

The employees to be paid from this vote not to be subject to the Civil Service Act.

The employees in this branch have never been paid under the Civil Service Act; the Auditor General has lately informed us that the law would hardly justify that. He does not object that they should be paid as they have been paid, but he has asked that these words should be put in so as to make it perfectly clear that it is justifiable to pay them without reference to the Civil Service Act. I may say that these employees are largely outside, employed all over the country. Some of them work part of the time here, and part of the time outside. The work in this branch is so mixed up that it is impossible for the rules of the Civil Service Act to apply to them.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). I do not know whether the hon. gentleman has already given the committee any statement with regard to the condition in which the cold storage is on steamship lines. I have heard it stated that there is a great deal of difficulty in securing accommodation for Canadian products on steamers possessing cold storage facilities.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. I have not given any explanation of that, but I shall be very glad to do so. The report which the hon. gentleman has heard that there has been difficulty in securing accommodation is not at all founded on the facts. As a matter of fact, last year, I venture to say that there was not a case where anybody asking for cold storage accommodation could not secure it. The products that are chiefly sent in cold storage are butter and meat. Some of the steamers which had been under contract for us to supply cold storage accommodation from St. Lawrence ports were employed in carrying troops and supplies to South Africa, and for a time, in the early part of last year, these vessels were not running from Canada. In the early part of the season there is no very great demand for cold storage accommodation; it is in July, or after July, that this demand arises and soon after that time there was an abundance of cold storage accommodation. The only line that did not put on these ships which had been under contract, was the Elder-Dempster line to Bristol, but they put on some other ships, so that in the fall of the year, when there was the greatest demand for cold storage, there was cold storage accommodation to Bristol as well as other English ports. I venture to say, speaking without having the actual figures at my command, that there was full accommodation for all the products that shippers wished to go forward in cold storage. I am reminded that there was a lack of accommodation from Nova Scotia. We had a contract with the Furness-Withy Company for cold storage accommodation from Halifax which required the sending of vessels and they took these vessels off with

out any notice and without fulfilling their contract. We are now dealing with them as to the matter. This was the only occasion of a lack of accommodation, and I may say that cold storage accommodation from Nova Scotia has been very little availed of. Their reasons for taking off their vessels were that they were losing money up to that time.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). The circumstances that were brought to my attention very incidentally were not in connection with Nova Scotia, but in connection with the shipment of poultry. A gentleman in Toronto told me that he had engaged in the business of shipping poultry to the old country and that he had been handicapped, to a certain extent, by not being able to procure sufficient cold storage accommodation on the steamers. Of course, I know nothing of the particulars myself.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. I think that what the hon. gentleman refers to was due to the fact that poultry did not go forward until the winter season. Our contracts with the vessels were for the open navigation of the St. Lawrence. When the vessels are taken off the St. Lawrence route, most of them go to Portland as we never made any arrangement requiring cold storage accommodation from United States ports. The Manchester liners sailed from St. John and Halifax this last year and they carried cold storage products from Canada to England all winter, but there was no cold storage accommodation to other ports in Great Britain except to Liverpool and Manchester. There were some slight complaints in consequence of most of the Canadian cold storage vessels going to Portland in the winter.

Mr. WALLACE. Is cold storage required in the winter time?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. For poultry it is. If we send poultry to the English market cold storage will be required, and I trust to make future arrangements by which we will secure that as much as possible from Canadian ports. I have never undertaken in any way to control, or assist in providing cold storage from American ports. I do not think that it would be wise or proper for parliament to do that. We do not undertake to control cold storage on the vessels that are taken off the Canadian trade and put on the American trade in winter time.

Mr. WALLACE. Are they not the same vessels?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. A large number of vessels that come to Montreal in summer, as the hon. gentleman knows, go to Portland in winter.

Mr. WALLACE. They have cold storage already provided.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. They have cold storage facilities, but we do