

great evil on our country instead of doing it a benefit. I do not intend to discuss this question at any very great length; but I must say that I do not myself favor the organization of any more courts in Canada than are found to be absolutely necessary. It is only the other day that our hon. friends opposite, when in power, organized the Supreme Court, with the result of taxing the people \$50,000 a year for its maintenance, and it is now proposed, as I understand by this Bill, to have another Supreme Court in Canada. My hon. friend asks for the appointment of three Judges. They will have to be very highly paid. If this court is to be of any value at all, it must, under this Act, be composed of three Commissioners who deserve and obtain the confidence of the people. The hon. gentleman says one of them must be a lawyer. I want to know what salary we would be obliged to give the hon. gentleman himself, who undoubtedly is eminently qualified for the position, in order to obtain his services. I say that we could not obtain that hon. gentleman's services for the position of Commissioner—to give up his emoluments at the Bar and become a railway Judge—at less than between \$10,000 or \$20,000 per year. I suppose it would be possible to find a lawyer in this country who would accept a smaller amount; but you do not simply want a lawyer who will accept an insignificant emolument. You want a man whose legal standing, character and position in this country would command that respect and confidence which alone would make such a court valuable. Then the hon. gentleman says the next Commissioner must be a railway man. I know something about railway men, and what is the fact? The fact is, the late Government were obliged to pay \$8,000 per year to obtain the services of Mr. Bydges, formerly manager of the Grand Trunk Railway, and when the Government no longer required his services, the Hudson's Bay Company were very glad to secure them at \$10,000 per year. It is also well known that the manager of the Grand Trunk Railway is getting a much larger salary than that. The third Commissioner will have to be in a position to compare favorably with his two colleagues. Under this Bill, we are therefore to have another Supreme Court established to accomplish the objects in view. I draw attention to the fact as one not unworthy the consideration of the House at the outset. The hon. gentleman has said that the Committee in England arrived at the conclusion that there must be some simple, cheap and expedient mode of dealing with this subject. If the hon. gentleman can devise such a mode, by which the admitted evils—for there are a great many things susceptible of improvement in relation to railway management—can be dealt with, and dealt with in such a way as not to unduly hamper the great railway interests of this country, I would be extremely glad. No doubt it is the hon. gentleman's intention to refer this Bill to the Railway Committee, in order that it may receive all the consideration and examination to which a matter of such great moment is entitled; and I would be very glad should the Committee arrive at any conclusion by which it will be found this Parliament can legislate on this important question, in such a way as to attain the object the hon. gentleman has in view, without involving injustice in some of the cases to which I have drawn attention.

Mr. HAGGART. The question of legislation in reference to railways is one which is exciting considerable attention in every country in which there are railways; and, for the consideration of the subject, it may be as well to glance at the position the Governments of different countries have taken towards railways in the past. When the first railways were run in England, the Government insisted upon fixing the rates, both passenger and freight. That was found not to work very well, and then the system grew up in England of what was called "free trade in railways;" that is, competition by different railways for the traffic in different parts of the country. That system worked just as

it is found to work in Canada at present. One railway purchased the stock of a rival and competition ended. There is another system in vogue in some continental countries—a portion of the railways being Government railways, and the balance being owned by private individuals. The Government fixed the rates, amenable, of course, to the legislature, and influenced by public opinion through the press, and this system proved very acceptable in those countries. In fact, I think the best system of railway organization in the world is the system in Belgium, which is being adopted in some other countries where a portion of the main line of railway is owned by the Government and a rate of freight is so fixed, which is acceptable to the great majority of the people. A system of Railway Commission is exciting also considerable interest in the United States. Several different States have appointed Railway Commissions, after a desperate struggle, the measure having been forced upon them by the united action of the rural population through the Granges. There is no very great agitation in this country in favor of a Federal Commission. The Minister of Railways says that the objection here is that a portion of the legislation in reference to this question should belong properly to the Provincial Governments. But as to all railways which interchange trade between different countries and different Provinces, the legislation properly belongs to the general Government, it should be held that legislation properly belongs to the Federal Government, and that the legislation in reference to these railroads, so far as this country is concerned, should initiate in this House; and the different Provincial Legislatures may follow afterwards, passing legislation for purely local railways. This is a question which cannot be shirked any longer. There is a feeling in certain sections of the country that if a person happens to be placed in a particular locality he is handicapped by being obliged to pay heavier rates to the sea-board than a farmer, merchant or other person somewhere else. The feeling is now well grown that there should be some legislation in reference to this matter. The Bill, to be effective, and to meet the wishes of the community should, besides, have a clause giving the Commissioners the means, by publishing the manner in which the different rates are collected, or some other suitable machinery, with the power of preventing extortionate rates in particular localities. Another thing I should like provided for—that is, some way of forcing railway companies to keep a certain form of account open to the supervision of those Railway Commissioners, and by publicity, by bringing an enlightened public opinion to bear upon them, keep them from entering transactions, perhaps very questionable. I hope that in another Session there will be some legislation added to the Bill which, in a manner, will regulate the freights of the different companies. The Bill at present is only an instalment of the needed legislation. This is a question which must be settled, and the opinion is gaining ground—it is a fixed opinion in all countries now—that the Legislature should control the freights of railway companies. We grant them charters in the different Provinces, giving their roads the character of public highways, and have the right of regulating the charges thereon. There is no Commission which would fix the charges at rates to be injurious to the companies; or compel them to abide by rates that would prevent them declaring dividends. But they should exercise such a control over railways as to prevent exceptional rates. In my section of the country we have the Kingston and Pembroke Railway, of which my hon. friend is a director, running into a mining district north of Kingston. But some of the parties connected with it receive exceptionally favorable rates in the sending of their iron to market, while others competing with them are obliged to sell out their properties to the railway company, because unable to pay