

in this position should not be re-engaged either by the government or by the Colonization Association. In fact, I think it would be well for them to be sent to the hangman or to the penitentiary.

Reference has been made to a commission appointed to investigate grain rates charged on the lakes. I was pleased indeed to see a commission appointed for that purpose. One of the gentlemen appointed I know very well, and I cannot speak too highly of his integrity. I believe the work will be thoroughly done. I am afraid that we have fallen many times in the past into the habit of throwing suspicion on commissions the moment they have been appointed. We have had several commissions appointed in Saskatchewan, and I have some knowledge of commissions appointed by the federal government, and only in one case have I had reason to believe that there was good ground for suspicion or doubt. I believe that work such as this can be thoroughly done by a commission, and we might do a great deal to hinder and to destroy the effect of such work by casting suspicion on the commission as soon as it is appointed. An explanation was given me of the high cost of carrying grain across the lakes, and it seems to me that it may have had some bearing on the matter. At the port of Montreal, it seems, there was such a congestion of traffic that in a short time the grain was backed up to Port Colborne. The boats carrying the grain down the lakes had to remain for periods ranging up to a week, and sometimes longer, before they could unload, and instead of charging demurrage, the owners informed those who were chartering the boats that if they could make only half as many trips in the season as formerly they must make a greater charge. This has been stated on very good authority and has been given as an explanation of the high rates. Now, the loss to the shipper has been enormous. The statement has been made again and again, at meetings I have addressed, that all that has been gained by lower freight rates has been lost by the higher rates on the lakes. And to a certain extent that is true. I think something should be done to prevent a recurrence of this. In my opinion some change should be made at this session in regard to the coastal regulations. I understand that it is only by act of parliament that the coastal regulations can be amended. I think it should be so arranged that the minister in charge of the department, when he finds that there is a combine taking too great a toll from the grain on the lakes, should have the power to set aside the coastal

[Mr. Millar.]

regulations and allow American boats to compete.

No mention has been made in the Speech from the Throne in regard to deep waterways. This is a matter of very great importance. I fear very much that pressure might be brought to bear upon the government to persuade them to engage in this enterprise, which would cost a vast amount of money and the benefits from which, for a great many years at least, would not be sufficient to warrant the expenditure. I remember that in the discussion that took place in this House last year it was claimed by some gentlemen that a saving as high as five cents a bushel might be effected. I took the pains, during the last few months, to look into the cost of carrying grain from Fort William to Montreal over a period of years preceding, and I was surprised to find out that the total cost was about four cents a bushel. I cannot give the exact fraction, but I hope to have it in a few days. How in the name of common sense could six cents a bushel, or five cents a bushel, or four cents a bushel be saved, if the total cost was only about four cents?

In connection with the railway situation, reference was made to the appointment of Sir Henry Thornton as head of the government railways, and I must commend the government for their action in this regard. I think every member of this House should be very pleased indeed that the government has secured the services of a man of such great ability as Sir Henry Thornton possesses. I had the opportunity of listening to Sir Henry Thornton in the city of Regina, and at the close of his address the impression I carried away was that the great tact that he showed, and the great grasp of railway problems, and particularly the problems of the Canadian National Railways, were such that he was very likely to succeed in an almost impossible task. I was struck by a terse remark which he made in his address. In substance, he stated that, his friends in the Old Land had said that the task was impossible, that it could not be done, but, he said, that was one of the most attractive features in his view. I felt that the address on that occasion did a great deal to reassure the people in regard to our national railway problem. It did a great deal, I think, to inspire them and to secure their co-operation and support. I hope that the government will give Sir Henry Thornton and his colleagues every chance possible, in order that our national railways under government ownership will have a good chance for success.

With regard to the commission of inquiry that was referred to in the Speech from the