

regards the question of a coal rate, there is no further consideration of the question now than there was at any other time. There is absolutely no reason why the company could not go on with what it said it would do and the experiment certainly ought to be made. The Minister of Railways and Canals ought to assure us that the experiment will be made.

Mr. ROSS (Kingston): Will the minister give us the statement as to what, if anything, he has done since that report was made in the press?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): The arrangement was made strictly between the Alberta government and the railway. I was asked

for assistance and I gladly agreed  
12 m. to give it, with the consent of the government, of course, to the extent of a dollar a ton. The first proposal was for a 100,000 ton movement. I would have welcomed very much more, but on that movement I proposed at the time to give them fifty cents a ton. For some reason they cut the quantity down from 100,000 to 25,000 tons. On the 25,000 ton movement we had a definite arrangement made for that movement on the basis which I have outlined. Personally, I will do anything in my power to get the movement under way, because if coal can be moved in large train load lots, that can be done only in the slack season on the railways, and that is in May and June or June and July before the wheat movement starts, so as to get plenty of time to move the cars back for the heavy wheat movement which would occur later. That was all that was asked and that is the very slack season in our mines. Last year I went and discussed the matter with representatives of the mine owners in Drumheller, and I said to them: If we put up a substantial amount to guarantee this movement and to keep a check upon it, you ought to undertake to cut your production costs very materially. They agreed to do so if this was done at this particular time of the year which was a slack period. I have made this somewhat extended explanation, because I want the committee, and particularly our western people who are anxious about this matter, to know that so far as we are concerned, we are ready to do anything we can to forward this movement.

Mr. SHAW: The ex-Minister of Finance (Sir Henry Drayton) has suggested that the Minister of Railways and Canals (Mr. Graham), perhaps, could give some assurance in connection with this matter. If there is any failure of the plan, it is apparently on the part of the Canadian National Railways. It is  
[Sir Henry Drayton.]

very important that the experiment should be undertaken now. We would be delighted to have from the Minister of Railways his assurance that he is prepared to do what he can to see that the experiment is carried out pursuant to the arrangement made.

Mr. GRAHAM: The Canadian National Railways are working under a statute passed by parliament, and the Minister of Railways has no authority except his good influence in the matter of advice.

Mr. SHAW: That is what we want.

Mr. GRAHAM: I discussed this just the other day. I do not know anything about the details of the arrangement. I believe it is an arrangement made between Mr. Greenfield and the Canadian National Railways. I understand Mr. Greenfield is in Montreal now.

Mr. SHAW: Would the minister use his good offices with Sir Henry Thornton to see that this experiment is carried out?

Mr. GRAHAM: I would very much like to see it carried out, and I have told the railway company I would like to see them give rates whereby this experiment could be carried out. I cannot go any further than that.

Mr. COOTE: As regards the movement of steam coal from Alberta to Winnipeg, the freight rate, I think, is \$5.15 per ton.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman is speaking outside of this item. This is Ontario. That is not in this vote.

Mr. COOTE: It is the same at the other end. The coal is from Alberta. I will take only a minute if you will allow me. The question was brought up here in regard to coking Canadian coal. There is a good market in Winnipeg for coke made from Canadian coal if the railways could be induced to lower the freight rate by seventy-five cents a ton. The present rate is pretty high, and all I am asking is that the Minister of Mines and the Minister of Railways, who are both here, might take that into consideration and take it up with the railways. They might be induced to grant a cheaper rate to Winnipeg for the summer months.

Item agreed to.

To cover unprovided items 1923-24, as per Auditor General's report, part a, page 3, 1923-24, \$130,442.08.

Mr. ROBB: It is to cover the usual statutory items.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: Those are really the auditor's adjustment items.

Item agreed to.