

then left, under the impression that nothing more would be done with regard to it, except to refer it to a special committee. The preamble was rejected, but rejected, as I have said in the absence of these members who, if present, would have supported it, and who had left when it was agreed not to go on with the Bill.

I may say that the lumber industry is the most important on that river, and in order to carry on lumbering operations successfully, a Bill should pass empowering the company to build proper protection. I do not wish at all to override the will of the committee—but I am satisfied—and I think the majority of the committee who were present in the beginning, will bear me out in this—that the rejection of the preamble was irregular and due to a misunderstanding.

The PRIME MINISTER. I do not know that this motion is absolutely unprecedented, though I do not remember any such motion having ever been made. Accepting, however, the statement of the hon. gentleman, that the vote taken in committee was a snap vote, the whole committee not being present, I have no objection to allowing the motion to carry.

Motion agreed to.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. SPROULE. Before the Orders of the Day are called, I beg to refer to a report which I see in a newspaper to-day regarding something that I said in committee yesterday, and which is a very unfair and incorrect version of what I really did say.

Mr. LANDERKIN. What is the paper?

Mr. SPROULE. I have here the Toronto "World," but I see that several other papers evidently misunderstood what I said, and reported me somewhat on the same line as this correspondent has done. The report says:

Dr. Sproule characterized the average system of lending of Canada "a swindling system," and held that no more charters of Bills should be sanctioned by Parliament that did not protect borrowers from a higher interest than was fair, and he understood that under the present system it was stated a loan was to be repaid, say with 6 per cent interest on the principal; whereas the interest was in reality on the full amount originally borrowed, irrespective of repayment.

Then it goes on to say that Mr. McCarthy said:

That unless such assertions were founded on fact they should not be made; but, if founded on fact, the sooner an investigation was commenced the better.

The report also contains the following:—

E. F. Clarke said all the expectations of the company might not have been realized, but it could not be pretended that there had been any sharp practice or operations in the remotest de-

gree justifying the use of the term "swindling" or anything of that sort.

In the first place, I may say that I never made such a statement as is attributed to me here when it says that I "characterized the average system of lending in Canada as 'a swindling system'." I said, with reference to the company that was before us, that they sent out literature offering to lend say \$1,000 or any other amount upon such terms that the borrower must take so much stock and would pay back \$1.50 per \$100 every month until he had made ninety-six payments, when his mortgage would be paid off and he would be entitled to have the mortgage cancelled and returned to him. But after he has made his ninety-six payments, he is told by the company that it will be necessary to make fifteen or sixteen payments more before he can get a discharge of his mortgage. I said that such conduct, taken in connection with such representations in their literature, might fairly be regarded as a swindling system. I said that several of these companies had been organized and were doing business in the country, and I knew of their operations. I characterized that operation as rather of a swindling character. I think the hon. member for West Toronto (Mr. Clarke), in answer, said that every company did the same. My reply was that, in my experience, no such thing was done, and I gave as my reason—

The PRIME MINISTER (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). Mr. Speaker, I dislike to interrupt my hon. friend (Mr. Sproule), but I would ask your ruling on a point of order—

Mr. SPROULE. I had nearly finished what I have to say.

The PRIME MINISTER. I suppose that my hon. friend has fair cause to complain of the report, and I did not wish to interrupt him. But I would ask your ruling, Mr. Speaker, as to whether it is in order for the hon. gentleman to make an explanation concerning what passed in a committee of the House.

Mr. SPROULE. It is a personal explanation.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE (Mr. Fielding). I may tell my hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) that the Bill is still to come before the House, and he will have ample opportunity to set himself right.

Mr. SPEAKER. As to the point of order, my impression is that under the rules of the House, an hon. gentleman cannot, as a matter of personal explanation, refer to what has taken place in a committee of the House until that committee shall have reported.