

deeds and other legal documents; in matters of procedure in courts and in connection with criminal offences; in the opening and closing of banks, registration and other public offices. It is now in use in England, Scotland and Sweden, and for some years also in Japan. That the importance of the question is recognized by the highest authorities—in fact, by all civilized nations—may be inferred from the short historical statement given in the preamble of the Bill. Hon. gentlemen are aware of the conspicuous part taken by our countryman, Mr. Sanford Fleming, on this important question, and too much credit cannot be awarded to him for the labor and distinguished services which he has rendered. Some amendments are required to the Bill now in the hands of hon. gentlemen, and these will be ready in time before the Bill is considered in committee, if it is the pleasure of the House to refer it to a committee.

HON. MR. DICKEY—This is too important a matter, perhaps, to be discussed at length just now, but as my hon. friend has referred to one class of cases provided for in the Bill—

HON. MR. MACINNES—These were simply incidences that I referred to. The Bill is intended to provide for a vast number of others.

HON. MR. DICKEY—I was about to call the attention of my hon. friend to the fact that the last clause of the Bill provides for two modes of computing time—that is to say, in addition to the present mode it provides for another mode of computing time—that is, by numbers extending from one to twenty-four. My hon. friend will of course answer that that is optional, but at the same time the objection is there—it provides two modes of computing the time of day. That objection will extend to all instruments, notices and meetings, such as he has adverted to, in which notices of the particular hour are required to be given. Then, with regard to the first part of the Bill, which establishes the time by degrees of longitude, my hon. friend is aware that in practice at present it is treated as entirely optional, and, in point of fact, in this long distance of fifteen degrees east and west there are various times in different cities. For instance, in my own small Province there is the time established in

Halifax, and in the next adjoining Province, which is perhaps within 250 miles of it, there is a different time in the city of St. John, &c., so that I am afraid that confusion will arise; and this last clause certainly increases the confusion in respect to A.M. and P.M. and the mode that is proposed here of from one to twenty-four, so that I think there is a very fruitful crop of trouble and litigation likely to arise from this compulsory Bill. It is only necessary at present to indicate these objections, so that if the Bill is referred to a committee the committee may endeavor, if they can, to wrestle with it, and make this Bill conformable if possible to the present practice without increasing the confusion. The present mode of computing time, which has existed certainly beyond the memory of the oldest inhabitant, ought not to be interfered with by adding another and altogether different mode of computation, which, of itself, I think is an absurdity, because we all know what 7 o'clock, p.m. means, but very few can understand—at all events, they have to go through an arithmetical computation, to understand what 19 o'clock means. My hon. friend, I hope, will be able to satisfy the committee, so that they will return the Bill to the House in some shape that will commend it to the House more than as it is printed.

HON. MR. ALMON—I should be very sorry if this Bill should be sent to a committee at all. I think it should be thrown out now. I perfectly agree with everything that the hon. gentleman said in praise of Mr. Fleming; he has given a great deal of attention to this question, so much that he has allowed his enthusiasm to get the better of his judgment, and too much learning has had the same effect on him as it had on St. Paul. This idea is a pet of his. Let us look at the Bill: It says that in Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia the notation shall be four hours behind the notation at Greenwich, and in New Brunswick five hours. You are well aware that there is a proposition to unite the Maritime Provinces, but the tendency of this Bill will be to create a division between them. We have had a good many petitions presented this session from Bishops and clergymen throughout the Dominion praying for legislation to punish people who do not observe the