

HON. MR. OGILVIE—I move that the Bill be not read the third time presently, but that it be read the third time this day six months. My reasons for moving the six months hoist are various. In the first place, for a great many years a number of amendments were made to the Railway Act. These amendments were consolidated a few years ago, and we thought we had an Act that was pretty nearly perfect; but I suppose, like all legislation framed by mankind, the Railway Act is not perfect. Nevertheless, if it is not perfect, I do not think that the members of this House, when they look into this matter thoroughly, will pass the Bill that is now before us. In the first place, it is the business of the Government to attend to such matters. We have the Railway Committee of the Privy Council, who are perfectly able to take hold of this kind of work and ready to do it; and I am informed on the very best authority that there are no complaints against the working of the Act on the part of our principal railways. If this Bill is passed in the shape in which it is now—we passed it last year, but it was thrown out in the other branch of Parliament—it will simply cause a good deal of trouble to the railway companies from those who may happen to have ill-feeling against them—either by individuals making complaint to the municipality or by the municipality applying to the Railway Committee of the Privy Council, and putting the companies to a great deal of trouble without accomplishing any good. The principal feature of the Bill relates to drainage. It provides that municipalities or individuals shall have the power to compel railways to make culverts through their roads wherever there may appear to be reasonable ground to do so. Now, culverts are all very well where they are absolutely necessary to carry off the water, but the municipalities take care that the railway companies provide culverts when they are building their lines. A great many railway accidents arise from the fact that culverts, either from the nature of the soil or other causes, sink after freshets. The water carries away the earth from the culvert and the road-bed subsides two or three inches. The rails spread, a train goes over the bank, and we never hear of the cause of the accident, because railway companies are disinclined to give details

of accidents. I am informed on the best authority that a very large number of railway accidents have happened from the cause I have mentioned. I do not think that we want to put into the hands of individuals or municipalities the power to cause an extra amount of danger to passenger traffic. Besides that, we have spent in Canada a great many millions of dollars and granted large tracts of land to get railways, and now we are asked to pass a Bill that may do the railway companies as much harm as we have done good by our money and land grants to the companies. Any person who will take the trouble to look into the Bill thoroughly, and into the Railway Act, will see that we have all the legislation that is necessary at present. If any amendment is required, the proper way to get it is to appeal to the Government to amend the existing law, and not pass new Acts that may not be workable and certainly will be a source of annoyance to the railway companies, without doing the country any good. The Railway Committee of the Privy Council is as good a safeguard as could be provided. It is more anxious to look after the interests of the public than the interests of railway companies, because it is amenable to the public. To say the least of it, if this legislation is not vicious it is certainly unnecessary, and we should be very careful how we go further with it. I hope the good sense of this House will be opposed to this Bill. Year after year it has been introduced, only to be thrown out in the other branch of Parliament. I feel very strongly on this question, because I took some trouble about it last year and have given it some attention since then, to find out whether there was any serious grievance or complaint. The engineers of the principal railway companies within the last ten days have told me that they had not a single complaint that they knew of, and that in case any such complaint should arise they are particularly anxious to attend to it as quickly as possible, as it is in their own interest to keep on good terms with the inhabitants through whose country they pass. These are the reasons why I have moved the six months hoist, not in a spirit of opposition or obstruction at all, but in good faith, and I have hopes that it will be carried to-day.

HON. MR. O'DONOHUE—Last year I was rather favorable to this Bill, but on