

listening to the arguments against it to-day I changed my mind. The hon. member from Sarnia asked the promoter of the Bill whether any demands came in from the public for a Bill of this kind. There was no answer but one, and that one answer contained 1,100½ reasons which confirmed me in opposing this Bill. These 1,100½ reasons given by the promoter of the Bill were that he had that many acres of land that the railway drained to some extent for him, but did not drain to the extent that he thought he was entitled to, and I concluded that such a Bill as this, without any complaint made against the railways by those who lived in their vicinity, was unnecessary. If my hon. friend had not owned 1,100 acres of land which required more drainage, I do not think that this Bill would have come before the House. I am not in favor of a Bill which tends to unsettle an established Act of Parliament for the benefit of any individual. It is rather hard to advert to such a matter, especially when the Bill is introduced by an hon. gentleman whom I look upon as a friend, and with whom I never had anything disturbing or annoying; but when no other reason can be given to this House but the one I have mentioned for the introduction of this Bill, I think it is not a sufficient ground to ensure my support of the measure. There is already a forum to which people can go if they are at all injured through failure of the railway companies to perform their duties. Those who are injured can go to the Railway Committee of the Privy Council, and they have their surveyors and engineers and means of deciding those questions. If we leave such matters to be dealt with by the municipalities we throw upon the railway companies a most complex and disagreeable duty. The municipality is composed of one set of men to-day and another set of men to-morrow, and if we bring the railways within their power we throw on the railway companies a burden both vexatious and troublesome. Unless there is a good reason in the public interest for bringing in Bills interfering with established Acts, I hold that it is a bad practice to adopt such legislation. Where an Act is established and has been found satisfactory for years it should not be repealed or amended unless there is a demand for legislation in the public interest. For these reasons, I shall vote for the six months hoist.

HON. MR. POWER.—I should be disposed to take the same view as the hon. gentleman who has just spoken. If there was no demand for this Bill, then probably we might be moving too rapidly to pass it; but the hon. gentleman could not have been paying attention to what took place at the Table of the House, or he would have heard a petition in favor of this very measure read here within the last few minutes. I am also informed, on the very best authority, that petitions which have been signed in nearly all the counties of the Province of Ontario are now finding their way before the other Chamber, and that more of them will get there within the next day or two. The probabilities are that the people interested in this matter did not think it necessary to present petitions to the Senate, because this House last year passed this Bill by an almost unanimous vote. Consequently, I do not think there is very much in the objection raised by the hon. gentleman from Toronto. That hon. gentleman was a little facetious, at the expense of the promoter of this Bill. He said that there were no grievances suffered by anyone, and no reasons put forward in favor of this Bill, except the 1,100 of the honorable introducer. I do not believe in personal legislation. It is objectionable; but, if it happens that the gentleman who introduces the Bill suffers in common with a number of his neighbors from the unsatisfactory condition of the law, that does not render his connection with the measure objectionable. The hon. member from Monck is not alone in this matter, and his case is the case of hundreds of others who have signed these petitions, one of which has been presented to the Senate and several to the House of Commons; and further, my own feeling is that it is not well to discuss in the House everything which takes place in the Committee. The hon. gentleman from Monck did not give the fact which has been put forward by the hon. member from Toronto as the principal reason why the Bill should pass. He said there were scores of people throughout Ontario suffering from the want of this Bill, and mentioned some townships in which there were a number of instances, and then added: "I am one of the sufferers myself." Was there anything wrong or improper in the connection of the hon. gentleman from Monck with