

Mr. MEIGHEN: I think the hon. member who is interrupting ran as an independent himself. He should not be very ungracious to others.

Mr. KING (Kootenay) It is his privilege. May I now continue my speech? I said it was not my desire to prolong the argument, but I wish to deal with this particular question.

We have heard a good deal during the last few days in this parliament about the necessity of Canadian trade passing through Canadian ports. Why will hon. gentlemen opposite not be fair to their own country and state correctly the conditions which exist in the country? It has been the desire and the effort of this government to promote trade through Canadian ports. It is well known to hon. gentlemen opposite that when in 1923, Mr. Fielding increased the British preference, he made that increased preference applicable to British goods that came through Canadian ports. With what effect? That to-day 98 per cent of the goods coming from Great Britain under the preference do come through Canadian ports. In the city of St. John this government, on coming into power, found one little potato house, operated by private interests, striving to handle the potato crop of the Maritime provinces. What was the condition at that time? The port of Boston was being used by the potato growers in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, in order to ship their goods to the markets of Cuba and the southern states. Now, what is the condition to-day? This government has established two large well-constructed potato houses in the port of St. John which are serving the people of the Maritime provinces, and to-day the trade which formerly went through the port of Boston is going through the port of St. John, to the advantage of the potato producers in the Maritime provinces. That is known to hon. gentlemen opposite, but we never hear of it. The expenditure for that purpose was justified, and many shiploads of potatoes have gone from the port of St. John that formerly went from the port of Boston.

We have heard a good deal about shipments of grain and grain products from our Canadian ports. I think the former premier of the province of New Brunswick (Mr. Fleming) submitted figures to parliament which were not a true statement of Canadian trade in the matter of grain passing through Canadian ports; and I propose, before I conclude my remarks to-night, to place on Hansard an accurate statement of the Canadian trade in grain passing through Canadian and American ports, so that it may be there for the advan-

tage of the Canadian public. Hon. gentlemen opposite do not seem to realize or to be advised of the fact that the Canadian railways have to meet the geographical disadvantages of the Maritimes in regard to the freight rates on grain going through St. John and Halifax. The rate to those ports is the same as the rate to Portland. That is, a man shipping grain from Port Arthur or from bay ports can ship through the ports of St. John or Halifax for the same cost, so far as railway transportation is concerned, as to the port of Portland. Someone may ask: Why does not the grain go through Canadian ports? Well, hon. gentlemen opposite know very well that when a man ships grain to the seaboard that grain is not yet on the market; he has still to charter a vessel that will take his grain from the Canadian port to the Old Country or to the countries of Europe.

Let us be practical, and let us be fair to ourselves. Here is the situation: A man is dealing in grain. He has his grain in one of the lake ports. He decides to move that grain, amounting say to 500,000 bushels, to the United Kingdom or to some European country. He knows the cost of railway transportation to the Atlantic seaboard exactly, but the unknown quantity is the rate at which he can charter a vessel to carry that grain to the market which he aspires to reach. That is the whole story. He is a shipper of grain, a shrewd business man engaged in a business that is not local—because a man shipping grain from Canada has got to compete with the man shipping grain from Russia, Australia, India, the Argentine, and other countries. So he must seek the best charter he can get for the transportation of his grain. He gets in touch with the shipping interests and finds there is certain tonnage at Philadelphia, New Orleans, New York, Boston, New London, Portland, St. John and Halifax, and then he gets his rate. Now, it is well known that in the larger American ports there is a larger tonnage. A tramp ship may leave Great Britain and go to South America with a cargo. It takes another cargo there, brings it up the United States coast line and discharges it at some port there. Then it is ready to take another cargo. Will that ship take cargo at a lower rate than a ship that leaves Glasgow and goes directly to St. John or Halifax? The question answers itself. That is the difficulty, and it will continue to be the difficulty until our Canadian people become so patriotic that they will say: "We will ship through our eastern Canadian ports, no matter what the cost"; and when they say that they go out of business. The remedy is the building up of a large population in Canada that will develop a larger world trade such as will