

am sorry that he is not in his seat, but he cannot get away with that. I have a letter here showing that a large feed company in British Columbia wired him on February 24 urging him to put mill feeds into the agreement, and he replied that it was too late, that the deal had been consummated by order in council the day before the wire arrived. That is a mistake. The order in council was passed, as he says, on February 25, but it was not the order in council that implemented the bargain at all. The order in council simply dismissed the appeal. It may have been in consequence of the bargain, but the bargain itself is not expressed in that order in council. It is expressed in a letter signed by the two railway heads and addressed to the minister. Anyhow I have a copy of a letter in front of me which I wrote to the Minister of Railways dated February 2, urging the inclusion of mill feeds, and the order in council was not passed until February 25. The agreement was changed in another respect on February 15, thirteen days after the date of my letter. The minister told us in the house the other day that the agreement did not go into effect until March 10, so there was ample time to have adjusted the matter and to have included mill feeds as well as wheat because, as I say, on February 15 a change was made in the agreement.

I said that there was no excuse for such action, but that is going too far. I should have said no justification. There is an excuse and it was put forward by the Minister of Railways and by the hon. member for Fraser Valley (Mr. Barber). They said, and I presume they are correct, although we have not the correspondence, that the British Columbia government accepted this transaction, gave it their imprimatur, O.K.'d it as being satisfactory; but I ask these two gentlemen who say that the British Columbia government accepted that deal, did British Columbia itself accept the acceptance of its government? I do not think so. Did they consult anybody? There is no record. Did they consult the dairy or poultry interests? There is no record. An election is coming on very shortly in British Columbia, and the government will have many things to answer for, for many of which they are not to blame, but it will have a hard job explaining its action in giving consent to such a one-sided agreement as that.

But it was not the only blunder which the British Columbia government made. As I said before, Mr. Beatty is a very astute man. He was out apparently to get everything he could out of the innocence of the Minister of Railways. He arranged the deal in the first place—the evidence is before me; I have

the letters—that the agreement was to apply only to wheat of No. 6 grade and lower, and to barley of equivalent grades. I have been in the feed business for seventeen years myself, and I have very seldom used No. 6 for chicken feed at all. It is almost invariably No. 5 or No. 4. The quantity of No. 6 that I would buy in a year would not amount to much. Well, we were going to have this brilliant arrangement put through, confined to No. 6 wheat and lower grades, and it would not have been worth a snap of the fingers; and British Columbia government, so we are told, agreed to it. But thank heaven, apparently, there was somebody with more intelligence. Hon. Mr. Hoadley, a minister in the Alberta government, interposed and said: No; it is nonsense to make it No. 6 grade, it should be No. 4; and it was so arranged. Unfortunately the Hon. Mr. Hoadley, apparently representing largely the farmers, did not take the trouble to look into the feed question, or I suppose we should have got redress on that also; but we did not.

The next trick that Mr. Beatty took—he took twelve out of thirteen—was to arrange that the agreement would be in force for one year only, and then we have to go back to the old rate. True, the minister provided, and I thank him for it, that then we could begin all over again and go over the long and extensive route of going to the Board of Railway Commissioners and appealing to the government again, at the end of one short year. But the rate was to exist for one year only, and then we could reappear and go over the whole ground again.

The next trick that Mr. Beatty won was a somewhat similar one. He arranged that the rate was not to come under the railway board, that it was not to be authorized by that board as all other rates have to be. No, this rate was put in a little division by itself subject to nothing except the railway's own good will or to a gentleman's understanding. Had it been arranged that the rate was to be authorized by the railway board, then at the end of a year the railways would have had to give reasons for changing it, but now they do not. The rate drops automatically, and then it is up to us to go through the whole performance again right from the beginning. I would almost call that a trick and a half to the credit of Mr. Beatty. There is no method of appealing against this thing. If we find that the rate is not being put into effect or that modifications are being introduced of their own conception, we cannot go to the railway board, nor can we go to