

glad to have us grown up and, so to speak, off their hands as far as their responsibility for us is concerned. I do not believe there is any doubt or disagreement about that among the people generally. But some serious matters are involved in this question.

I have noticed that many people in this house and in the country seem to think that if only we had things a little different from what they are, Oh, how we could solve our problems! It reminds me of a story my father used to tell me about the fellow who always wanted to live in a country just on the other side of the fence. It is a common thing for people to think that if we were thus and not so, it would be well with us. Particularly, just now, we have a constitutional scapegoat in this country. Everything this parliament wants to do it cannot do because the "constitution" will not let it; and as for the naughty provinces, they simply will not cooperate, so that we cannot solve our unemployment problem; we cannot solve our relief problem and we cannot solve this and that and the other thing; and the provinces are inclined to complain on much the same score.

Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I am not sufficiently informed, but I believe that all this kind of talk is simply window-dressing. I honestly believe that if we would go to work with an attitude of honesty and straightforwardness and with a sincere desire to solve our problems, and had the solution, we should not have very much difficulty getting the provinces to cooperate with us towards that solution. So far I have not found any provincial officer who is not ready to do pretty nearly anything, except sacrifice some of the rights which his province possesses, in order to help us solve the problems which are confronting all of us.

Just now the thought is that if only we could centralize powers in this country; if only we could transfer to the dominion the powers which the provinces possess, all these difficulties could be solved. May I examine for a few minutes what has been done by dominion governments for the last twenty-five years with the absolute powers they do possess? I shall mention three or four of them because I believe it will help people to understand why we have these stresses and strains. I may tell the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) very frankly that he annoyed me considerably when he blamed for those stresses and strains something which I did not believe should be blamed for them. I may be wrong, but in fairness to him I am telling him what I think.

In the first place, there are causes of stresses and strains of which the public generally have

not even dreamed. Here is one. Unquestionably this parliament has absolute power over the tariff structure of the railroads. Surely there is nothing to prevent parliament from exercising that power. I have not heard that any province is questioning it. Let me indicate to the house some of the things which have happened to the disadvantage of my own province. Provinces are being strangled or smothered to death because of inequalities from which they have no power to relieve themselves and from which they cannot get any other authority to relieve them.

Referring briefly to the railroad structure, I find, according to information elicited by the commission which recently received evidence, such an absurd situation as this, in regard to barbed wire, which is vital to the farming industry in the prairie provinces. The rate per 100 pounds on that commodity from Montreal to Vancouver is seventy-five cents, while to Edmonton, a distance more than five hundred miles shorter, the rate is more than double, namely \$1.98. I do not propose to go into this matter to any extent to-night. If I did I should be out of order. Just the same, there is here a problem which illustrates the sort of thing that this government has done with the power it absolutely possesses. Now, if that condition has been allowed to grow up; if it has gone on throughout the prairie provinces, as I shall show at a future time, it is bleeding those provinces to death economically. It has been completely in the power of this parliament; there has been no constitutional difficulty in the way of straightening the matter out, and yet this condition has been allowed to continue.

I shall mention one more and then leave this particular subject. I mention binder twine, which is all important.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I do not want my hon. friend to be more annoyed with me than necessary, but I would ask him what that has to do with appeals to the privy council.

Mr. BLACKMORE: Simply this: A province like Alberta, or Saskatchewan, or Manitoba, must have some court to which it can bring its case, some court which will hear it. Those provinces have been sending members to parliament for years and years, capable, honest members who have presented our case before the high court of parliament year after year; yet these monstrous inequalities and injustices have been growing up. We have come and complained about them, for they have been sapping the very lifeblood from us; yet we have had no redress whatever. Do you wish to know, Mr. Speaker, the reasons for the stresses and strains? Let me