

this discussion with interest. I know that it is a great hardship to the farming community that they have been deprived of a train service for the last six or seven weeks. There has been a great deal of disagreement and litigation. The people in possession of the United Counties Railway have been a set of schemers and railway promoters, and I have no doubt it is true that a very large portion of the subsidy has been diverted from the railway enterprise, leaving it in the position in which it is today. It is true that the railway runs through a fertile section of the country.

But unfortunately the products of that portion of the country, which is an old settled country, are somewhat concentrated, and do not afford a very heavy traffic; the traffic itself is comparatively light. Now it may be that that road, operated upon business principles, and by honest men, might be made to meet expenses. I know there has been a time in the history of the United Counties Railway when the traffic would hardly pay the cost of the axle grease. A good deal has been said about what the government might do to remedy this state of affairs. I remember that three or four sessions ago the Minister of Railways and Canals, at the instance of the hon. member for Missisquoi (Mr. Meigs), introduced into this House an amendment to the Railway Act, giving effect, if I remember correctly, to an Act of sequestration passed by the provincial legislature which required the confirmation of this parliament, as railways of this kind have been brought under the General Railway Act. Now the member for Gaspé (Mr. Lemieux) says that the provincial government is contemplating action of that kind. Their position would be very much stronger had the amendment which the Minister of Railways and Canals introduced three or four sessions ago—

Hon. Mr. HAGGART. Did that Bill pass?

Mr. PARMELEE. It passed the Railway Committee and passed this House, but when it went over into the other Chamber, at a time when the Liberals had not secured a majority there, it was promptly killed. So if any one is responsible for this state of affairs, I think there is where the responsibility belongs. Now I do not think, unless something of that sort is done, that it is possible to relieve the situation to any great extent. It is useless to talk about subsidies, because subsidies are granted to secure the building of a road, but they cannot go further and secure its operation. In this case, with fair business management, if this road could be sequestrated and passed over into the hands of good railway men who would run it as a business enterprise instead of a speculative scheme, I think it might be made to pay. I think that the government has done all that it is possible to do to protect the interests of the people who are suffering from the unfortunate condition in which that enterprise stands.

Hon. Mr. TARTE. I would be sorry to be misunderstood. I did not mean to say that the South-eastern Valley Railway is closed. I know it is working with the Rutland Railway. What I said was that the United Counties Railway is closed.

Motion agreed to.

EARLIER SESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT.

Mr. NAT. BOYD (Macdonald) moved

That this House is of the opinion that this parliament should be called for the dispatch of business on or about the last Thursday in November of each and every year.

He said: I fully understand the importance of this motion, and can anticipate the many objections that may be raised against it. Much can be said for and against the English system that we are following, and also there may be a difference of opinion with regard to the United States system that has been suggested. Now, regardless of what may be said in support of or in opposition to either one of these proposals, I think I am well within the opinion of this House when I say that the manner in which the members of this House have been treated by being called here at this most untimely season of the year, is not by any means in the interest of the members themselves, or in the interest of the country at large. As to the composition of this House, it is well known that the vast majority of the members of this House are men actively engaged in the ordinary avocations of life, farmers, merchants, lumbermen and business men. Whether it is wise in the interests of Canada that the electors should continue to select men of that class, or that they should select them from the wealthier classes, remains to be seen, but up to the present time they have selected for the most part members of the former class. Such being the case, I think I express the opinion of this House when I protest against the date at which we have been called together this year. In proposing this resolution I have no party end in view, and have no purpose of finding particular fault with the party in power, because governments that have preceded this one have been at fault in the same respect. At the same time, I feel confident that if this motion is voted on freely by the members of this House on both sides, it will be sustained. Now I do not believe that any government should be permitted to seek only their own convenience in fixing the dates, because that is largely what they are doing when they change the date and delay it month after month until we are brought now to a very busy season of the year. Any man in business, whether he is a farmer or not, loses his spring business, and is bound to suffer for the balance of the year. Now that being the case, what right has any executive of this House—because that is what they