

Mr. POULIOT: The minister will permit me to remind him that up to the present moment I have said nothing offensive with reference to himself, and what is more, I do not intend to say anything offensive about him.

Mr. MANION: That is all right; I wasn't suggesting that.

Mr. POULIOT: Let me say to the minister, however, that in my opinion the management of the Canadian National Railways was wrong in buying this stuff. I am criticizing this as a purchase made by the management, and whether the purchase was made through the Stadacona Sales Company or through any other concern, the cold fact remains that this atrocious compound has been bought by the Canadian National Railways and, what is worse, has been bought at a higher price than would be paid for preserves of better quality. That is all. But what I find most extraordinary is this, that in this part of the country at present it is pretty hard to pick strawberries, and yet we find that this preserve has been put up during the winter. We had a very mild winter, it is true; December was exceptionally mild, and one or two strawberries were found here and there. But surely people cannot find strawberries in wintertime to make jams and preserves. Certainly you could not pick enough strawberries to sell to the Canadian National Railways for all the people who travel on their trains.

An hon. MEMBER: Does not the hon. gentleman know that we have ever-bearing strawberries in greenhouses?

Mr. POULIOT: If they came from greenhouses I am sure the price would be at least 75 cents. But this does not purport to be made from greenhouse strawberries; they are wild strawberries. Apparently they grow in the fields, under the snow, for this preserve was made in January. In the case of the parliamentary restaurant I could not believe that these strawberries were purchased last summer to be used this winter, but I was told that the purchases of preserves by the Canadian National Railways were made in January. The strawberries themselves probably have to be purchased in June because in December or January the fields are covered with snow and nothing can grow.

I do not know if this one manufacturer is related to the hon. member. When he is present in the house perhaps he will tell us who recommended that this product be used, when the company first started to make pre-

serves, how large their kettles are and so on. To use an American expression, it will be interesting to hear about the melting pot and to find out what quantity of jams or preserves have been sold and at what price.

The jars used by E. D. Smith and Company are of the same size and shape as those put up by the other company. The label may be a little different but everything else is the same. One is sold for fifteen cents while the latter is sold for twenty-five.

The hon. member for Compton is very scrupulous. He told me the other day that he was defending the millionaires. Is he one in making? He told me also that I was fattening myself at the expense of the country, but I have never done that. I wonder if he is any relation to lord bacon, Sir Joseph Flavelle? That gentleman is an important personage in the city of Toronto and perhaps through him the other fellow might sell more preserves.

Down in my constituency are many people who for years have been faithful employees of the Canadian National Railways. This company now comes along and says it has no money and some of these employees are sent back home. They are being deprived of work while such contracts, as those to which I have referred, are being carried out. I know the Minister of Railways is doing his best, but such practices are unfair. There are 50,000 people in my constituency, several hundred of whom work for the railway company. Some of these men have had the honour to drive the trains upon which the Prime Minister (Mr. Bennett), the Governor General or Sir Henry Thornton have ridden. For this service they received letters of appreciation, but that is all. Some of these men came from the country, others from the different villages; they established themselves and attempted to bring up their families as good citizens. Now they are being deprived of work because the company has no money. I remember the first session of 1930, when the leader of the opposition (Mr. Mackenzie King) stated that he considered it was his duty to prevent unemployment, and he told Sir Henry Thornton to keep on as many men as possible. When this government came into power there were fewer unemployed than there are at the present time. The Minister of Railways has just said that the Canadian National Railways must practise economy. We agree with him, but at the same time we cannot approve of the railway increasing the number of unemployed.

I receive letters every day from people who have been deprived of their livelihood,