

sumer at whose door the retailer leaves the fish, it may be 100, 500, or 1,000 miles distant from the waters from which it was taken.

I have an illustration to give to the House of what it would mean if we could affect a short cut, so to speak, between the producer and the consumer. It is the experience of a gentleman in the Railway Department J. L. Payne. This gentleman informs me that he recently purchased 900 boxes of finnan haddie from a Nova Scotia firm and they were laid down at the doors of some 900 different people in Ottawa who had joined with him in the order. The fish at their doors, all expenses paid, cost seven cents per pound, while at the same time, in the retail stores in this city the same class of fish was selling at twelve and a half cents and upwards per pound.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: I suppose there were no further expenses in connection with that shipment other than the original cost of the fish and the transportation charges?

Mr. JAMESON: That is my information.

Mr. MACLEAN: These were no distribution and selling expenses?

Mr. JAMESON: No. The shipment was the result of co-operation on the part of different people. Mr. Payne kindly acted as agent, and my information from him is that he paid six cents per pound to the producer, and that it cost one cent per pound to bring the fish to Ottawa and to deliver it at the door of the consumer. There were no profits.

Mr. MACLEAN: Can my hon. friend tell me what the selling price of the same class of fish is say, in western Nova Scotia, say at a point like Windsor or Kentville?

Mr. JAMESON: I cannot tell my hon. friend that; I do not know what the profits are down there, but I think the dealers just sell to the one man. For instance, the man who prepares the fish for the wholesale market would sell to the retailer, and so there would be just a profit for two individuals.

The trouble in dealing with this matter in regard to transportation is that two or three transportation charges are superimposed on the original price of the fish, and that the profits of dealers, jobbers and retailers, have to be considered. I merely mention this instance of which I have been informed by Mr. Payne, in order to show

[Mr. Jameson.]

that unnecessary transportation charges, and perhaps the profits of some jobbers, might be eliminated or reduced.

Mr. HAZEN: From what point of Nova Scotia did they come?

Mr. JAMESON: I do not know that Mr. Payne would object to my giving that information. I think they came from the Maritime Fish Corporation, and that they were shipped from Digby. My information is that in England the system of distribution of sea foods has been so perfected that a part at least of the trade is direct between the buyer at the port of entry and the consumer. This obviates the profits of jobbers and retailers, and involves only the minimum cost of transportation, while the fish reaches the consumer in prime condition. The household which uses fish regularly has a standing order for delivery on certain days each week, and the dealer ships it in a receptacle woven from a sort of marsh grass which I am told costs less than a penny. Of course, in England distances are trifling and population great as compared with Canada.

Again, if my information serves me, fish trains under normal conditions leave the sea ports for various centres in England each night. They carry fish only at just one half of the ordinary rates, while they have the right-of-way over all other classes of traffic. This illustrates the importance of the business as there regarded.

It is related of His Majesty King Edward VII that once when returning from Balmoral he found the Royal train had been backed into a siding. His Majesty inquired the cause of the delay, and was informed that they were waiting for the fish train to pass, as it had the right-of-way. The King's reply was in that characteristic vein which did so much to endear him to his subjects: "Quite right," said he, "Monarchs should wait that my people may be fed."

Why does the fish train in England have the right of way? Because it carries a cheap food, which should be promptly delivered. Monarchs might wait, that the people should have a good and cheap food. How is it in this country? Why, a train loaded with pig iron is quite as apt to have the right of way as one loaded with fish.

Now that the halo of royally conferred titles surrounds so many Canadians closely associated with our transportation systems, it may not be unreasonable to hope that they will adopt a more kingly and kindly