

I may say that, in holding that view in the Railway Committee, I did not have very much support. The large majority of the committee always went against that opinion, and never hesitated, so far as I know, to give any capitalization to any company that wanted it. Now, it seems to me that if we had been ready and willing to give every company that came along the limited capitalization that is asked, it is rather a fool time to begin changing our view when a legitimate enterprise with a meritorious proposition comes before parliament. If the House will, even on this occasion, lay down a certain policy as to the amount of capital that is to be permitted to a railway company, and apply it from now on, even beginning with this enterprise, I should be inclined to support the proposition. But if the criticism offered is made only because of fear that this proposition is likely to be of some effect, that it is likely to have practical results—if what is really opposition is put forward in the form of criticism—then, as one of those who believe in the merits of the scheme and the necessity of its being carried out, I would be compelled to support the scheme as it is, even under the accusation of agreeing to over-capitalization. I do not claim to be more clever than other hon. members of this House, but it seems to me that I can follow quite clearly the proposition of the Minister of Railways, that when assistance is proposed to be given, it will be possible to restrict the operations of these powers that we are now giving to the company, that it will be possible then to make an arrangement, to make a bonding agreement, with the company that we are now creating, that it shall exercise such powers as we are now giving them only to the amount that we then agree to allow them. It seems to me that that would be possible and proper. So, while I would be glad, and while I think it would be a proper thing, for the House, even now, to decide upon a policy whereby no railway company should be permitted, either under the name of stock or bonds, to be over-capitalized, I am not prepared to be a party to opposition to this scheme, to single it out from all others and apply a principle which has never been applied before, and which we have no assurance will ever be applied again—taking the stand that the protection I desire to provide for the public interest can be provided at the time the assistance is given, if assistance is to be given. At that time, I would propose to hold the government strictly to account for the measure and the manner of assistance given. But at the present, I feel that, as a supporter of the scheme, I would not be justified in supporting what would appear to be rather opposition than criticism.

Another word on another phase of the fact. It seems to me there is a misapprehension as to the full effect of giving large

powers in the matter of issuing stock and bonds. It has been held repeatedly that it was necessary to give large powers to issue stock and bonds in order to enable an enterprise to succeed. Now, I am not a capitalist, and I am not familiar with the workings of railways or railway promotion; but it strikes me that if a railroad project, which in itself was meritorious, were permitted by parliament to issue only a limited amount of stock and bonds, I would feel much more like investing my money in that scheme than in one which was permitted to issue a practically unlimited amount of stock and bonds. It strikes me we are not adding to the credit of a railway enterprise, by giving it excessive bonding powers, or powers to issue stock, but quite the contrary.

Mr. GOURLEY. I have listened with great pleasure to this debate. I have as a rule disagreed with the hon. member for Alberta (Mr. Oliver) with reference to capitalization, because I think that a company simply asking for a right to build a railway ought not be injured in the money markets by any small or narrow view of capitalization. But just as I got ready to agree with my hon. friend from Alberta on this Bill—because I think this Bill stands upon an entirely different footing—then I regretted to see the hon. gentleman hedging a bit. I would have been much better pleased if he had brought a more strenuous political life into this debate. Now, my hon. friend the leader of the opposition, I think, has suggested a course that we should adopt. It is idle for the government to wink at the idea that there is to be no other corollary to this Bill, because it is simply asking us to shut our eyes to the fact. We know that another Bill is coming down as a supplement to this Bill, and therefore my hon. leader made the good point that we should consider these two Bills together. I will admit as a lawyer that the proposition of the Minister of Railways and Canals and of the Minister of Finance is perfectly correct. In a subsidy Bill we can put in any conditions we like, and if this company is going to ask the government to aid that railway, they have got to accept the conditions in the Subsidy Bill, otherwise the government will say: You have got your charter, go along and build your railway; but if you are to receive assistance from the government, you must accept such a charter as we give you. There is another general principle. If there are two or more statutes on the same subject, the last one must control the others. Therefore I see no difficulty on that point, it is merely a matter of legislative courtesy. I think it would be better to have both these Bills before us so that we could deal with them together, because then we should not be giving this company powers to-day which we would have to modify to-morrow. Therefore, I think the suggestion of the leader of the opposition

Mr. OLIVER.