

Mr. ARMSTRONG. I submit that this House has not the information to enable it to vote on this question. The hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Jones) has moved an amendment to the Bill, and he has given his reason for doing so, that certain pledges have been given by members of the Government. The leader of the Government, in order to get out of the difficulty, says that arrangements have been made for building that piece of the Short Line Railway, and on that understanding the hon. member for Halifax agrees to withdraw his amendment. Now, Sir, I submit that there is a large amount of money, perhaps \$4,000,000, involved for the building of a piece of useless road that will never pay running expenses, and if that arrangement is made contingent on the passing of this Bill, before the House assents to it we have a right to know who is going to foot the bill. If it is the country I submit that this House has a right to know it now; if it is the Canadian Pacific Railway we have a right to know that too. The Premier says it is a simple question of right and wrong. I endorse that statement. The Bill has been before the Railway Committee, it has been discussed for weeks past and nobody says there is anything wrong in granting the company the privileges they ask. I go further, and I say that so large a company involving such extensive interests as the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, have a right to ask anything reasonable from this House in order to enable them to carry on their business. No objection has ever been taken to the Bill on that score, and we have a right to assume that what the company asks is perfectly right. If it is perfectly right, they should get what they ask without any conditions being attached. This House should not impose upon them the expense of several millions which they have no right to impose upon them; it is a sort of penalty upon them for getting their Bill through the House. We know the immense damage which was done to the Grand Trunk Railway Company by a similar course. They were involved in difficulties which they have never been able to surmount to this day; and I protest against the Canadian Pacific Railway Company or any other company being loaded down in the same way. A company so extensive, ramified as it is through the whole country, bound up as it is with the prosperity of the country, cannot be injured in any way, without involving the country in almost corresponding injury; and it is the duty of this House to see that no such load is put upon the company as will affect its interests or through it the general interests of the country.

Mr. MITCHELL. I must say I differ from my hon. friend from Bothwell (Mr. Mills) and my hon. friend from South Middlesex (Mr. Armstrong) with regard to the means we should take. But I agree in the conclusion that the company should not be loaded down and embarrassed beyond what is legitimate and fair; and so far as the Bill is concerned, they are not loaded down. The Bill before the House was passed almost unanimously by the Railway Committee, and with an amount of enthusiasm on both sides of the Committee that is rarely seen there. If there have been differences between the Government and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, as rumor says there have been, I know nothing about them beyond that. The Canadian Pacific Railway Company have said that they want this Bill passed and it is all they want; they do not want to have anything more forced upon them; and are gentlemen in this House on either side going to block the legislation which is so desirable and necessary for a great corporation like that, which, as my hon. friend says, is bound up with the prosperity of this country, simply because some suspicions exist that a compact has been made which is going to load them down? So far as we are concerned, all we have to do is to say whether we shall refuse to pass this Bill, which was so unanimously carried in the Railway Committee, because we have some suspicions that negotiations have

been going on. I do not think this House will adopt that course. The hon. gentleman spoke about secret compacts; we know nothing about them.

Mr. JONES (Halifax). We want to know.

Mr. DAVIES (P. E. I.) The Minister has said there is a compact.

Mr. MITCHELL. You say you want to know. This House has a right to know at the right time; but I say it is not right to interfere at this late stage of the Session with the passage of this Bill, the promoters of which have been kept dancing attendance on Parliament for the past six weeks.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). Why?

Mr. MITCHELL. How do I know why, or how do you know why? Rumor says that because the Government have been trying to get them to build a link of railway down through the Province I represent—they have been, so far as I know, all along refusing to build it, but the hon. gentleman says some arrangement has been come to—not with the Canadian Pacific Railway—and, therefore, nothing has been imposed upon them, so far as we can establish, by the legislation we are now passing.

Mr. EDGAR. He said they are to build the road.

Mr. LISTER. The agreement is signed and sealed for the building of the road.

Mr. DAVIES (P. E. I.) We want to know what it is.

Mr. MITCHELL. I did not understand that. Anyway, whether an arrangement has been come to with the Canadian Pacific Railway or not, I hold that it is a private undertaking. The Bill contains in itself the obligations only which we are willing to impose on the Canadian Pacific Railway, and we have no right to block a Bill of that kind at this late stage, simply because hon. gentlemen suspect that there is something behind it that ought not to be done. When the time comes for the Premier to present to the House the arrangement made, then will be the time to discuss it, and you will find me as ready as anyone to point out objections if it is a measure that ought not to be adopted. But I do hope that hon. gentlemen will not, at this late stage of the Session, block so important a measure.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Does my hon. friend agree to withdraw his motion?

Mr. JONES (Halifax). After the statement made by the hon. gentleman that he was going to bring this down to a certain stage, I was willing the Bill should pass through the Committee, but in view of the points raised by hon. gentlemen here, and in view of the fact that this Bill has stood over now for three weeks, postponed from day to day by the Government until they could come to such an arrangement as the Premier says they have arrived at, no great injury to the company can result by allowing the Bill to stand until the next meeting of the House, when the First Minister can submit the arrangement he has made.

Mr. LAURIER. There is no desire on the part of the Opposition to block this measure.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Oh.

Mr. LAURIER. I repeat there is no desire to throw any impediment in its way. I say this most distinctly. The hon. gentleman says this Bill ought to pass right off, but nobody knows better than the hon. gentleman that this Bill has been called up from day to day and allowed to stand at the request of the Government. We have given it not even an hour's discussion, and the time is up and we stand on our rights.

Mr. KIRKPATRICK. I think the Bill in this House will not make the Government show their hand or show anything. If the hon. gentlemen will