

length of time, in some cases steps becoming necessary to compel them to unload. In other words, if they thought the market in coal was rising they would keep the loaded cars on their sidings indefinitely, paying one dollar a day per car for demurrage, and thus carrying on a kind of profiteering in coal. That condition was changed, but a very iniquitous thing was done, because no distinction was made between the man who needed the coal for his boilers and the man who was obtaining it for resale. There is hardly a man in Ontario who has been using coal during the last three or four years who has not been compelled to pay hundreds of dollars for demurrage which he really should not have had to pay. Suppose a man uses on the average a car of coal a day under his boilers or in his furnace. That man cannot safely have anything less than fourteen days' supply of coal on hand, because blizzards are liable to come up; the coal situation may become acute, and if he has not an adequate supply on hand he must close down for the winter. That has happened in very many cases of which I have personal knowledge. Now, in order to have the necessary supply of coal he must bring the cars in and he must unload them. Unloading and re-loading coal costs about fifty cents a ton more than it would cost if a man were able simply to run a care right up to his boiler house and unload right at the boiler. The regulation to which I have referred places a handicap on manufacturers in Canada. I hope the Government will take into serious consideration the advisability of allowing all manufacturers who use coal some abatement in the demurrage charges that are made, so that they can hold a car for at least seven or ten days at one dollar per car per day, which is a fair and reasonable charge, instead of penalizing them from \$7 to \$12 per day. I know companies that have to pay to the railways as much as \$700 or \$800 a month for demurrage. The Steel Company of Canada, if they have cars standing with coal, and especially coke, must pay a very considerable amount. I cannot see why there should be any demurrage charge against coke at all, because those who are using coke or know anything about it know that coke cannot be unloaded a second time, because the loss would be so great from the coke crumbling into dust. It must therefore be unloaded direct from the car into the furnace. I hope that the Minister of Marine will take into consideration the advisability

[Mr. Currie.]

of having half-a-dozen colliers built. I feel satisfied they could handle coal very much more cheaply. We could get Nova Scotia coal up to Belleville, Kingston, Port Hope, Cobourg, and all these other places and unload it alongside the dock by means of the elevators these colliers carry. I hope the Government will do everything in their power to see that the situation is relieved.

Another thing we must consider is an embargo on coal going to Europe. Normally we give the United States just as much soft coal as they give us. In times past the great bulk of the soft coal for the Eastern States used to come from Nova Scotia. A large quantity of Nova Scotia coal still goes there, but not in as large a quantity as it should. Whether the United States is endeavouring to reach the point where they will not have to use Canadian coal, I do not know, but the fact remains that they are compelling a lot of our coal to find a market through Atlantic ports in Europe and South America. Whether that is due to lack of effort on our part, or to diversion of Nova Scotia coal to Europe, I do not know, but I am satisfied that the Board of Railway Commissioners will take that matter in hand.

The situation so far as Ontario is concerned is very acute. Some of the large concerns in Toronto and Hamilton will have to cease operations unless the situation is relieved, thereby throwing out of employment thousands of men. That is going to cause great trouble this fall and winter. The cost of living is so great that a working man cannot afford to lose a single day's work, and it is necessary that we do everything in our power to see that the coal supply is maintained. I hope to see the day when this country will be independent of any other country for its coal supply, and when we will have sufficient coal and adequate facilities for handling it. I think one of the most cogent reasons for having built by the Government a small number of ships of the kind I have mentioned is that it would enable us to supply our own people largely with coal from Nova Scotia. The minute we start bringing this coal to Hamilton, you will find the owners of bituminous coal in the Southern States rise up in their wrath against the United States Government and demand a free market. The best market for the United States anthracite coal mines is Canada. We use proportionately more hard coal than do the Americans. Many anthracite coal mines in the United States are standing idle to-day because they have no orders. The control