

the country and know all about its possibilities. Talk about estimating traffic on projected lines! Why it can only be a sort of educated guess, and perhaps not very much of a guess at that. In such a matter no one can guess with any certainty. One hon. gentleman spoke of the information given to the shareholders of a private company, like the shareholders of the Canadian Pacific Railway, in regard to branch line projects, and said it was far more detailed than any information that has been disclosed here. Very well, I will read the information the Canadian Pacific Railway shareholders receive. I have the report here. I am not criticizing it at all, but I am pointing out that we as shareholders of the Canadian National Railway system are far more critical than the shareholders of private companies because the latter trust their directors. Here is a quotation from the annual report of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for the fiscal year ended December 31, 1923:

10. During the past year a moderate programme of branch line construction in the western provinces was proceeded with, 231 miles of line being graded and 347 miles of track laid on lines the construction of which you had previously authorized. Your directors are of the opinion that some further extensions should be built during the present year in order to supply much needed railway facilities to farmers in the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. All the branches have been carefully located in good territory and should develop considerable additional traffic. Your authority will be asked for proceeding with the construction of the following lines and for the issue and sale of a sufficient amount of consolidated debenture stock to meet the expenditure, namely:—

Then the report goes on to enumerate 249 miles of proposed railway construction. I have given more information as to each one of these branch lines than is to be found in the report of this private company concerning these projected 249 miles.

Mr. MILLAR: I do not want to discuss the construction of branch lines in districts that I do not know anything about. But when we come to discuss resolution No. 14 I shall be prepared to do so because it proposes to construct a branch line in the constituency which I represent. But so much has been said as to what these branch lines should earn that I feel justified in quoting a paragraph from a report on The Wheat Situation, by Henry C. Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture in the United States. I think the quotation has a direct bearing on the matters we are now discussing. The extract in question reads as follows:

It is recognized that some railroads depend largely upon wheat for revenue. It seems evident, however, that in the long run such roads may profit by carrying wheat in a period of depression at little or no profit

in order that agriculture may be maintained as a source of revenue in periods of prosperity. Low freight rates have aided in the settlement and development of a large part of the wheat growing regions. Low rates may be as necessary to maintain this development through periods of depression as they were to secure the settlement and development.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: In answer to my hon. friend the minister I hope he is not going to take it for granted that because he has not already constructed lines in every instance he should not give proper information. I submit to him that you can learn just as much when you are running survey lines through a particular section of country as you can from the trackmen placed on dump. Traffic returns are not got from railway dumps. The real reason why we have full particulars in the present instance is that the matter seems to have been properly canvassed. There is one thing for which I would commend my hon. friend in this particular report. He has a plain statement of the management that, as regards the new money that is to be put into this venture, it will be a profitable investment.

Resolution reported, read the second time and concurred in. Mr. Graham thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 33, respecting the construction of Canadian National Railway lines, Kamloops-Kelowna division, province of British Columbia.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

#### COWICHAN BAY-VANCOUVER ISLAND

Hon. GEORGE P. GRAHAM (Minister of Railways and Canals) moved that the House go into committee to consider the following proposed resolution:

That it is expedient to bring in a measure to provide for the construction of a Canadian National Railway line from a point at mile 58.3 near Deerholme on the Vancouver island main line of the Canadian Northern Pacific railway, in a generally easterly direction to Cowichan bay, in the province of British Columbia; estimated mileage including existing grading 8 miles; estimated cost, \$358,000.

Motion agreed to and the House went into committee, Mr. Gordon in the chair:

Mr. GRAHAM: The memorandum which I have in regard to this branch line reads:

Cowichan bay, Mile 0-8—	Cost
Proposed in 1924—8 miles grade.. . . .	\$230,000
Proposed in 1925—8 miles track.. . . .	128,000
	\$358,000

In 1924 it is the intention to do the grading and bridging on the 8 miles at a cost of \$230,000, and in 1925 to lay the track on it and complete it at a cost for that year of \$128,000.

The purpose of this line is to make a short routing to tide-water for timber and its products from Van-