

not enforce their use, and the trouble was that some people wished to send poultry forward via Portland. Although it went on steamers fitted with cold storage, the cold storage was not worked, because there was not enough to make it pay the owners of the steamers, and by the contract they had with us they were not obliged to provide cold storage when sailing from an American port.

Mr. INGRAM. The government, I understand, pays for the icing of these cold storage cars?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. Yes.

Mr. INGRAM. Would the hon. gentleman give us an idea what it pays per car?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. The arrangement that we make with the railway companies is that we pay for the icing of the cars and we also guarantee that each car shall earn two-thirds of its capacity of freight. We have sometimes to make up the deficit on that, but the deficit on the whole season has been very small, and it has not been increasing, although we have increased very largely the number of lines on which these cars run. We find that after a car has run for a season or two, the people get to understand it and there is enough freight to fulfil the conditions without our being called upon to fulfil our guarantee. The cost of icing last year was \$3 to \$6 per car according to the distance it has to go.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). To what products is this restricted?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. I would not like to say that it is restricted at all, but, as a matter of fact, butter, fruit and poultry are the only products that are so sent.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). I would like to know whether it would apply to fresh fish?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. Yes, anybody would be perfectly at liberty to send fresh fish in these cars. But, these cars are intended to run from the west to the east, that is to say, they are for the export trade and not intended to apply to the internal trade of the country so much. Therefore, fish coming up from the maritime provinces to Ontario or Quebec, I do not think, would be able to avail itself of these cars, but, any fish passing, for instance, from Moncton to St. John or from Moncton to Halifax, or from further up the line to Halifax or St. John, would have these cars available for its carriage.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). I want to bring to the attention of the hon. minister the report of a committee of the House of Assembly of the province of Nova Scotia which has recently had under consideration the encouragement of the fisheries and the disposal of the catch as fresh fish. The report of the committee is very long, and I will

Mr. FISHER.

not trouble the hon. gentleman with it except to say that I think the whole report is very worthy of the attention of the government. In regard to this particular matter which is now being spoken of, I would like to read just two clauses of the conclusion of the report. After dealing with the difficulty of sending fish over the Intercolonial Railway in such a way that it would reach Montreal and points in Ontario and Quebec in good condition, they say:

Attention was drawn to the fact that under the existing rule of the Intercolonial Railway no dealer can ship less than a car-load without becoming liable to pay for the whole freight charge thereon. It was suggested by some of the witnesses that this difficulty might be overcome by the small fish dealers making up a car-load by combining together. This plan, however, has very many difficulties connected with it as these dealers, although sending their goods to the same points, are often separated by great distances with imperfect means of communication, and each man is desirous of forwarding his goods direct without reference to the other. In the opinion of your committee, the better solution would be to apply the same regulations to the transportation of fish as the Department of Agriculture has adopted in carrying butter and cheese to Montreal. In the latter case we understand that the advantage of through transportation is accorded to small shippers in less than car-load lots by the Department of Agriculture guaranteeing to the railway a certain proportion of any loss that might be made. A similar system applied to the shipping of fresh fish would doubtless do much to stimulate the trade.

It appears from this that the members of the committee were under the impression that the regulations spoken of by the Minister of Agriculture applied to the shipment of butter and cheese to Montreal, as well as to such shipments to Montreal eastwards.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. These shipments from eastward to Montreal are for export from Montreal. A great deal of even maritime province butter and cheese is handled by exporters in Montreal and shipped from that port to England. The Intercolonial Railway has a regular system of cold storage cars from Metis westward to Montreal.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). If it is desirable to adopt that principle with respect to the export trade, it might be taken into consideration as to whether it is not desirable to adopt it for the purpose of increasing the trade in fresh fish between the maritime provinces and the provinces of Quebec and Ontario. That trade has developed to an enormous extent during the last few years. It has developed on account of faster freight trains and on account of cold storage facilities being to some extent supplied. At present a very large portion of the Montreal fish trade is supplied from American ports. There is no reason in the world why the Canadian fishermen should not participate in that trade to a very much greater extent than they do at present. The statistics of this trade during the past few years are