

and yet money is being wasted on contracts similar to the ones to which I have referred. I do not know who is responsible for this, but I ask the minister to see to it that he is dismissed at once. These contracts should be cancelled and those people who have been put out of work because economy was to be practised should be reinstated at once.

Last year the minister and I had our little tilts, but I have learned that he was not responsible for the trouble in my constituency. Another hon. member was responsible for this, and I intend to confront him with these facts upon his return. It is my duty to defend my people; that is why I am here. When our people are in distress and when we are here to look after unemployment relief, it is our duty to fight for their interests. I do not wish to be disagreeable to anyone. In times of prosperity I would not mind anyone making some money by selling preserves in the right manner, but in times of distress, when people are in such trouble, one should see to it that the trouble ceases and profiteering is stopped.

Mr. SAMUEL GOBEIL (Compton): I do not for one moment propose to answer such an uncalled-for and silly statement as we have been obliged to listen to from the hon. member for Témiscouata (Mr. Pouliot), except to say that during the last four, five or perhaps six years one of my brothers in La Patrie has built up a little private trade in wild strawberries put up in cans. I have not the full information in regard to the matter; I hope the hon. member brings it up before the railway committee and between now and then I shall endeavour to get full information. The only thing I can say to the house to-day is that it came to my knowledge about a year ago that my brother received a sample order. Of course I am no merchant, but I imagine these sample orders are shipped on the understanding that they will not be paid for unless they are satisfactory. That is all I have to say for to-night, and if my hon. friend wishes to bring the question before the railway committee I shall certainly endeavour to get the particulars so as to be able to state the facts.

Mr. R. W. GRAY (West Lambton): No more important bill has been brought before the Commons than that which the Minister of Railways (Mr. Manion) has introduced to-night. He has given us a very fair and clear explanation of it, and had he not been prompted by one of his colleagues, the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Stevens), one would have had very little fault to find with the character of his speech. One or two

[Mr. Pouliot.]

matters discussed by the minister, however, induce me to refer very briefly to his remarks.

The first is the point raised by him that the conditions in which the government, on taking office, found the railway was due to a certain extent to the methods of the late Liberal administration. May I point out to him that during all the years since the Canadian National railway system has come into being, there has been annually appointed by the house a committee consisting of various members from all sides, Conservatives, Liberals and Progressives, and that each year, certainly since I have been a member of the house and of that committee, we have brought in a unanimous report on the Canadian National railway estimates and other matters which it has had to consider. Those of the Conservative party who sat on the committee had every opportunity to criticize the methods of the railway or of the government or the expenditure, had they seen fit to do so. The minister, while a member of the opposition, had every opportunity to criticize the committee's report when it was brought in, but I do not remember a single occasion when either the minister or any member of the present government or any other hon. gentleman on that side criticized the committee's report when it was presented to the house. Therefore I say to the minister he is hardly fair to the late administration when he blames it for the condition in which the Canadian National Railways found itself when he took office.

The other point on which I wish to speak for a moment is in connection with the royal commission appointed by the government. It is true that this commission was recommended by the committee of last year. I am glad also to find that the minister gives the committee credit for making various recommendations as regards economy and that those recommendations have been followed by the railway. But when he speaks of this commission; when he eulogizes the various appointees of it and goes out of his way to say how impartial the commission is and that he knows not whether its members vote Grit or Conservative, that is not the main question in which we as Canadians are interested. What we are concerned in is the report that these men will bring in, and had the minister not raised the question I do not think any hon. member would have discussed it until the report is brought in, at which time we can judge whether these men are of the high character that the minister has given them. If newspaper reports of various