

land. We were told the other night that the railway was to fall into the hands of some persons who live in England, with the exception of one person in Calgary. I would like to know how far these people are going to operate the railway in the interests of the people through whose district it may pass. This is a pure speculation, a pure scheme to make money for a few promoters, and we are going to repeat the mistakes which we have made before, as for example when a few years ago we conferred a monopoly on the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway, which now practically controls all the coal lands of the Island of Vancouver. Surely, it is time for us to take warning, and if there has been no precedent established by the Dominion Parliament up to this moment, is there not independence enough in this new Parliament to strike out into a new course for the future? If there is not it speaks badly for the people of Canada. We see with what a lavish hand the public domain is being given away to aid in the creation and perpetuation of monopolies; and that is going to be the outcome of this scheme unless you attach conditions for the protection of the public as a matter of contract, instead of depending upon the good-will of an Administration; for we know now that these Administrations, strong as they think themselves to be, are easily amenable to the influence of railway corporations. The time has come when we have to decide whether the railway companies own Canada or the people own Canada. Is Parliament going to legislate for the people or for the corporations? It looks very much as if the people were losing power, as if the power was, not gradually, but rapidly, passing into the hands of huge railway corporations. Now-a-days individual men seem to have no rights at all or to meet with no favour at the hands of the Administration. I have listened to many a discussion in this House and in the committees of this House, especially the Railway Committee, and on one and all occasions when the interests of the individual citizens come into collision with those of the railways, the interests of the individual invariably suffer. The unorganized people are crushed to the wall by the great railway corporations; and while this company has not that power at this time, the fact that it comes here under the ægis of the railway corporation appears to be a sufficient reason for hon. gentlemen to surround it with all the power of a great railway corporation, and the consequence is that the people's interests are disregarded for the interests of monopolists. Now, I protest against this or any Administration legislating simply in the interest of railways or corporations. We have too much of that. I never can find when an individual right comes in collision with those of a railway company that he gets fair consideration here, and the surprising part of it is that members of this House, who ought to be free from such influence, who believe they are free from them, seem to hand over their judgment into the keeping of these corporations. For these reasons we should now make a new departure and protest against the people, through Parliament, parting with any powers that are not going to be exercised for the welfare of the whole community.

Amendment negatived: Nays, 61; Yeas, 37.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. When the resolution on which this Bill was founded was before the House, Mr. MULLOCK.

I took occasion to draw the attention of the Committee to the enormous quantity of land in the North-West which had been withdrawn from settlement and handed over to speculators and corporations. The fact has come out to-night that more than twice the settled area of the great Province of Ontario has been handed over to railway companies alone, to say nothing of the immense tracts belonging to the Hudson Bay Company and the large areas handed over to the land companies and land speculators. The fact of the matter is we have discounted the future of the country. Instead of keeping it for the people, we have handed it over to speculators and corporations; and now, in order to make it as easy as possible to prevent any more damage, in order to provide that these lands shall be sold at a reasonable figure and prevent corporations from grinding all they can out of the settlers, I move that the two following clauses be added to the Bill:—

The lands so granted shall be sold by the said company at prices in no case exceeding \$4 per acre, the said lands, when sold by the company, shall be subject to the same conditions of settlement, improvement and residence as may be now in force respecting homestead lands in Manitoba and the North-West.

Any such lands so sold, on which the said conditions are not fulfilled, shall, at the end of two years from the date of sale thereof by the said company, revert back to and become the property of the Government of Canada.

The reason I move that clause to make the land subject to homestead duties is simply this: When the question was before the House before, the mover of the Bill said that we could not prevent the company from selling these lands to other speculators and to those other speculators holding them as long as they saw fit; but by inserting this clause, and there will be no hardship in inserting it, we provide that the lands sold by the company shall be sold subject to settlement duties, and we make it the business of the company to see that these duties are performed, because if they are not the land shall then revert back to the Government and become the property of the country.

Amendment negatived on same division.

Bill reported.

DOMINION ELECTIONS ACT.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. I want to ask the House to discharge the Order for the third reading of Bill (No. 146) to amend the Dominion Elections Act, and to refer the Bill back to the Committee of the Whole House for the purpose of making two or three alterations, not of great importance, but which are necessary to carry out the policy already adopted by the House as regards this measure. I will explain briefly the amendments I propose to add to the Bill. In the first place, there is a clerical error in the Bill, as engrossed, which requires to be amended, and which I need not explain now, as it will be apparent when we come to deal with it in Committee. There is likewise an amendment with reference to the certification of the electoral lists to the returning officer. At present, they require to be certified by the revising officer when required by the returning officer, and I propose to ask the House to agree that they may be certified by the Queen's Printer. These lists are often required in a hurry when the revising officer is away. Last year there was a vacancy in the office of revising officer when an