

had better postpone our decision. We have heard that this is a question of great importance, a question involving sovereignty over an Empire; and surely, therefore, it ought to receive the amplest consideration. I do not know what the intention of the parties may be as to a division; but I think that the discussion upon the merits of the award has come up very irregularly. I ventured to think, yesterday, that the introduction of such a motion was out of order, but I bowed to your decision then, and I do not intend to dispute it now. I have, however, no hesitation—whatever may be my views, which I do not intend now to explain, as to the merits of the award, on the policy of confirming or rejecting it—I can have no hesitation, I say, in voting against referring the subject to a Committee of the House, because I consider that it is a most objectionable proceeding. It is an abnegation of the duty of the Administration of the day to allow a private member to move for a Committee, to raise a question upon which it was their own duty to advise the House as to the proper course to be pursued. They have had ample time to do that since the award was given, they have had the whole Recess to gather information to guide them to a correct decision, and to enable them now to get the views of the House thereon. I shall vote without considering the merits; for the consideration of the merits will come up more legitimately on the Bill of my hon. friend from Bothwell (Mr. Mills). I shall vote against this motion: first, as being irregular, and, in the second place, as being improper to originate with a private member of the House, at all events, until the Government had submitted the question, which has been so properly described by the hon. member for West Durham (Mr. Blake) as being of the nature of an international question.

MR. ANGLIN: Coming from a Province which has no special or direct interest in the matter, I have listened to the debate so as to form an opinion as to how I should vote. But I am still somewhat at a loss. If I understood him correctly, the position taken by the leader of the Government was that this is a question which must be submitted to the Privy Council in England, for settlement. If this be so, I cannot see what can be

gained by the appointment of the Committee now proposed. Is it supposed that the Committee will gather information that it may be useful to submit to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council? The hon. member who has just sat down contends that, in a matter on this importance, the Government should not allow any private member of this House to take control of the proceedings. The hon. member for Algoma (Mr. Dawson) is within his right in moving his resolution, but the leader of the Government would only be doing his duty to this House and the country in stating that he would not consent to a Committee of this kind being appointed, unless some good could be accomplished by it; and what good can be done by it I can hardly imagine. It would have to enter into abstruse questions about which there is so much difference of opinion between gentlemen who have studied the subject so thoroughly. The hon. member for Halton (Mr. Macdougall) informed us that it would be impossible for the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council to say positively what is the boundary line, as defined in any existing Act of Parliament, or other document of an authoritative character. He described the vast territory under dispute as equal to an area comprising many nations of Europe; but the hon. gentleman subsequently stated that the portion about the proprietorship of which there can be any reasonable doubt is within comparatively narrow boundaries, and is treeless, barren, and worthless, except for the minerals it may possibly contain. I think the question is one of so intricate a nature, Sir, that it cannot be considered thoroughly by a large Committee of this House, unless it sit from day to day, and devote its whole time to the subject. The hon. member for Algoma has stated that very important Acts of Parliament were never taken into consideration by the Commissioners. I regard that as a mere assertion on the part of the hon. gentleman. He believes that such was the case, no doubt; but there is nothing to show that the Arbitrators did not consult those documents.

MR. DAWSON: I said that they were not brought forward by the advocates who appeared before the Arbitrators; I did

MR. HOLTON.