

matter was thoroughly discussed and other people did not see just eye to eye with him, he was very much annoyed and was going to put the whole Bill to one side and stand by the principle of clause 25. Then we find him coming down in the House and moving that this be added as a subsection :

Provided that no order for such connection shall in any case be made or leave granted when the company with which connection is sought is operating a local telephone system in the same city, town or village or a long distance system between the same localities as the company seeking such connection, and, in the judgment of the board, is serving the public in an efficient manner.

There is little difference between the amendment proposed by the hon. member from South York (Mr. Maclean) and that brought down by the Minister of Railways. I say in all seriousness we have made some very important amendments in the public interests. We have brought down clauses by which the tariff of telephone companies shall be regulated. We are provided for entrance into the municipalities, and I think that we could well let this matter stand for the present and probably deal with it next session. The principle embodied in the motion of the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Hyman) is one which I think decidedly wrong. It amounts simply to the confiscation and destruction of the property of a company which has spent an enormous amount of money in developing its business in this country.

Mr. CAMPBELL. The amendment submitted by the Minister of Railways is in the right direction. It is going to be of great advantage to the public by reason of the independent companies getting connection with the trunk lines. That will not injure the Bell Company at all because I believe these trunk lines are good paying properties and will be more paying when they have a larger number of new subscribers. So that instead of taking away anything from the Bell Company, the fact that you are giving them a large number of new subscribers will make their long distance lines better paying property. I think therefore the government are doing well in submitting the amendment now before us, but I think they have not gone far enough. I regret that they did not see their way to give us connection between these local companies. I cannot see what objection there can be to that. I cannot understand all this hedging and twisting and turning and defining as though the interests of the Bell Telephone Company were the only ones we have to consider. We are not considering the Bell or any other company. What we are here for is to look after the interests of the people and put on our statutes such legislation as will give them greater advantage. Can any man say that if these companies were compelled to

connect, the one with the other, that the Bell Telephone Company would not be better served? This connection would certainly be a great convenience to the people. It would ensure them a cheaper service and in every way be to their advantage. This Bill went through the Committee of the Whole. That committee recommended it and it was printed, and in it there is a provision that the Board of Railway Commissioners may order that all these companies shall connect the one with the other. In many towns in Ontario there are two companies. Business men and professional men and others are therefore obliged to have two telephones in their houses or offices and pay two rates.

Now, would it not be better—and why should it not be done?—if these companies were compelled to join their lines, so that, instead of having two telephones a person need have only one? Nothing is taken from the Bell Telephone Company in that way. If a small company with fifty telephones seeks connection with the Bell Company with 500 telephones, the Board of Commissioners will certainly make the terms on which connection shall be granted such that there will be a due return to the company having the 500 subscribers, and no more than a due return to the one having 50 subscribers. In the county I have the honour to represent there is an independent telephone company having 120 telephones. In the same district the Bell Company has only 25 telephones. If, a connection were made between the two surely it would be to the advantage of the Bell to make connection with 120 subscribers.

Mr. CONMEE. How much does the independent company charge?

Mr. CAMPBELL. It will make no difference, because that is all the board adjusts the connection charges, so that no injustice is done to either company. But the principal object is gained, and that is the convenience and advantage of the public. To secure this all that needs to be done is to pass the Bill as it passed in Committee of the Whole before, and leave this matter to the Board of Railway Commissioners. Of course, if the government insist on this amendment, I suppose it will go through. But I can tell the government that they will have to come to it, for public opinion in this country will not stand for the refusal of these companies to afford connection with their lines. The advocates of the Bell Telephone Company may talk until they are black in the face, but the people of this country will not allow the Bell Company, this great monopoly that has grown rich at the expense of the people, to refuse connection with their lines. The time will come, and come very soon, when the people will have their own way in this matter. If the government insist on this amendment, I think they will