

help us out. If we continue to have such crops as we had last year, I believe the bargain will come out all right; but this Dominion government must not place any further burdens on the province of Manitoba, or it will bring that province to a state of very serious indebtedness in the near future. I would ask the Minister of Finance to allow the Bill to stand until the Minister of Railways is here, because he was thoroughly in touch with the Bill that came before the House last session. The Minister of Finance was only at the Railway Committee a very little time, but the Minister of Railways knows exactly what this clause means, and I would ask him to be on hand to explain it. In the meantime I would ask that clause 'E' be struck out of the Bill.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. I would rather hear from members of the committee who are more familiar with the Bill than I am. I understood that this Bill was reported with the concurrence of the Minister of Railways, and I would not like to take the responsibility of making any motion against the judgment of the committee.

Mr. CLARKE. Why not let it stand until the Minister of Railways is here?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. I would like to hear what the promoters say, and also the members who were present at the committee and supported the Bill.

Mr. OLIVER. I admire the solicitude of some hon. members in regard to the branch line provided for in subsection 'E.' As it is a branch line that entirely concerns the constituency I represent, I might possibly venture to state my views in regard to it. In the committee I objected to the section as it appeared in the Bill, and it was amended with the consent of the company, and with the approval of the committee, so that for my part I was willing to withdraw my objections to it. That being the case, and the matter having been discussed there and settled, as I understood, whether I am particularly friendly to the Bill or not, I feel bound to uphold that settlement now that the Bill comes before the House. I think that is only fair to myself and all the parties concerned. As to the merits of this proposed branch line, my hon. friend from Middlesex (Mr. Gilmour) objects to it because it does not touch the Canadian Pacific Railway. That used to be a radical objection to any railroad in the North-west.

Mr. GILMOUR. My objection is not that it does not touch the Canadian Pacific Railway, but that there is no way out to the east, without going back north 120 miles.

Mr. OLIVER. Once the Canadian Northern is constructed, back north will not mean anything more than back south. It all depends on where you are coming from and where you are going to. My hon. friend

from Selkirk (Mr. McCreary) insists on coming up to the Saskatchewan river from Montana; but he is not bound to come that way. Everybody coming to the Saskatchewan is not coming from Montana; in fact, a very small proportion are coming from Montana. As a matter of fact, the people are coming from that portion of the United States which lies south and south-easterly from the city of Winnipeg, and it is shorter for them to come to the Saskatchewan district by way of the Canadian Northern than by the Canadian Pacific Railway. So that while I do not wish to argue for the Canadian Northern Railway Company nor for this branch line in particular, I do wish to point out that the objections which are urged against the branch line are not valid objections, and did not prevail with the Railway Committee, and that an arrangement having been agreed to in the committee, it is hardly fair to raise a contention in the House against the arrangement. The country which is to be served by this branch line is already very largely settled. There is a necessity for the construction of such a road as this; and when the Canadian Northern Railway Company propose to take the responsibility of serving a certain piece of country with a certain branch line, I do not feel warranted in taking the responsibility of opposing them. As to what some other company has offered to do, I am prepared for my part to support the proposition of the other company too. I would not feel justified in rejecting their proposition, but neither do I consider that they are justified in asking the House to reject the Canadian Northern proposition.

Mr. McCREARY. The hon. member for Alberta (Mr. Oliver) apparently takes the same stand as did the hon. member for Saskatchewan (Mr. Davis) a few days ago—that because this particular branch line happens to be in Alberta, no other member has a right to discuss it. Now, I find that great portions of this and other lines are in the province of Manitoba, and therefore I claim the right to discuss all questions relating to them. The hon. gentleman seems to rest a large part of his argument on the point that a large number of the people who are going in to the country do not come from Montana or the neighbouring states; but I find by the immigration returns that nearly 97 per cent of the 3,700 people who came from the United States in the month of March struck the Canadian Pacific Railway main line at Moosejaw, or Medicine Hat. They came in either via Coutts or via North Portal. If they came via Coutts, they struck the main line at Medicine Hat and would go by the Canadian Pacific Railway to where this new line is projected. If they came in on the Soo line via North Portal, how would they reach this line? They would strike the main line at Moosejaw, and would have to go back 350 miles to Portage la Prairie and then

Mr. McCREARY.