

Henderson can refuse you or any gentleman to carry your cargo, if he desires to do so, and he is not a common carrier to that extent.

Mr. ARMSTRONG (Chairman).—That is one of the serious objections I have heard in different parts of the country—representations made to me that you men will not receive only what you care to receive, and will not carry anything except what you care to carry, and dictate to the people what kind of goods you wish to carry.

Mr. KING.—I have never before heard the suggestion that the man who is prepared to charter his full boat has to be treated as a common carrier. We are all in the position of tramps on the lake, picking up whatever cargo we can from any party we can and carrying it as cheaply as we can.

Mr. MACLEAN, M.P.—You are not bound to serve?

Mr. KING.—No.

Mr. H. W. RICHARDSON, (of Kingston).—I come before you as a shipper and also a steamship owner. I represent both the shipping interests and also the grain interests of the country.

Mr. KING.—In deference to Mr. Richardson's modesty may I add that he is probably one of the largest grain shippers in Canada, with elevators all over the west, and not only interested in shipping grain from the west to the seaboard, but he is also a joint owner in eight or nine steamers carrying grain down the lakes.

Mr. RICHARDSON.—There have been so many questions asked that I can see that this committee wants a great deal of information. I do not think any man can get on his feet and give it to you in a few minutes or even in a few hours, for it would not occur to him to tell all you require before you can size up the situation. Now I am going to take the very first thing. The congestion of storage, the loading and unloading of boats, has a great deal to do with the cost of the freight. You may get a quick elevator in Fort William one day, and another day a discharge in Montreal, and make fairly good money; but if you have to peddle around Fort William, taking up different samples of grain in different elevators it is very different. In the fall of the year the grain is pouring into Fort William, and there is no difficulty in going to one elevator and getting a clear house, and in six hours you are loaded. But when it comes on to the spring of the year and there is very little grain in one house and a little in another, the steamer has to peddle from house to house to get its load, and wait its turn, simply because the supply of grain is becoming exhausted. You cannot govern that.

Senator YOUNG, (Chairman).—That is only cleaning up the tail end of the crop.

Mr. RICHARDSON.—Yes; you can not govern that. Take a shipper putting his grain in Montreal; my storage in Fort William is a cent a bushel per month, while my storage in Montreal is less than half; therefore I am going to put my grain in Montreal and wait for the market? What happened? A false market is established in Winnipeg—I mean that a crop scare goes out, the grain is pretty well shipped out; we will sell July wheat, to protect shipment to Montreal. I put my wheat in Montreal intending to send my wheat to Europe. I sell my wheat to Europe and take off my July option; the price goes up; in Winnipeg what can I do? My grain has to stay in Montreal to cover my short sale. These conditions will arise notwithstanding all you can do on earth; you cannot govern them; all you can do is to make adequate storage facilities for the volume of grain that is coming to you ordinarily. Now regarding the steamers on the lake, the freight is as flexible as my hand, and it has to be. You gentlemen do not understand. In an evening a hundred shippers in America will send a hundred cables to one port, perhaps in London, another hundred to Berlin, Rotterdam, Paris or somewhere else. Now every shipper has his route to figure on. He may get a good rate via Baltimore, or by New York, where he can get the cheaper ocean freight, or by Boston where he may find some tramp