

duce her husband's naturalization papers and the consequence was she was refused a passport and she has not been able to go and see her children. The second case was that of a Scotch widow born in Scotland. She made application on the proper form. She lost her passage by that boat—she got it by a later one—because the minister who vouched for her was not accepted until he had, as in my case, written and said that he was indeed a minister of the gospel. The third case was that of a British woman who had married a German. Her boy had gone to the front and she had been very prominent in Red Cross work. But because she could not produce the naturalization papers of her husband, who had been dead for twenty-five years,

5 a.m. she was not able to go and see her children at all and to this date she has not seen them. Of course she had been married to an alien, but he had been dead twenty-five years and she naturally could not produce his naturalization certificate. I do not think the regulations of Great Britain extend to things of that kind.

It is easy to say that you can start ahead of time and you will be all right. That is true. You can start six months ahead. But sometimes people are in a hurry; sometimes they want to run across to the Old Country to consummate a business deal or to see relations who are very sick, and it is necessary to go in a hurry. It may be easy for hon. gentlemen here who know how to do this sort of thing, to go to the Passport branch and get a passport in an hour or so, but it is different in a case of plain people in small country places who are visiting the Old Country—the event of their lives—and who find all of a sudden that these regulations come in the way and prevent them from going. It is said, with a certain amount of truth that these regulations are based upon the British ones. They resemble in some degree the British ones, but they are much more stringent in the way they are being carried out. For instance, Britain is a small country, geographically speaking, and in that country they have two passport offices where this business is transacted readily and quickly as I have occasion to know. Two members of my family who recently left Scotland decided in a hurry to come out. In one case they had only a few days, and within about thirty-six hours after the application and photograph were put in, the passport was received. There was nothing of this nonsense about verifying people, and if there had been, the short distances in that country would allow this to be readily done; it would not

[Mr. Neill.]

take thirty-five days, and I do not think the British people expect us to carry out our regulations under any such system as that. Our laws do not require it, and I do not believe the British laws require their regulations to be carried out in that foolish way. Why then should we be the victims of this unnecessary system? What makes a government unpopular is when people cannot go about their business without being harassed unnecessarily. The Prime Minister, I think, could effect an improvement immediately. If he wishes to make a change, he does not need to hire the services of a superman or an expert lawyer. Let him take one of his own officials, a man of ordinary or even mediocre ability, and so long as he is not on a pedestal of his own fatuous self-importance, he can readily devise a system whereby this can be done easily, simply and cheaply, in a way that will enable the charge to be reduced a third. Between a five-dollar charge for fees paid and five or six dollars for photographs, this means an item of ten or twelve dollars. This may not mean much to us, but to people who have to go steerage,—and there are still people who go steerage—twelve dollars on a steerage ticket is something like twenty-five per cent of the value added on for this absurd regulation.

Supposing one of ourselves were concerned in this thing and we were hurrying home to the Old Country to see a dying wife or child. What would we think of these almost criminally stupid regulations that would prevent us from getting there until it was too late?

There is nothing spectacular about this reform. It is very simple and modest, but it concerns us all as Canadians. If the government can see their way to clearing up this mess and making it easier, simpler and cheap to get passports to go to the Old Country, they will be doing something to make things easier and pleasanter for the common people of Canada.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: The passport regulations are framed, not so much with a view to meeting any requirements of our government, as with a view to conforming with the requirements of governments of foreign countries to which persons may be going who are obliged to have passports with them in order that they may be admitted. That is the explanation of the cumbersome character of the regulations. I agree with my hon. friend that they are vexatious in their delays, but I am told that the form as drafted was based upon a form prepared and sent out by the League of Nations as a result of its careful