

of the British Columbia government and the various farmer bodies who appealed, finally reached the governor general in council in Ottawa, I think two and a half years ago. The government could have done several things: they could have granted the appeal; they could have refused it; they could have referred it back to the Board of Railway Commissioners, which course the Prime Minister hinted would be the one they would take if they did anything at all, or they could have continued doing nothing as they did for quite a period. But they did none of these things. There was a suggestion by somebody in the cabinet, and I more than suspect it came from the Prime Minister, because it was something that would suggest itself to his alert mind. I do not think it was the Minister of Railways (Mr. Manion), because I do not believe he would have thought of it. Someone suggested that instead of litigation, so to speak, the railways and the consumers should get together. This was not a bad idea at all, because, when you are in any way approaching litigation, it is always wise to compromise with justice to both sides. The only trouble was the method by which this was carried out. We often hear in the house charges thrown at the Prime Minister of being a dictator. Sometimes a dictator is a good thing; I only wish in this case the dictator had himself handled his original suggestions, but unfortunately he turned it over to the Minister of Railways, and the latter and the head of the Canadian Pacific, Mr. Beatty, sat in a poker game with British Columbia interests as the stakes and it was just too bad for British Columbia interests. Had the Prime Minister sat in at that game, I do not think we would have had Mr. Beatty walking off with the hair, hide, flesh and tail of the animal and leaving us with—well, what was left. To change the metaphor to that of the race track, the horse carrying Mr. Beatty's colours came in first and the British Columbia horse was not even in sight when the race was over.

Let me consider for a moment what Mr. Beatty got out of the deal. I could discuss first what British Columbia got out of it, but that could be put on the back of a postage stamp and still leave room for a gerrymandering redistribution map. It is more important to consider what Mr. Beatty got out of it. The first thing he got was the dismissal of the appeal. This was a fatal error for the government to make and a most unfair deal for British Columbia. Mr. Beatty stipulated and demanded—and he got away with it—that the appeal should be dismissed, not left as a protection for us in the future, not left even

[Mr. Neill.]

only as a means of enforcing the agreement which was merely a gentleman's one and not binding in law. The appeal should have been left at least as a club to guarantee the carrying out of the agreement, but the minister gave way and I think he made a fatal mistake. I shall give him full credit for one thing he did, because Mr. Beatty, a smart, capable, able man, was out to get one hundred per cent and a little bit more; he also demanded that this arrangement should be a final ending of British Columbia's claim, but the minister to his credit stood out and said that we must leave the door open. It will be open for British Columbia to start the case again, but we realize the enormous delay and expense that would be. It would take years—and that is not a figure of speech—and great expense to fight the case before the railway board, have it come here and then be stood over for a year or two before it was dealt with.

The second thing Mr. Beatty got away with was this: It is said that he met us half way; that he gave up half the differential. The answer to that is no, and again no, and a thousand times no; he did not do anything like that at all. He met us half way on grain alone. Our claim was for two classes: grain and mill feeds. Mill feeds consist of bran, shorts and middlings and they constitute by far the larger amount of the traffic involved. Let me explain. A hen eats wheat, shorts, bran and, to some extent, middlings. A cow does not eat wheat; it eats bran and shorts, and a hog eats shorts and middlings and does not eat wheat. The consequence is that the quantity of bran, shorts and middlings, that is of mill feeds, carried in relation to the quantity of wheat, will be in somewhat the same proportion as the size of the hen compared with that of the cow. That is not perhaps exact, but there is a far greater amount of mill feeds carried than of grain alone.

I see the word "screenings" was put in, and hence we have to raise up our hands and sing psalms and give glorification for being able to get screenings from the prairies at a reduced rate. Every British Columbia man knows that we do not import screenings from the prairies. We can get screenings at a very low price right out of the elevators at New Westminster and Vancouver. That is just a bit of window dressing.

It was right to cut the difference in rates in half. I think it should have been cut out altogether; that is the differential. Why is it not right to do it on mill feeds? There is no answer to that. The Minister of Railways pleads ignorance and says that he did not know that it was of so much importance. I