

unless we shall have the most liberal time for the completion of the road. They said that they did not expect to take eight years. They still believe that they will be able to complete the road in five years. But they said that for the assurance of their stockholders and for the assurance of timid capitalists it would be better to grant an extension of time to eight years, instead of five years originally stipulated for the completion of the road. That concession we agreed to give them. I do not think that anybody in the House will regard it as a matter of very great importance. Then they asked that we should make arrangements respecting the leasing of the portions of our line that might be completed. Our original scheme contemplated the leasing of the eastern division to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company. It was provided by the Act that any portions of the road which might be completed in the meantime might be operated by the commissioners. • The Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company came to us and said : If you complete any portion of the road in the meantime we think you should give the lease to us, and we could offer no objection to that. We have no desire to operate this road at all. We object emphatically to the operation of this road as a government work. Later on I will be ready to take issue with my hon. friend, and if he is prepared—as he has not yet done—to come boldly out as the champion of government ownership and operation, I tell him frankly that as respects this great national work we differ from him, and we will carry our difference into the discussions before the people of this country.

Mr. SPROULE. You cannot help it.

Mr. FIELDING. What does my hon. friend say?

Mr. SPROULE. It is Holson's choice with you ; you cannot help it.

Mr. FIELDING. I cannot understand my hon. friend.

Mr. ALEX. JOHNSTON. Nobody does.

Mr. FIELDING. My hon. friends over there speak for two railway companies who are in the habit of advising them what to do, but they must remember the homely adage : that you should not measure another man's corn by your own bushel.

### OPERATING THE ROAD.

We had no desire to operate this eastern division, and inasmuch as we did not want to operate the road when completed, we saw no reason why we should not make an arrangement with the Grand Trunk Pacific for the operation of any portion of that road which when completed they might be willing to operate. In giving them that concession we gave them nothing which, in any sense could be deemed a disadvantage to the people of Canada. Another Amendment, and a very trivial one, is as regards the causes which might arise for the non-completion of the road. In nearly all contracts of this character there are clauses providing that if, from the Act of God, or the King's enemies, or because of floods, &c., a work is delayed, the contractors shall not be held to account, and in this case the clause did not include the word 'strikes' in this contract.

Then a questions arose as regards the rolling stock. The Company were under obligation to provide \$20, 000,000 worth of rolling stock of which the sum of \$5,000,000 was to be designed for that eastern division. The company pointed out that while they were bound to complete the western division in a given time there was no time fixed for the completion of the eastern division. We were building the eastern division ourselves, and there was no reason why we should bind ourselves to complete it at a certain fixed date, although it is needless for me to say that, subject to physical difficulties, that eastern division will be pushed forward with all possible speed. However, the Grand Trunk people pointed out that as there was no time limit fixed for the completion of the eastern division, it might possibly happen that if they finished their western division they would have their rolling stock ready for the western division, and we not having completed the eastern division would not be in a position to receive and made use of the \$5,000,000 worth of rolling stock which they were bound to