

well as the reasons which induced the government to take these running powers. As I have said again and again, I am utterly opposed to the acquisition of any road or any running powers on what may be exorbitant terms by the government from Montreal to Georgian bay. Even if we should get ownership on reasonable terms, I do not think there is any necessity for the government obtaining possession of this road. I know that my own views in that respect differ from those of a good many others. I believe that the time will come when it will not be an advantage for any railway company to haul freight from Georgian bay to Montreal. I believe that the time is coming fast when the hauling of freight by railway will be supplanted by more economical ways and that, therefore, there is no advantage to the people to be derived from the extension of the Intercolonial Railway to Georgian bay.

Mr. EMMERSON. I understand my hon. friend to say that he is opposed to the acquisition of these powers or to the acquisition of the railway in any way upon exorbitant terms.

Mr. HAGGART. I am opposed to it at any time. I cannot see what advantage it would be. You have the Grand Trunk Railway, the Canada Atlantic and the Canadian Pacific Railway at present connecting with Georgian bay. If you have any freight to send to St. John or Halifax, you have competition to the fullest extent possible to Montreal, so that it will be of no advantage to the people or the Intercolonial Railway to have running powers over any other railway. These running powers can be of no use to the railway which has them unless for one object: that is as a lever in the making of freight arrangements with the road. We could have these running rights without any legislation whatever, for the General Railway Act gives the Railway Commission power to give running rights to one road over any part of another if it deems it necessary.

Mr. EMMERSON. Not to the Intercolonial. The Railway Commission does not control the Intercolonial.

Mr. HAGGART. I am not aware as yet, nor do I believe, that the Intercolonial or a government railway is an exception to that rule. Why should not the Intercolonial be in the same category as the others and have the same rights? However, I will put off further discussion of the subject until I see the Bill. I am rather afraid that the terms upon which we are to acquire the rights given under this Bill will not be of advantage to the people of Canada.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I stated some time ago to my hon. friend (Mr. Haggart) that there had been no negotiations of any kind between the Grand Trunk and the government with respect to the acquisition by

Mr. HAGGART.

the government of the Canada Atlantic Railway. That statement I now repeat.

Mr. HAGGART. I rather thought my question went further than that.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. What was the question?

Mr. HAGGART. Whether the government had had any negotiations with the Grand Trunk Railway Company or the Canada Atlantic Railway Company as to the acquisition by the Grand Trunk of the Canada Atlantic Railway or contemplated running powers to the government road.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. My answer is the same as in the other case. There have been no negotiations. With regard to the main feature of the Bill, I have simply to observe, in answer to my hon. friend for Carleton (Mr. R. L. Borden) and my hon. friend from South Lanark (Mr. Haggart), that the Bill simply gives power to the government to acquire running rights over the Canada Atlantic system from Montreal to Côteau and from Côteau over the Canada Atlantic to Georgian bay. And it provides nothing else. It is not the intention of the government, at the present time, to run the Intercolonial up to Georgian bay and organize the system, but we take the power to acquire running rights, and then, if they are to be exercised, the terms are to be fixed by the Railway Commission. At present the Railway Commission has not jurisdiction over the Intercolonial. We take these powers, to use or not use as may seem wise.

Mr. FIELDING. The very clear and emphatic statement of the ex-Minister of Railways (Mr. Haggart), whom I may speak of as the railway expert of the Conservative party, has one advantage. It places matters very plainly before us from his point of view, and serves to disabuse the public mind of an idea, which, I think, has prevailed to a large extent. That idea is that it was the policy of the Conservative party, had it been returned to power at the last general election, to acquire the Canada Atlantic Railway and extend the Intercolonial by that connection to Georgian bay, and that the failure of this government to so acquire the Canada Atlantic Railway was a grave mistake. It is always a fair matter of opinion whether these railway extensions are desirable or not; but, in this instance, we have now, from the railway expert of hon. gentlemen opposite, a clear and emphatic statement, so far as he has a right to voice the opinion of the opposition—

Mr. HAGGART. I am only voicing my own opinion—

Mr. FIELDING. Quite so, I realize that.

Mr. HAGGART—as I voiced it before.

Mr. FIELDING. But, occasional references are made to a former Minister of Rail-