

I might mention another matter of minor importance, in the same category as the carriage of mails from Quebec; I refer to the carriage of overflow mails from Montreal to Toronto. This is not a serious item viewed from the standpoint of financial returns to the railway. At present I understand the Canadian Pacific Railway, on three days of the week, carries part of the overflow mail, in storage or baggage cars, and possibly this particular service is attractive to the railways. No doubt the Post Office Department would find it profitable to consider the question of allowing the Canadian National Railways to carry these mails in particular, and all of them, every day of the week.

There are a few other suggestions which I might throw out with respect to possible changes that might be made to the advantage of the Canadian National Railways as well as in the interests of the people of Canada as a whole. A saving might in some instances accrue to the Post Office Department also. The hon. member for Dauphin spoke of the need of some consideration being given to such railway train duplication as exists at present and which might be eliminated. The point I am raising now is rather similar. I suppose that every member in this House at some time or other in his life has suffered the inconvenience, on coming to a junction point between one railway and another, of having to wait a more or less lengthy space of time before making connections. If hon. gentlemen will only think of the inconvenience they have suffered under such circumstances as individuals, only once or twice or at most a few times in the course of a lifetime, they will readily sympathize with the country at large in the inconvenience to which the people are put every day of the year and every year in our history through the delay that is caused in the transportation of mails for the same reason. It seems to me that from the postal point of view alone this matter is well worth taking into consideration. Probably my hon. friend from North Toronto (Mr. Church) will check me up on this with the suggestion that it is a matter for the railway commission. No doubt the railway commission might very well employ themselves in providing better connections at points of junctions between two railways in the interests of the travelling public. But I emphasize here the importance of such an improvement for the proper distribution of the mails. If trains could be made to connect at junction points it would then be possible for the Post Office Department to route mails over two lines rather than over one as at present is the case.

Then there is the question of the carriage of overflow mail throughout the Dominion as a whole. The Canadian National Railways, I think, might be given the carriage of these mails in any particular place where a great deal of it originated. There is an overflow service between large centres of the Dominion, in eastern Canada particularly and to some extent in the west, and this overflow mail could perhaps be subdivided for the purpose I have in mind. I do not

know how the Post Office Department views this matter at all.

Strictly speaking, overflow mail is mail that cannot be carried in the postal service car, the storage space available in that car being very limited. The mail clerks must have their distribution boxes placed all around the car and they must be able to move freely from one point to another, so that there is not a great deal of space left for the storage of bulky mail. Anything that cannot go into that car is classed as overflow mail and is carried on a car behind. The hon. member for Dauphin gave the cost per foot per mile of the space so allotted. But there is a certain class of overflow mail which differs from this ordinary material. This other kind appears seasonally, some of it very regularly. We have for example certain magazines and weekly newspapers—one at least in Canada—that constitute a very large amount of overflow mail every week in the year. Then there are other magazines that appear every two weeks or perhaps monthly; and at certain seasons of the year large quantities of catalogues appear in the mails, sometimes filling a whole car by themselves. That kind of overflow mail, when it is sufficient to fill a car, is I believe very profitable to the railways; at any rate, it is decidedly advantageous to them to get the carriage of this mail, inasmuch as it is easily disposed of, being simply destined from one point to another. This mail entails no particular responsibility except the care on the part of the railway people to see that it is kept intact. I would suggest to the Post Office Department that mail of this kind, where the question of distribution en route does not enter into the matter at all, and where there is no particular necessity of relieving storage space by taking it into the mail service car, be turned over to the Canadian National Railways wherever possible. For example, there is every week a car of weekly newspapers originating, let us say, in Montreal for distribution in western Canada. That car could very well be carried to Winnipeg at least by the Canadian National Railways.