

tion arises whether, as a matter of policy, if the harbour commissioners have such control, it is in the interest of the public or not that they should absolutely refuse all right of access thereto. One of the representatives of the harbour commissioners, in presenting that matter before the committee, said that at some future day undoubtedly a railway would run along that embankment, but they objected to power being given to a railway company to do so. But all the company asks is that they be allowed to do so on such terms as might be agreed upon and settled by the Governor in Council. These are matters of detail, and I submit that the committee were considering more the question of detail than the principle of the Bill when they hurriedly disposed of it this morning. I have much pleasure in seconding the motion that it be referred back to the committee for reconsideration.

Mr. KENNY. The hon. gentleman from Grey (Mr. Masson) has stated that the opposition in the committee to the Bill came from the harbour commissioners for the port of Montreal. I would remind my hon. friend that the chairman of the board of trade of Montreal—

Mr. MASSON. On the ground of the harbour commission.

Mr. KENNY. No, at the instance of his own council, and by a unanimous vote of the council, the chairman of that board of trade attended the committee and opposed the Bill. I have also to remind my hon. friend that the representative of the largest navigation company of the port of Montreal, the Richelieu Navigation Company—the company which pays the largest amount of fees of any navigation company to the Harbour Commission of Montreal—opposed it, and just here I may say that those of us who are accustomed to deal with matters of navigation and who know the difficulties of navigating in a rapid current like the port of Montreal, recognized how very objectionable the Bill, as proposed, would be from the standpoint of those interested in navigation. Now, my hon. friend must recognize this. It was palpable to every member of the committee this morning. In a question important to Montreal, because the city of Montreal is most concerned, when the chairman of the harbour commission, when the president of the board of trade, and the representative of the largest navigation company on the St. Lawrence all unite in opposing this Bill, I must say that I think the committee did wisely in rejecting it, and the House will, under the circumstances, make a great mistake in re-submitting it. If the matter is one of so very great importance, why cannot it stand until next year? We will all be here next year, and then have a chance of reconsidering it. Under these

Mr. MASSON.

circumstances, I submit that it would not be wise for us to adopt the motion just made.

Sir DONALD A. SMITH. The hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Kenny) has so well presented the case of those who oppose the construction of a bridge at Montreal that it is really unnecessary that anything more should be said with regard to it. But as the hon. member for North Grey (Mr. Masson) mentions that the opposition came from the harbour commission, I would certainly say, as one of the representatives of Montreal, that in this he was altogether in error, and that the opposition to it is not solely from the harbour commission of Montreal, but from the board of trade, and also from all those who are most largely concerned in the trade and commerce of the city of Montreal. They feel that it would be a very great inconvenience to that trade were such a bridge built there at present at the point spoken of. The hon. member for Grey (Mr. Masson) mentioned as an argument in favour of having the bridge built now, or having the Bill sent back to the committee for reconsideration, that it was admitted a bridge might be required, and would be built there at some future time. Well, that may be. Many things come to be required in the future which at present are not wanting, and certainly it is the opinion of the great body of the people of Montreal that at present this bridge is not wanted, and that we would be very much better without it. You have against the Bill the city with its suburbs of some 300,000 people. It may be that you have on the south shore a few hundred who are anxious for it, but surely the opinion and the wish of such a large majority ought to have weight with this House. I would submit that I hope the House will not refer the Bill back to the committee, but, as suggested by the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Kenny), will leave it for consideration at another session of Parliament.

Mr. CURRAN. In addition to what my hon. friend has just said, I would bring under the notice of the House this fact. It was stated by the chairman of the harbour commissioners this morning that the guard pier which it is the desire of this company to use, will not be completed for perhaps three years, so that the promoters of this Bill will lose nothing by coming back another session. There is plenty of time to dispose of the guard pier and decide whether it is to be handed over to a private company, after the guard pier itself has been fully completed.

Mr. EDGAR. There is one matter connected with the discussion of the Bill before the committee which has not been mentioned, and which is very important. The opposition was made to this Bill by the harbour commissioners. After a consider-