

have spoken in regard to the quantity of coal that exists in the western provinces, and in particular, Alberta, may not be aware that much of this coal will not stand long shipping, nor long exposure, without crumbling into dust. This coal may be stored in good cool cellars and when it will give reasonable satisfaction, but much of it is of inferior quality. Some of the coal in southern Manitoba—and there is only a small coal area in the southwestern portion of the province—contains 35 per cent of moisture. Further West the percentage of moisture is less, and the quality of the coal rises accordingly. I understand that a briquette-making plant is now in operation in southern Saskatchewan, which plant by compressing the soft coal derived from some of the soft coal mines, produces a coal of a higher heat value than the best anthracite coal.

I am informed that the coal in the Smoky river area which caused a great deal of discussion in the House last year, has a higher heating value and is equal to any anthracite coal, and the Government would be well advised to see that those coal areas are transferred to the Canadian National railways, as they would then become a national asset. This is the only really valuable coal field accessible to the National railways which has not yet been given to some private enterprise. By constructing a railroad about 65 miles long, connection could be made between the Canadian National railways and the Smoky river area, and as the coal starts in at the side of a hill, this would be probably one of the cheapest mining propositions that we have in this country at present. I hope the Government will use every endeavour to get the briquetting plant under way and enlarge it to the extent found necessary, thus solving our hard coal problem.

If, as the hon. member for Regina (Mr. Cowan) has said, a branch line of about 60 miles long will open up an anthracite area in the vicinity of Calgary, that matter should be given attention. The trouble is that most of the soft coal of Alberta will not stand shipping; it cannot be shipped for weeks and left in cars, say at the head of the Lakes, and then shipped by boat, without going to pieces and crumbling into dust.

The Minister of Railways (Mr. J. D. Reid) might also give attention to the matter of having a more reasonable rate of freight on coal from Alberta to Winnipeg and the rest of the West during the sum-

mer season when railway cars are lying idle on sidings. The big rush from the West is when the grain crop is coming out and we have to depend on anthracite coal to a large extent, because the railways carry wheat to the head of the Lakes and carry back coal. The railways have had a gold mine in hauling wheat east and hauling back coal from the head of the Lakes. If it be possible for a railway to pay by hauling goods one way and empty cars back, there are plenty of empty cars in the summer time and the railroads would be well employed if they would make a bid for bringing coal East in the summer season. If the Canadian National railways were to do this, the deficit on our railways might be greatly reduced. These are three matters that might well be taken into consideration by the Government with great benefit to the nation at large.

Mr. JAMES R. WILSON (Saskatoon): Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a few observations in regard to this matter. I do not think there is anything that the people of both East and West are to-day more interested in than the development of our coal resources. The object of developing our coal resources is two-fold: First, to keep our money at home, purchasing our own materials and supplying our men with work, and second to create traffic for our railways which at the present time, show a balance on the wrong side owing to lack of traffic.

As the hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Blake) has stated, there is in Western Canada a great deal of coal that will not stand storing during the summer season. Some hon. members have suggested it will, but that is not possible because spontaneous combustion might occur. But we have hard coal, and I regret to say that up to the present time only one deposit of hard coal, known as Banff coal, has been worked, and this has been worked by the Canadian Pacific only to a very limited extent. Our experience in the West has been that while we could get a supply of this Banff coal, we did not look for Pennsylvania coal. But during the past four or five years it has been impossible to secure a supply of this Banff coal, because the Canadian Pacific Company have been producing from that particular mine only sufficient to supply their needs. There are two other known deposits, one of which has been referred to as the Smoky River deposit, and the other is the Sheep Creek deposit. The Smoky River deposit is located about 70 or 75 miles from the line of the Canadian National railways, and it is estimated that it would

[Mr. Blake.]