

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, July 15, 1903.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

THE ATLANTIC AND LAKE SUPERIOR RAILWAY COMPANY.

Mr. GEORGES BALL (Nicolet) moved that that portion of the eighth report of the Select Standing Committee on Railways, Canals and Telegraph Lines, reporting the preamble of Bill (No. 36) respecting the Atlantic and Lake Superior Railway Company not proven, be referred back to the said committee for further consideration.

The PRIME MINISTER (Rt. Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier). Was not this motion disposed of yesterday?

Mr. SPROULE. That was another Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER. I think that was concerning the Ottawa Valley Railway.

The PRIME MINISTER. I do not think any notice of motion was given, therefore I take the point of order.

Mr. BALL. It was given, and I am all right. This Bill is similar to that which was presented in the session of 1901, and the Mr. Galyndez who is mentioned therein is the same party who is presenting it this time. He was asking to revive the Bill of the Atlantic and Lake Superior Railway, which had lapsed. His request was granted, and the Bill was revived with some amendments. Mr. Galyndez having shown his good faith in living up to the conditions of the previous Bill, the House should accept the present Bill without amendment. The proposition was to have the railway run from Sorel to Lévis, and from Paspebiac to Gaspé Basin, on the Baie des Chaleurs side. In 1899 the company asked the government for subsidies to enable them to finish the road. They asked for a subsidy from the River St. Francis to Chaudière Junction, or to the Quebec bridge, and again for subsidies from Caplin, on the Baie des Chaleurs side, to Gaspé Basin. The government then had not much confidence in the company, and I do not suppose they have much now. They did not want to grant the request entirely, but they granted subsidies for thirty miles of road from Caplin to Paspebiac and from Paspebiac to Gaspé Basin. Subsidies were granted to another road not named. For the eastern portion, instead of granting aid to the Atlantic and Lake Superior, they granted aid to another company in which they had great confidence, the South Shore Railway Company, which was represented by a gentleman named Mr. Hyacinthe Beauchemin, of Sorel, who was representing Mr. Tourville, Mr. Leduc and Mr. G. M. Fortier. Mr. Beauchemin was the managing director. So the government, in-

stead of granting subsidies from St. Francis to Chaudière Junction, granted them from Sorel to Lotbinière, a distance of eighty-two miles. The subsidies were apportioned as follows: 82 miles at \$3,200 per mile, making \$262,000; and for the bridge opposite Sorel, on the Richelieu river, \$35,000; for building a bridge across the Yamaska river, \$50,000; for building a bridge across the St. Francis river, \$50,000; for building a bridge across the Nicolet river, \$15,000; in addition to \$16,000 voted before and paid which make \$31,000. The Quebec government had previously granted to the same road \$50,000 to erect a bridge opposite Sorel on the Richelieu river; about \$80,000 to build a bridge on the St. Francis and Yamaska rivers; and \$32,000 for the Nicolet river bridge. The city of Sorel had also granted \$50,000 for the same road, making in all \$604,000. You would think that after all these favours from the government this company would have built the road very quickly. On the 27th of September, 1899, we had the pleasure in Nicolet of a visit from the right hon. Prime Minister (Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier). He was invited to assist at the banquet to his old curé, Mr. Suzor, who had been fifty years in the priesthood. At that banquet and in the presence of about 300 priests, bishops, members of this House, members of the Quebec legislature, and especially the members for Yamaska, Arthabaska and Nicolet, the right hon. gentleman made a statement. After congratulating his old curé and friend on his long life in the priesthood and the friendly relations that had during that time existed with his curé, he turned towards the bishop and here is the statement he made:

(Translation.)

My Lord, I am happy to convey to you the good news that, in the fall of the year you will be able to travel by rail from Montreal to Nicolet, as the South Shore Railway will then be completed to Nicolet.

The bishop answered:

I am very happy to hear this good news from the mouth of the Prime Minister. I will take notice of it and I will remember in due time.

That was four years ago and not only has the road not been finished as far as Nicolet, but not one inch of the road has been built from Sorel to Nicolet. Some of the road has been built but it was built before that time. The subsidies granted for these eighty two miles of road covered the portion of twenty four miles which had already been built and for which subsidies had previously been paid; subsidies therefore being paid twice for the same twenty four miles which are as follows: from Sorel to Yamaska—105.7 miles, from Yamaska to St. Francis, 6½ miles, and from Nicolet to St. Gregoire, 6¾ miles, or a little over twenty-four miles, leaving fifty-eight miles to be built. The portion from Sorel to Yamaska was built and trains were