

committee to look into the evidence, I have perfect confidence in that committee that they will guard the interests of all parties concerned as jealously as this House will. If any reason should be shown why this Bill should not pass, the committee will report to that effect. How are we to judge whether it is right to pass this Bill or not, if we do not send it to the committee, where the evidence concerning it can be obtained? I am persuaded that the majority of this House will see the reasonableness of the proposition that has been made. We do not commit ourselves to the principle of the Bill, when it is a private Bill which requires investigation.

HON. MR. POWER—I am rather in a quandary as to how I should vote on this motion, and I am placed in that position by the hon. leader of the Senate. When the Bill was under discussion on a previous occasion he opposed it as a matter of principle, and he tells us this evening that while he may possibly oppose the Bill at a later stage, still he thinks it would be highly unfair to the hon. promoter, and the person whose interests he represents, not to allow this Bill to go to a committee for the purpose of having an inquiry. Now I remember that when this Bill was under discussion before, the hon. leader of the House did not take that view. At that time he looked at the preamble, in which are set out all the arguments in favor of passing the Bill, and took the ground that if all the statements in the preamble—and that is all that could go to the committee—if all those allegations were true, the Bill should not pass. Now, what is the substantial allegation? It is that this patent was granted on the 12th of July, 1883—the day is perhaps a little ominous—and under the law the owner of the patent should have made his application on or before the 12th July, 1888. Now, it may be that Mr. May was engaged in the celebrations which occasionally take place on the 12th July, but then that might have been forgiven him if he had applied next day, but no application was made for three months afterwards, not until October, 1888, and since that time a further period elapsed, from October, 1888, until the opening of the present session of Parliament, before any steps were taken by Mr. May to make his rights good.

HON. MR. MACINNES (Burlington)—He could not have taken any steps before.

HON. MR. POWER—He could have applied in the Session of 1889. As the hon. member from Lunenburg has said this evening, and the leader of the House said on a former occasion, the public may have been using this patent since.

HON. MR. MACINNES (Burlington)—He, Mr. May, had no opportunity of applying to Parliament until now. He could not have done it during the previous Session.

HON. MR. POWER—Why not?

HON. MR. MACINNES—Because there was not time. Last year the House had risen, and he applied at the very earliest period he could to this Parliament for relief.

HON. MR. POWER—His patent right expired on the 12th July, 1888. The application to the Department was made by his solicitor in October, 1888, and then the application should have been made to this Parliament the following Session. A good deal of time has elapsed and, as has been pointed out, the rights of other people may have arisen in the meantime. Now we are asked, because his solicitor neglected his duty, to pass this Bill. I quite agree with the view taken by the leader of the House on a previous occasion, that this would be vicious legislation, and the arguments which the hon. gentleman has made use of this evening have not changed my mind. Unless he produces stronger reasons in support of the Bill I shall oppose the second reading.

HON. MR. DRUMMOND—With regard to the rights of other parties which may have arisen in the meantime, clause 2 applies to them.

HON. MR. KAULBACH—No.

HON. MR. DRUMMOND—Clause 2 says:

“Any person who has, within the period between the twelfth day of July, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, and the extension of renewal hereunder of the said letters patent, acquired any interest or right in respect of such improvements or invention, shall continue to enjoy the same as if this Act had not been passed.”

That fully provides for any interest which may have arisen prior to the passing of this Act.