

rights of the French population to a larger proportion of its representation in the Senate of Canada, and to increase accordingly such representation?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—The government is not prepared to announce any policy or principle on the subject. The seat occupied by Senator Cochrane was occupied by the late Senator Sanborne, who was one of the Senators named in the original proclamation.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—I call the attention of the hon. gentleman to the answer he has given me on a former occasion.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—All I can say is that it had no reference whatever to the possibility of that vacancy arising—no reference whatever to it.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—I want to call the attention of the hon. minister to this matter—he did not let me finish—he told me about the Atlantic service, that the time has changed, and that new speed might replace the old speed. I think the French population of Wellington has so increased as to become the two thirds of the total population and that such a fact should impress itself on and call for the consideration of the government in the choice to be made of a successor to the late Mr. Cochrane.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND—The hon. gentleman makes a statement that is true to a certain extent. The English speaking population of the province of Quebec has more than its share of the representation in this chamber, but I think it would be hardly good politics to withdraw the seat that the English speaking minority from Quebec has had, which was held by the late Senator Cochrane. The English speaking minority is distributed in quite a number of counties and senatorial divisions, but that minority is more especially grouped in the Eastern Townships, and I think it should be one of the last seats the government would think of taking from the minority in order to bring their representation to a fair basis. There are other seats which are mostly—I should say exclusively—French in the province of Quebec, represented by English speaking members of this body, and the remarks of the hon. gentleman would perhaps apply to such districts when the occasion would offer.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—I thank the hon. member very much for giving me the views of the government on the subject. I hope that when the government arrives at a decision they will not forget what the hon. member has just stated to the House.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND—I can promise the hon. gentleman I shall not forget the fact myself either.

RAILWAYS LAW CONSOLIDATION BILL.

AGAIN IN COMMITTEE.

In the committee on clauses 5, 6 and 7,

Hon. Mr. BEIQUE—With a view to reconciling conflicting opinions, especially those of the Secretary of State, I beg to move that clauses 5, 6 and 7 be struck out, and replaced by the clause of which I gave notice, with the following words added:

This section shall not, however, operate as regards through-traffic on railways owned by any provincial government without the consent of such government.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—As the clause stood originally, it seemed to me that we were really over-riding the sovereignty of the local government. Take the case mentioned yesterday of the Timiskaming Railway. If that road were taking traffic from one of our main lines, and the traffic over the Timiskaming Railway might be only ten miles, of course the portion of compensation they would get would be so trifling, it would not be worth accepting. We must remember that on all those subsidiary lines, they have less business than the main line. As a matter of fact, they are constantly falling into the power and becoming part of the main lines of the country. The Grand Trunk Railway and the Canadian Pacific Railway are now largely made up of branch lines which were originally independent. They could not survive; the traffic on a short line was found not to be paying. If we pass the clause as it stood in the original Bill, the traffic they would receive would not enable them to live. For that reason I think the proposition is a very wise one. No rights are interfered with, and it is for the province to say whether they will agree to it or not.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—That argument applies to every local road owned by an independent company, and if the pro-