the hon. gentleman any means of ascertaining what proportion of the cargo comes from the United States ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. That is somewhat difficult, because we receive the goods from the railway companies and they do not discriminate between the two very carefully. We are obliged to approximate, but I think I am right in stating that the percentage is but small.

Mr. CLARKE. I should like if possible to have definite information on that point.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. I will try. It is somewhat difficult to get minute information. I can tell the hon. gentleman generally that the great bulk of the cargoes has been supplied by Canada.

Mr. CLARKE. Where did the hon. gentleman get that information ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. From the steamship companies and customs.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT.

Mr. CLARKE. Would it be unreasonable to inquire from the steamship companies what are the exact quantities that come from the United States ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. Certainly.

Steam communication during the season of 1903, i.e., from the opening to the closing of navigation, between Gaspé basin and Dalhousie or Campbellton, \$12,500.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). Is any change being made in the service ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. This used to be performed by the steamer 'Admiral'. It is now being performed by a screw steamer of greater draught. But there has been some difficulty about getting into various harbours.

Mr. MARCIL (Bonaventure). Has the contract been signed ?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. No.

Mr. MARCIL (Bonaventure). I cannot allow this item to pass, Mr. Chairman, without thanking the Minister of Trade and Commerce for the trouble he has gone to during the last two or three years in trying to improve this service. I might also mention the right hon. the Prime Minister in this connection. The hon. member for Gaspé (Mr. Lemieux) and myself have been to see the right hon. gentlemen often in the last three years to try to get a more satisfactory service than has been given in the past. This service is from Dalhousie to Gaspé Basin, a distance of 160 miles, along the whole county of Bonaventure and Gaspé. The county of Gaspé being entirely without railways, and Bonaventure the same for nearly one-third of the distance, great importance is attached to this steamship service. The old steamer 'Admiral' performed this service for twenty-five or thirty years. But, though a good boat in her time, the 'Admiral' is somewhat out of date. She was formerly the property of General Grant as far back as 1864. She is a paddle-wheel steamer, and, for that reason, not fitted for the route. For the last five or six years the people have insisted on a change and on a more modern steamer being provided. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Trade and Commerce saw the reasonableness of the request and invited Mr. Connolly, who has the contract under the name of the North Atlantic Transportation Company, to secure a better and a more modern boat, and one propelled with a screw, so that she could start earlier in the spring and keep the service up later in the fall, for the service in the Baie des Chaleur can easily be kept up for at least ten months in the year and a specially constructed vessel could ply along that coast for almost twelve months in the year. Paspébiac and other ports are open for the whole twelve months. Mr. Connolly