

, 14-15 GEORGE V, A. 1924

The WITNESS: Of course, we all know that the easiest thing for an engine-driver to complain about is the character of the coal he has got. However, I have made a note of that and I will see what we are doing, but just offhand, I would say the coal is bought under proper inspection.

(To Mr. Doherty): What arrangement have we, if any, with the Marconi Company? What is the situation regarding our wireless?

Mr. DOHERTY: I have not the details, but it is the usual marine contract.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: That is the trouble with it. On the United Fruit boats all you get is the United States and the American Stock Market, and the American baseball results, and perhaps the racing reports.

Mr. LOGAN: That is something.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: You are better off without them.

The WITNESS: Yes, especially the racing results.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: It amounts to nothing.

The WITNESS: I do not know offhand, Mr. Logan, but we will have that looked into.

The question of how much tonnage we would require if we had to handle, or could handle, all of the tropical fruit traffic between the West Indies and Canada, I cannot answer offhand.

As to the Argentine and Brazil: We might have a look at that, but I doubt very much whether there would be sufficient business to justify the establishment of an ocean route to the Argentine and Brazil.

Mr. DOHERTY: We have already had one experience there.

The WITNESS: We tried it and abandoned it. There was insufficient traffic. You see most of the traffic between the Argentine and Brazil goes to the United Kingdom—at least, to some extent—and that in turn I think is due to the fact that English capital is very largely invested in the Argentine railways, and for that reason those who have their capital so invested have brought pressure to bear on English shipping companies to establish routes between the Argentine and England, and the trade relations which exist between the Argentine and England, as I say, is fundamentally due to the large capital interests which are invested in the Argentine railways.

Mr. LOGAN: I may say in addition to that, that one of the fundamental reasons we have not secured proper trade is that we have not been properly represented there.

The WITNESS: If you have a large amount of English capital invested in the Argentine, and have a number of important and outstanding business people in the industrial and the financial world interested in the Argentine, naturally they address their efforts to promoting trade between the Argentine and their own country. There is no Canadian capital invested in the Argentine, broadly speaking, nor in the Argentine railways, and that is the condition to which you refer. That has grown out of this fact I have mentioned, and that is something which is beyond the control of the Merchant Marine, and largely beyond the control of the people of Canada.

As to the present rates, the high rates which are charged: I am not quite sure whether I understand your question. To what rates do you refer, Mr. Logan?

Mr. LOGAN: The rates between Eastern Canada and Vancouver via the Panama Canal. How do they compare with New York?

The WITNESS: We have lately established a service from Halifax, through the Panama Canal, to Vancouver; from Montreal in the summertime.

Mr. DOHERTY: At the present time the rates are exactly the same as from New York. I will say, however, in connection with the first sailing, that we had

[Sir Henry Thornton.]