

contemplated the intervention of twenty-four hours between each sitting of the House. I can scarcely suppose it would mean that if the Committee sat to-morrow, and the House did not adjourn until 9 or 10 o'clock at night, it would preclude the consideration of the Bill by the Committee the following day. Literally interpreting the rule, it would mean twenty-four hours from the time when the second reading passed this House before it could be considered by the Committee. There has been some little latitude, I have noticed, in the interpretation of the rules here, and the rule might be construed as meaning from one sitting of the House to another, but whether it was contemplated to apply the rule to a case like this, where there have been two sittings in one day, I cannot say. There is an easy way of getting over the difficulty. The House might consent to suspend the rule, but I very much fear that such a course would be objected to by some of the members who are opposed to this Bill.

Hon. Mr. DICKEY—I mentioned it because it is the only Bill that will be referred to us, and I did not like to give thirty or forty gentlemen the trouble of meeting and doing something that might be disallowed by the House. As the rule has been suspended in so many cases, I thought it might be dispensed with in this case.

Hon. Mr. VIDAL—In endeavouring to interpret the meaning of one of the Rules of the House, it would be well to think for whose benefit the rule has been made. Is it for the benefit of the members of the Senate or for the benefit of persons outside, that they may have due notice that the Bill is to be considered? My opinion is that twenty-four hours must elapse between the second reading of the Bill and its consideration by the committee. Unless the rule is suspended by the consent of the House, the Bill could not go before the committee to-morrow.

Hon. Mr. POWER—I did not understand the leader of the House to express any decided opinion on this question, and I do not think that our practice has been of the rigid character indicated by the hon. gentleman from Sarnia. I have very frequently known Bills to be considered by the Committee within twenty-four hours after the second reading, without the notice required by the

Rules. In this particular instance the parties who are interested have been here, and their representatives are here now in force, so that there is no harm being done. We are suspending the rules on behalf of the Government measures, and pushing business through. Is there any particular reason why this Bill should be made a sort of scapegoat for the laxity which has been shown in dealing with other Bills, some of which are not so meritorious? No substantial reason has been given why this Bill should not pass. It was not opposed in the House of Commons, and the fact is just this—the company has built some sixty miles of road through a good and populous country, and proposes to build some sixty miles more. The company is not asking Parliament for any aid or special privileges. I think it one of the most meritorious private bills that we have had before the House this session. Although the twenty-four hours notice might be required if we were interpreting the rules strictly, I would remark that we do not interpret our rules strictly, and the Chairman would have been justified in thinking that the notice was sufficient. The Forty-second Rule provides that measures are sometimes passed with unusual speed, and now at the close of the session, is just the time when measures are being passed with unusual speed. I do not see why a different measure should be dealt out to this Bill from that which has been applied to all others. It is a case for liberal construction and a liberal construction of this rule would allow the Bill to go before the Committee to-morrow morning. I think the Chairman would have been quite justified in calling the Committee without referring the matter to the House and reporting the Bill to the House.

Hon. Mr. McMILLAN—I do not know that I am particularly interested in this Bill—in fact I know very little about it although it is in my charge. I agree with the hon. member from Halifax—I do not see why this Bill should be made a scapegoat at the tail end of the session. It certainly will not help those who are opposed to the measure when it comes before the Railway Committee, to be raising all these technical objections at different stages of the Bill. I would rather see the hon. gentleman accept the motion to suspend the rule and fight the Bill for all it is worth before the Committee. If he has a good case, if he has a valid objection to the