

from a route that their clerks in many cities of the Dominion now well know to a route which those clerks do not know at all.

To give definite consideration to the four claims that were made by the official of the Canadian National Railways who placed this matter before the committee last year, I will refer first of all to the carriage of mails between Montreal and Vancouver, a through service. This seemed to many of us to lend itself admirably to a shift from one railway to the other, and it was felt that the Canadian National Railways could very well take that mail and make the earnings which the Canadian Pacific has up to the present time been making, without greatly disrupting the service and the work of the clerks necessary to render that service. On careful investigation, however, I find that there are details that are rather complicated, particularly on that portion of the route between Winnipeg and Vancouver. The mails are not carried in bulk through to Vancouver, but they are loaded into one sixty-foot mail car and as much storage space behind it as is required. As the mail passes on through those important centres, Portage la Prairie, Brandon, Indian Head, Regina, Calgary and so forth on its way to Vancouver, the mail is distributed from this postal service car, and as the space is available in the postal service car, the space in the storage car or cars behind it is relieved, the mail being piled into the postal service car. By agreement with the Canadian Pacific Railway, as the space in the storage car is relieved, it is also cut off for payment, the Canadian Pacific being paid only for the space that is required. If this service is to be divided between the two railways, as is suggested, each carrying one-half, it will immediately appear to hon. members here without any technical training, for I myself admit that I have none in that respect, that it will be claimed that the same advantage cannot be taken of storage space in half a car as could be taken in a full car.

As to claim No. 3, that all overseas mail ex steamers at Quebec should be carried between Quebec and Montreal on the Canadian National, that claim was made simply as being a possible point of balancing up the sheet between the two railways. On investigation, I have come to the conclusion that we will have to find out the country of origin and what the government of that country would say as to the routing of its mail once it landed in this country. Some, perhaps a goodly portion of that mail is through traffic that has to travel right across the continent, and it has to go, according to

[Mr. C. W. Stewart.]

agreement, by the shortest route possible. If the Canadian National Railways were not ready to give the shortest time and the quickest service in delivery, without any reference to our Post Office Department, the contract might be cut off by the British postal service which has command of that. That is a very small service at any rate. I understand it is a matter of only \$15,000 or \$30,000 for the whole thing. It is not a serious matter, and considering that the Canadian Pacific have in years past, when necessary, put on a special train to deliver that mail from their steamers at Quebec to Montreal in the shortest possible time, I doubt whether the Canadian National, to their financial advantage, could compete with the Canadian Pacific in that respect.

We have two claims left that seem to lend themselves to some adjustment, the first one being the through carriage of mail between Toronto and Winnipeg, so routed. At the present time, that is carried over the Canadian Pacific. The same objection that could be raised as to the carriage between Montreal and Vancouver, that is that there is a large distribution of that mail en route, does not apply to the carriage of mail between Toronto and Winnipeg. With the possible exception of the head of the lakes, the twin cities of Port Arthur and Fort William, there is no large distribution of mail routed from Toronto to Winnipeg. That which goes into the car at Toronto goes out at Winnipeg. It could just as well be carried by the Canadian National as by the Canadian Pacific, so far as time is concerned, because their times are equal in that respect. The only difference that could be made would be the hours of arrival in Winnipeg in regard to meeting outgoing trains on the many branch lines that run out of the gateway city into various parts of western Canada. I think an adjustment could be made in that regard. I would suggest to the Postmaster General and to the members of the House generally that, as regards the carriage of mail between Toronto and Winnipeg, the question of transferring to the Canadian National Railways a part which the Canadian Pacific now has, could very well be considered. This would, to the extent of at least \$150,000, reduce the difference that the hon. member for Dauphin (Mr. Ward) gave us. I have forgotten the figure, but I think it amounted for the last year to something like \$350,000. If I remember rightly, that is what the hon. member quoted. And that sum could be cut down almost by half through the alteration in this one service. It seems to me too that the service lends itself to this economy.