

Great Eastern Railway section, the Montreal Bridge section, and the Ottawa Valley section; the whole forming links in a chain of railway which was to extend from Gaspé Basin to Sault Ste. Marie. The charter has lapsed; this House has refused with full knowledge to revive the charter of the Atlantic and Lake Superior Railway Company. These debts remain unpaid and now an attempt is made to take out portions of this road, to give it new life, to turn it into an electric railway and to give it an entrance into the city of Montreal. The arguments advanced to the House by the member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) have been laid before the committee by him on two occasions. To-day, seventy-two members were present in the committee when the vote was taken, and by yeas and nays the majority declared that the case presented for this application was not a favourable one. I protest in my own name and in the name of the people I represent against the taking of the Ottawa Valley section out of the Atlantic and Lake Superior system until that concern has satisfied the legitimate debts which are due to my constituents. As long as this official report of the Railways and Canals Department of Canada shows that the Ottawa Valley section remains a portion of the Atlantic and Lake Superior system, no letter from Mr. Globensky, the secretary of the Ottawa Valley Company, and no letter from Senator Thibaudeau of the Atlantic and Lake Superior Railway Company has weight against the official document which is in possession of members of this House.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. MARCIL (Bonaventure). So far as Mr. Armstrong is concerned, I may say that if I were to undertake to sketch before this House his doings in the county of Bonaventure, I would occupy most of the afternoon. But I consider that above him I owe a duty to my county, and it was for that reason that I took the stand which I did, and which I was glad to see ratified by the majority of the Railway Committee.

Mr. J. E. LEONARD (Laval.) (Translation). Mr. Speaker, having been detained in Montreal on professional business, I was unable to attend this morning's meeting of the Railway Committee, and consequently take part in the debate on the Bill which has just been reported by that committee, a Bill in which the constituency I represent is greatly interested.

I do not understand why my hon. friend from Bonaventure (Mr. Marcil), whose county, situated hundreds of miles away from Montreal, has interests totally foreign to those of the counties crossed by the projected line, should so oppose the Bill. I am always surprised to find how the members from the province of Quebec are lacking in spirit of co-operation which is found elsewhere, especially among the members from

Mr. MARCIL (Bonaventure).

the western provinces. When their general interests are at stake, you will generally find these gentlemen from the west working together; while we, members from Quebec, are always at daggers-drawn. What has my hon. friend from Bonaventure to do with this question? We are here four members representing the constituencies interested in that road; two are supporters of the government, and two are members of the opposition. Out of the four, three are favourable to the road; as I feel confident that the hon. member for Argenteuil (Mr. Christie) is in its favour. Why should the name of Mr. Armstrong be mixed in this matter? We are cognizant of the ill-feeling which exists between that gentleman and the hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Mr. Préfontaine) and the member for Bonaventure, but we have nothing to say to that. All that we ask is that the counties which we represent should have greater railway facilities with Montreal. That Bill, which is a private one and concerns the four counties I have just mentioned should be dealt with as all other such Bills, provided its object be considered just and reasonable. We are not asking favours from the government; we are not applying for a grant; no, all we ask is that these counties be dealt with in the same way as other counties throughout Canada, that they be not placed under a disadvantage. We represent these counties, we are competent to judge of their needs. After thoroughly going into the matter, we are in a position to say to the House and to the government that this railroad is needed. Does our application interfere with any vested rights? No. Then, it seems that it should be granted, whatever our political leanings. Because we are members of the opposition is not sufficient reason why we should not be treated in the same way as other members of the House.

The counties of Argenteuil, Two Mountains, Jacques Cartier and Laval are the richest in the province of Quebec; nevertheless, they are without railway communication with the commercial metropolis of Canada. When residents of those counties have to go to Montreal, to sell their produce on the markets of that city, they are compelled to drive distances of 25, 30 or even 40 miles. Is not that an abnormal position and greatly to the disadvantage of those people? It matters little whether this Bill is introduced by a supporter or by an opponent of the government; it matters little that among the promoters there should be personal enemies of some members on the other side of the House; if the reasons urged in its favour are good, all other considerations should be put aside.

Let the strictest terms be laid down for the purpose of protecting the road against any design on the part of schemers; let the Railway Committee, by a hard and fast