

Supply—Post Office

to take them from the standpoint of the distances travelled and the services being rendered. I just want to show the Postmaster General what discrimination exists. For instance, I have before me contracts for six miles, and in those contracts I find a difference of \$100 for doing the same work, travelling the same distance, over the same conditions of roads and giving the same service. All of them give good service; but even in a distance of six miles, here is \$100 of a difference. Then we go to the distance of eight miles, and we find there a difference of \$120, for the same class of work, giving the same service. Then when you move along to the distance of nine miles, and the figure is still going up—we find a \$150 difference in the contracts. Then coming to the contracts for ten miles, I find there is a difference of \$250 a year between contracts covering ten miles. Let us go a little bit further and go to the 13-mile limit. Here are contracts of men driving 13 miles, over practically the same kind of roads—most of them dirt roads, as we say—both of them having the same conditions in the winter and the same conditions in the summer. Here we find a difference of \$310 in two or three contracts.

That is not so bad. We now come to the worst ones. We first come to the contracts with regard to 14 miles. Here we find a difference of \$360. You can take these and follow the thing along, but let us go to the case of a man driving 15 miles. Here is a difference of \$690 on a mail contract. One contractor drives 15.2 miles. He serves 48 boxes and gets \$875 making six trips a week. Another contractor drives 15 miles; the distance is a little bit less. He serves 46 boxes, two boxes less, and receives \$1,565. He was shrewder in getting his contract through. That man, at \$1,565, is not getting one nickel too much; but the other poor fellow is being gypped by the department to the tune of \$690 a year and probably does not know it. I am not mentioning any names here because the department can easily turn them up and find out exactly who they are.

The same thing goes on with respect to contractors driving 16 miles. I am not going to tire you with too many of these but there is a \$260 difference there. With respect to those driving 16 miles over a fair road, there is a difference in their contracts of \$510. That is discrimination of the worst kind. Whether it is due to patronage, whether it is due to political influence or to the system of tendering I leave it to the department to judge.

Then we come to another case, that of a man driving 17 $\frac{3}{10}$ miles daily. He serves only 28 boxes and receives \$930. His

neighbour, on the next mail route, drives only 17 miles, serves 12 boxes more than the first man, and receives \$1,440, or a difference of \$510. These routes are within a few miles of each other.

For the benefit of the department, and so these facts will be on record, I should like to set out a few more cases. This refers to one man driving 18 miles. As a matter of fact there are four of these in Prince Edward Island, and there is a difference in their contracts of \$600.

Let us take another case. One of these men drives 21 miles. As a matter of fact I think the actual distance is 21 $\frac{2}{10}$. I know the route very well because I have been over it lots of times. This man serves 42 boxes and receives \$1,140. He makes six trips a week, and must travel over a bad road in the spring. The other courier drives 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles and serves 76 boxes, and for this receives \$1,760, or nearly \$600 more; and he does less work.

Then let us go on to another case. The first of these mail couriers drives 22 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles, serves 51 boxes and receives \$1,200, while his neighbour who drives four miles less gets \$360 a year more.

That is your tender system for you! The worst of it is that the tender system is not entirely to blame. I think the department here in Ottawa is to blame for a good deal of it.

Then we find a much greater discrepancy when we deal with longer routes. I have in mind one man who drives 27 miles and another who drives 28. There is a great difference here, both in the service given and the number of boxes served. The man serving the greater number of boxes—I believe he serves 73—receives \$1,440, while the other man who serves a lesser number and drives a shorter distance receives \$2,200. As I said a moment ago, the man who is receiving \$2,200 is not getting a nickel too much. I could go on to give the facts respecting others who drive 30 or 35 miles, but I believe the information I have given is sufficient to indicate to the minister that there is great discrimination here.

I have a further criticism to make of the Post Office Department. Only a short time ago a contract was up for tender. This was in connection with a 15-mile route. The man who had held the job threw up the tender because he said he could not make it pay at that price, and he had no help on his farm. I believe the amount received was \$1,550. This man went to his neighbour, who had plenty of help, and the neighbour said, "Yes, I will take it off your hands, if I can get it." The department said, "No,