

been virtually tied up for years, and in some cases they have had to sacrifice a great deal of the interest to which they were entitled.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Is the honourable member referring to Alberta or Ontario?

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: I am talking of the West.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Why not talk of Ontario?

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: Well, it is true to a certain extent of Ontario.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Much more so.

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: But it is truer of the West. However, I am afraid I should not make this digression; I ought to stick to the Bill.

Some Hon. SENATORS: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: As I was saying, the Bill is now before us, transformed and beautified, or at least made passable. In my opinion it has one great merit: it provides for a very excellent principle, the regulation of rates. On this account I am convinced it would be wise for this House to let the Bill go through. We have done what we could to improve it. If I am right in considering that regulation of rates is an excellent thing, why not let the measure be sent to the other House, where it would have a chance of being improved further and passed, and then put into force and tested by experience?

I do not know what the fate of the Bill will be. On the one hand, I understand, the Government feels a great deal of anxiety with respect to the difficulties of putting this excellent principle of regulation into practice. Besides, to put it into practice may be dangerous politically. I have been told that there may be, therefore, a concealed hope that the Senate may remove from the lap of the Government a child that might later on cause it a great deal of annoyance. On the other hand there are people who will accept no regulation whatsoever. Let us be frank. The Bill is at the crossroads—

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I think my honourable friend is not quite right.

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: I may not be.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: My right honourable friend opposite (Right Hon. Mr. Meighen) said that everyone was in favour of the principle of regulation provided oneself was not regulated.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Everyone here.

Right Hon. Mr. GRAHAM: That seems to be a truism.

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN: I am glad my honourable friend has reminded me of that fact. But I do not think it changes at all the trend of my argument, at least on this point. On the one side there are the weight of responsibility and the fear of political consequences, and on the other side the ever present desire of some people to benefit, whether or not at the expense of others. It may be that the combination of these two sentiments will drive this Bill to its finish in this House.

The system we have now is that of the survival of the fittest. Do honourable senators believe that is better, more desirable, than regulation? That is the question I want to put before this House. Under the system of the survival of the fittest, dog eats dog. That has gone on from the time of the cave-man, and it has brought about untold misery and innumerable bankruptcies. Everybody knows that. Are we going to vote for a continuation of that system in transportation? Some people say that we are not obliged to keep in existence those transportation agencies which are unable to survive without regulation. It is said we should let them die. Well, what would be the consequence? The law of nature does not change. If we permit the continuance of the old system of the survival of the fittest, dog will continue to eat dog and in time the very few transportation agencies which have been able to survive will demand increased rates. In that process there will be an unlimited amount of waste. What will be the result of it all? Simply the placing of certain companies in a position where they can exact excessive rates.

There is this further consideration. If capital cannot find sufficient protection what will it do? The West requires capital, and the East has a great deal of sympathy for the West, notwithstanding what has been said by some of my honourable friends. The East understands what the life of the pioneer means. We have pioneers in the province of Quebec. I think the life of the pioneer in Quebec is rather harder than that of the pioneer in the West, who finds his land cleared and is able to put his plough into the ground the first year he settles on his farm. In my province the pioneer's axe must precede his plough; he must clear the land before he can cultivate it and establish a home. I could say considerable about the golden times gone by, when the Western farmer used to work only two months in the year—

Hon. Mr. SHARPE: That is not true.