

has occurred recently or during the Session of the House in delivering the mails over that section of the Grand Trunk Railway west of Toronto and the intermediate points east of Toronto on the same line of railway: What the reason for that delay may be other than the severity of the season I am not prepared to say, but one fact is known to all the members of the House, and that is that the section of the Canadian Pacific Railway from Brockville to Ottawa has lengthened materially the time during which trains travel over it, from what it was in previous years. I am not in any way disposed to censure any railroad for delays over which it can have no control, and necessarily these must be very serious in the winter season, but I think this House owes it to itself and owes it to the country that the valuable franchises that have been conferred by it on the different railway systems of the country should secure to the people in return all reasonable mail facilities. If the recent opening of the Ontario and Quebec section of the Canadian Pacific Railway has led to these delays or has been a material factor in producing the delays in the mails, I think this House should know it. My motive is to bring to the attention of the House and the country the fact that these delays are occurring. I am sure hon. gentlemen must have found it a matter of serious inconvenience to maintain that correspondence with their own localities which is a necessity with many of them, at all events, who have to leave their business for such a length of time as they are compelled to leave it; and, if their convenience could be aided in any way by an intimation to any of these companies which are responsible that the House looks to them to facilitate the carrying of the mails as much as possible, my object will have been accomplished.

Mr. CASEY. I hope the hon. gentleman will add to his resolution an enquiry into the date of departure of trains from Ottawa and their arrival at Brockville, as I think that is quite as important as the other. I move that those words be added. I think the delay of mails coming eastward has certainly been scandalous on this section of the road. I think also that the alteration of the date at which the mail train leaves Ottawa to connect with the Grand Trunk is a very serious and totally unnecessary inconvenience to those who have to send mails by this road. We all remember that the mail train for Brockville used to leave at about 11 o'clock at night, and you could mail letters for it up to 10 o'clock. That train now leaves here at about 8.30, losing thereby at least two and a half hours, during which you might write letters to go by that train. It makes comparatively little difference to those of us who live west of Toronto, because we can send our letters at the later hour by the Canadian Pacific Railway itself, but to those who wish to correspond with Toronto or points east along the Grand Trunk, it must be a serious inconvenience. I urge as strongly as possible upon the Postmaster-General that his Department has some responsibility in regard to this matter. The Department should have the power, if it has not—I believe it has under existing laws, but, if not, it should be given the power—to see that mail trains are not wantonly changed in their hours and that the hours of the departure of mails are not wantonly made inconvenient to the public, especially that the public are not inconvenienced in the interests of the railway company itself. It is clear in this case that the train is not necessarily changed to the earlier hour, because it has up to this year made connections with the Grand Trunk, starting at a later hour, and there is no doubt that it could do so still. It is therefore for some other reason, for the convenience of the company itself only, that the hour for the departure of the mail has been changed. I understand that the mail and passenger cars are attached to a local way train, which stops and shunts at all the stations between Ottawa and Brockville. The reason is not far to seek. It is easy to see that the

Canadian Pacific Railway Company wish to divert traffic from the Grand Trunk route to their own route between here and Toronto, and it is quite natural that they should wish to take any means at their disposal, the means in this case being to make it inconvenient for the public either to go or to send letters by the Brockville route. I contend that, in this case, where the railway company in question is practically a Government institution, when it has received all the cost of all its lines almost from the Government, at all events the vast majority of the price, as some think a good deal more, it should be compelled, as far as the laws put it in the power of the Government to compel it to yield to the convenience of the public even at some inconvenience to itself. I have pointed out that there is nothing impracticable in keeping that train at the old hour, nothing impracticable in acting for the public convenience in this matter, and probably no loss to the company would be involved in coming back to the old hours, except that they would have to give up this means of annoying the Grand Trunk and preventing traffic going by that road. I think they should be forced to give that up if the law allows it to be done. Whether the law empowers the Government to do this or not, the influence of the Government over this company ought to be such that they should be able to secure this beneficial change. I hope the Government will carry this out, and that the Postmaster-General and his colleagues will see that the matter is remedied.

Mr. CAMERON (Victoria). I would suggest to my hon. friend who has moved this resolution that he should ask for the date and the hour, because it is evident that the date only means the day of the month, and what we want to ascertain is the hour as well as the day of the month. In reference to the remarks of my hon. friend from Elgin (Mr. Casey), I am informed—I don't know if I am correctly informed or not—that the mails for the west are still sent by the Grand Trunk line and not by the Ontario and Quebec. If that is not so, I shall be glad to hear from the Postmaster-General. It is clear that the new and shorter line, the Ontario and Quebec, should be used for the conveyance of mails. It is used almost exclusively for the conveyance of passengers, and I think the mails ought certainly to go by the shortest, the most direct, and the most reliable road, which it certainly is. In my experience, the Ontario and Quebec train is almost invariably sharp on time in arriving at Toronto and in arriving here, and the Grand Trunk is almost invariably from one to four or five hours late.

Mr. CASEY. I quite agree with the remarks of the hon. member that mails for points west of Toronto should be sent by the Ontario and Quebec, which is the shortest route. I wished to call the attention of the Department to that matter and will do so officially by letter. I think that the through mails should go by the Ontario and Quebec since that route is the shortest. It would also be a great convenience to our part of the country, if a mail clerk were put upon that train. I do not like to suggest anything that involves extra expense, but I am informed that there is no mail clerk on the Canadian Pacific coming down by the night train, so that letters have to go to the Toronto post office to be sorted, and therefore they lose connection westward by the Credit Valley to St. Thomas, and all other places for which that is the distributing point.

Mr. MITCHELL. I rise to notice a remark made by the hon. member for West Elgin (Mr. Casey) in which he assumed that the fault lies with the Canadian Pacific, he takes that for granted. He forgets that there are some people in this House who know a little about that as well as himself. If he watched the arrivals and departures of the Grand Trunk, as I have, he would find that nine times out of ten they are behind time; indeed, so general is their delay that nobody expects them to arrive at the advertised hour. With regard to what he said as to the Canadian Pacific