

Holmes,  
Lewis,  
Macpherson,  
McCool,  
Morrison,  
Schell,  
Wade,  
Logan,  
Harty,  
Wright,  
Campbell,  
Charlton,  
Davis,  
Emmerson,  
Gallery,  
Girard,  
Guthrie,  
Lemieux,  
Lovell,  
McCarthy,  
McGugan,  
Mulock,  
Sifton,

Lavell,  
Robinson (Nord.)  
Kendry,  
Johnston (Cardwell),  
Ganong,  
Kidd,  
Daniel,  
Lefurgey,  
Reid (Grenville),  
Rosamond,  
Calvin,  
Tisdale,  
Curlbert,  
Fowler,  
McIntosh,  
Tarte,  
Avery,  
Brock,  
Gourley,  
Lennox,  
Seagram,  
Roddick,  
Monk.

Amendment (Mr. Clarke) negatived.

Mr. SPEAKER. The question is now on the main motion.

Mr. A. C. BELL (Pictou). Mr. Speaker, the importance of this measure will be a sufficient justification for resuming for a short time the discussion of its provisions at this stage of the Bill when it is most proper and convenient to discuss it in its entirety. Generally speaking it must unquestionably be admitted by the people of this country and the members of this House that this is a measure of the very utmost importance. It is really a very great measure. Judging it by its financial character it is very clear that it is the most important measure that has ever been submitted to the parliament of this country by the present administration and one of the most important that has ever been submitted to the Canadian parliament. Hence, it is well at this stage of the proceedings, that is on taking the motion for the second reading of this measure, to discuss it in a manner which would not be proper when we come to consider it in detail in Committee of the Whole House. Now, I should think the first thing that would strike members of this House and the people of this country in considering this measure is its very great extent and the very great burden that, unquestionably, will be imposed upon the finances either of the country, or of the company if it is carried to completion. A transcontinental railway we have achieved already. The building of the Canadian Pacific Railway from the point at which it started, I may say a long way towards the centre of the continent, was a very great work of its kind. Still, this was not an undertaking spanning the whole continent as this proposition now before the House is. so that, even as compared with the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Transcontinental Railway Bill which the right hon. Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) has proposed to this House is a measure involving a work

The SPEAKER.

that is more extensive and even greater than the Canadian Pacific Railway, a work which we all know to have been so much for the general advantage of Canada. We have not been standing still in Canada in the matter of railway construction. While we had the Canadian Pacific Railway with its connections and branches in eastern Canada and particularly its connection with the branch which reaches the Atlantic at St. John, while we had what was in very truth, in its last stages a transcontinental railway from the Atlantic to the Pacific, a railway uniting the waters of the two oceans, the greater part of which was constructed on Canadian soil, we were not confined to that altogether, because in the Canadian Northern, a road which has been under way for some years, although it did not commence, perhaps, with the ambitious title of a transcontinental railway, nor did its owners and those who were promoting its interests and driving along the project reveal to the people of Canada or to the world, in the first instance, that they proposed to commit themselves to the construction of another transcontinental railway, we have a railway which is very rapidly assuming the character of a transcontinental railway, of the second transcontinental railway line in Canada. It is now approaching Edmonton and has its plans, as I am informed, arranged for the extension of the road from Edmonton to a point on the Pacific somewhere in the vicinity of the point which it is proposed to be reached by the road to be constructed under the Bill now before the House. In eastern Canada the Canadian Northern Railway has large connections and has actually at the present time, as I am informed, reached the port of Quebec, one of the objective points of the great work which it is proposed to accomplish by the Bill now before the House. Hence, we have actually one Transcontinental Railway in full operation and we have another which, with a reasonable amount of assistance on the part of the government, will become a second transcontinental railway at a very early date. That being the case it is a little difficult to explain to the people of this country wherein lies the urgent necessity of providing for what I may call a third transcontinental railway for a people numbering six millions as the right hon. Prime Minister describes the people of this country to be in his opening speech on this subject. It seems to me that six millions of people might be satisfied with less than three transcontinental railways and it would also seem as if it might be difficult for six millions of people, occupying an enormous extent of territory and only partially and ineffectively occupying that territory, to furnish the business which would properly utilize the means of transportation afforded by three railways of the class and character of these which we have been engaged in building and which we are