

them, and all they ask is that as a company they shall have authority to carry on this business, a business they have been carrying on without any responsibility, and if they carry the mails, as no doubt they are not allowed to do under the law, what possible harm could there be? What objection could there be to giving them the power to enter into an arrangement with the Postmaster General from post to post and from settlement to settlement, where the government has no mail accommodation now? That is all they ask. If there are any contracts for carrying the mail in that portion of the country, all the government has to do is to say 'No, you cannot have it.' They are carried now by a responsible party.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—But they can make a contract without that clause. The clause goes further and says 'with any corporation or any individual.'

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—No it does not go further. I am speaking of the one point. That is to take power as a company to enter into this contract. That is all it does, and it is precisely the same with the other amendments, and the same argument applies to all the amendments which the hon. Secretary of State proposes. It proposes to restrict the operations of this company in matters of making contracts with the government for certain purposes, and in erecting telephone and telegraph communication between different posts and elsewhere if they please. The hon. gentleman says 'Why they can go anywhere, even to Mexico'. Supposing they do. Have we not already in two or three charters granted powers to Canadian corporations to go into Mexico and into other countries and islands on the Pacific. That is a power we have given them, and even supposing this company has that power what harm is it going to do?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—That is not the point. My contention is that under this charter they can build a telephone line between Edmonton and Calgary.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Then let them build it if they please. Is the hon. gentleman standing here as the advocate of all the monopolists in the country?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—No.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—We have had too much of that kind of thing, and if we could have an opposition telephone, or telegraph communication by any company, particularly this new company, let us have it. Let me tell the hon. gentleman another thing; if he has studied at all the character of the corporations that are in the unorganized territories and that have been carrying on business there for a long time, he will find that they would close out any other company that goes in, unless they have the authority to carry on their business by law. It was urged very strongly that the clause giving them the right of expropriation should not be inserted in this Bill. Well, it was pointed out particularly by the hon. gentleman from the Northwest Territories who has studied this question, and every one knows that the companies in the Northwest Territories—that is in the unorganized portions, on the borders of Alaska, down through that country—are so powerful that unless this company had power to construct their lines over portions of the territory which the other companies own, no one could go in there, and the time is fast approaching when they will be obliged to give others the power to enter that country and erect telephone and telegraph lines and do other work which they cannot do on account of the monopoly which exists at present in the country. I must confess that when I first read the Bill I thought it was an extraordinary one, but when I came to consider where its operations are to be carried on—and there are no powers given in this Bill which are not given in the other—I gave my weak support, whatever it might be, to the passage of the clause and I am quite satisfied that the gentlemen who come from the Northwest Territories and those particularly who have studied the question as effecting the unorganized territories will tell the hon. Secretary of State that if these amendments are adopted this Bill is not worth the snap of your finger.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—I do not propose to restrict them in the slightest degree by the language I propose introducing there. But I say this Bill gives them power which parliament never contemplated, and which they never intended to use themselves. Under that Bill they can build a telegraph or tele-