

Resolved, that it is expedient to enact as follows:—

Advances may be made time to time, out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Canada, to the Minister of Railways and Canals, to enable him to purchase necessary materials and stores for the construction, renewal, maintenance, and operation of the Canadian government railways, and for the establishment and conduct of railway stores; provided that the sums so advanced shall not exceed annually, for the Intercolonial Railway the sum of one million five hundred thousand dollars, and for the Prince Edward Island Railway the sum of one hundred thousand dollars.

He said: His Excellency the Governor General having been acquainted with the resolution recommends it to the favourable consideration of the House.

Motion agreed to.

MORNING SITTINGS.

The PRIME MINISTER (Rt. Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier) moved:

That, commencing with Wednesday next, and until the end of the session, the House shall meet on that day, and on each subsequent sitting day, at eleven (11) o'clock in the morning. That in addition to the usual intermission at six (6) o'clock p.m., there shall be also an intermission every day from one (1) to three (3) o'clock p.m.; and that government orders shall have precedence at all such sittings, members having still the right to ask questions on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Mr. F. D. MONK (Jacques Cartier). I would like to ask the right hon. gentleman what steps will be taken to secure the meetings of the standing committees, which still have work to do—the Committee on Public Accounts and the Railway Committee? We are very anxious to hasten the business of the session, and perhaps the right hon. gentleman will indicate to us the general course of business to be pursued under this motion. Will we go on with the Grand Trunk Pacific contract until that matter is disposed of and then take up the Redistribution Bill?

The PRIME MINISTER. The course of business will not be at all affected by the House meeting in the morning, but I am happy to inform my hon. friend that when we take up the government policy to-morrow we propose to go on with its discussion until that important subject is exhausted. After that I am not prepared to say what course will be adopted to dispose of the final business to be brought up by the government. As regards the committees, there is only the Railway Committee which has any important business. I did not know that it was intended to have the Public Accounts Committee sit again. It has had every opportunity to sit during the past four months. But there is one important matter before the Railway Committee which will have to be disposed of, and the only thing that can

be done is to give it power to meet during the sittings of the House.

Mr. CLANCY. Are we to understand that no further provision is to be made for sittings of the Public Accounts Committee? That committee has been waiting some weeks for the appearance of a witness, and I hope the right hon. gentleman will see the necessity of endeavouring to give that committee an opportunity to close its business.

The PRIME MINISTER. If a witness has been summoned and is going to appear, some provision will have to be made to meet a contingency of that sort.

Mr. MONK. There is one matter under investigation before the Public Accounts Committee which has not been closed. And it will be absolutely necessary for that committee to meet at least two or three times. Perhaps there may be other matters under investigation; but the investigation of this subject has certainly not terminated, so that we must have sittings of that committee.

Motion agreed to.

RAILWAY ACT, 1903.

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE (Hon. Charles Fitzpatrick) moved the third reading of Bill (No. 21) to amend and consolidate the law respecting railways.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN (East York). I desire to move that this Bill be referred to the Committee of the Whole with instructions to amend it by adding the following as subsection 4 of section 263:

The maximum passenger tariff shall not exceed two cents a mile.

In this Bill there is a provision dealing with the maximum passenger tariff, but I propose that the Bill be made still more definitive in this respect so as to fix that tariff at two cents per mile. In Canada, in the older provinces, we have had railways for the last fifty years, and the passenger rate has been the same from the day railways were established until to-day. No effort has been made to reduce the passenger rates, although as I pointed out to the House before, all other forms of railway charges have been reduced time after time. Freight rates have been cut in two several times. And it has always been found that the effect of reducing the freight rates is to increase the business of the railway. Substantially my argument is that what applies to freight charges would apply also to the passenger charges, and if the passenger charges were reduced the railway would benefit and the public also would be advantaged. I have been in receipt of a great many letters on this subject; it is surprising the expression of public opinion which this proposal has evoked. As a matter of fact, many of the railways of Canada are charging people four cents a mile. I do not speak of the