

long delayed, if, as announced by the leader of the House, a contract has already been signed and exhibited to the Government—a contract apparently made in good faith by capitalists able to perform their contract—and if it is only necessary a short delay should be given in order that these gentlemen should satisfy the Government that they really mean to carry out their contract, it does seem to me impossible to come to the conclusion which the hon. member for Marquette has reached, namely, to hoist the Bill, to throw out all chance of this company doing anything, to throw overboard the contract made with the New York capitalists, and to put it entirely out of the power of any private individual to obtain an act of incorporation or charter a company to do the work during the present Session. To vote for the three months' hoist would simply put it out of the power of Parliament to clothe any association of men with the power to go on with the construction of the railway, except by the direct action of the Government. Admitting that the construction of the railway is important, as stated by the hon. member for Marquette (Mr. Watson), and the hon. member for West Durham (Mr. Blake), it seems to me we should look at this matter as a matter of business rather than as a matter of party. A contract has been actually entered into by persons who, we have reason to suppose, are able to build this railway, and we are asked to give the Government power, in case they are satisfied by the directors of their capacity to build the road, to proclaim the charter and allow this company to go on. It seems to me we are likely to obtain the construction of the road much sooner by permitting this company to go on than we would by killing the charter, throwing up the signed contract, and leaving it an entirely open question for future consideration. If the Government were prepared to go further than they do, if they were prepared to say, that in case the present company do not build the road, they, as a Government, are prepared to advise the House to construct it as a Government work, there would be more force in the position the hon. member for Marquette takes with reference to the action of the House upon the motion and the amendment. What are the reasons urged against our going into committee on this Bill? First, there is the political aspect of the case, which is raised by the hon. member for West Durham (Mr. Blake), that members of this House ought not to be directors in railway charters. That is an important general question, but it does not apply to this particular case any more than to many other cases, both during the present and preceding Sessions of this House; and I doubt very much whether the hon. member for West Durham would be inclined to advise his friends or the House to throw up a good contract, supposing this contract which has been made to be a good reliable contract, and leave the whole thing in a state of chaos to the chances of future combinations, unless the Government are prepared to advise the House to undertake the construction of the railway as a Government work. I am not going to take up the time of the House with discussing the political aspect of the case, as to whether members of Parliament should be promoters of railway or other charters granted by the House or not. That is a question which could, as the hon. member for West Toronto (Mr. Beaty) said, be more fitly discussed upon a substantive proposition that hereafter members of Parliament should not be competent to be directors in railway charters. The other question raised is that of the character of the directors and the character of the transactions which are alleged to have taken place among different members of the directorate. Now, it was alleged in committee, and the statement has gone through the country by means of the press, that there was an arrangement between the hon. member for King's, N.S. (Mr. Woodworth) and the hon. member for West Toronto (Mr. Beaty), that the ordinary directors of the company—these two gentlemen being extraordinary

Mr. IVES.

directors—were to have a bonus of \$50,000 divided among them, and that the hon. member for West Toronto and the hon. member for King's were to divide equally between them the surplus of profits. I can only say that there has been no evidence of any satisfactory character to establish that allegation; there has been nothing to justify a section of the press of this country in the course they have taken with reference to that allegation. The hon. member for West Toronto emphatically denies it; the others or ordinary directors emphatically deny it. The proof, or supposed proof, is contained in letters which have been mislaid, which, unfortunately for the hon. member for King's, he is not able to produce, and the only thing he does produce is the letter from the Finance Minister stating his impression is, that the arrangement was that the hon. member for West Toronto and the hon. member for King's were mutually interested in the enterprise. That is a very different thing from the allegation that the ordinary directors were to receive \$50,000 and those two were to divide the surplus of the profits. Therefore the charge as originally made in the committee, the charge that has gone over the country, that has been circulated by a section of the press of the country, rests entirely without proof, rests on no proof whatever. That was not the statement either of the hon. member for King's to-day. He said to-day, without making any allusion to the \$50,000, that he and the member for West Toronto were mutually interested, were equally interested in this charter, and that would seem to be borne out by the impression the Finance Minister would seem to have gathered from his recollection of the letters. Taking that statement, I do not see that there is anything particularly improper in it, anything in it which would justify this House in refusing to go into committee upon this Bill. Suppose, for instance, it were clearly established that the hon. member for King's and the hon. member for West Toronto were to be mutually interested in this undertaking, is anyone in this House so silly as to suppose that any board of directors are to undertake the labor and anxiety and trouble, and incur the expense necessary to float a scheme of this kind, to build the railway and manage it afterwards, and pay the bondholders their annual interest, without any compensation whatever for it? Does any one suppose that any member of this House or any business man in this country does this sort of thing entirely for the fun of it, and lives on air in the meantime? I need not dwell upon that point very long. I believe it was perfectly legitimate, as long as the House permits members of Parliament to be promoters of railway schemes, for these two hon. gentlemen, these two members of this board, to expect to make something for their time and trouble and expense for the prosecution of this work. It is said there was charter selling, that there was an endeavor to sell this charter. There is no evidence of this fact. There is no proof whatever that the charter was ever offered for sale or was ever peddled from Dan to Beersheba, or through the continent of Europe and America.

Mr. MITCHELL. Hold on now; are you blind?

Mr. IVES. I will hear the hon. gentleman.

Mr. MITCHELL. Are you blind or deaf?

Mr. IVES. I am neither blind nor deaf, nor am I going to speak so long but that you will have an opportunity in a few moments. I have heard no evidence that there was an effort to dispose of or to sell this charter. The hon. gentleman from King's adduced as his evidence to-day a supposed contract between a Mr. Macdonald and Mr. Beaty. Certainly the proof he adduced was no proof whatever. The contract was one under which Macdonald was to take the bonds, and I presume the land grant, and build the road, and pay \$1,500 a mile to the company out of the proceeds of the bonds and land grant. That is all there is in it. There