

HON. MR. KAULBACH—I am glad to see that my hon. friend from Ottawa is in favor of subsidizing railways now. I understood him to say the other day that it was a sort of bribery.

HON. MR. SCOTT—My remark had reference to subsidies to railways in another part of the Dominion. I quoted the roads I referred to.

HON. MR. DICKEY—Is there not a question of the power of this House to amend the Act to give aid to another railway.

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL—Yes, we cannot amend it; that is why I said if anything could be done it must be by a new bill. I will be very glad to assist my hon. friend in any way I can.

HON. MR. POWER—A question of policy arises under the first clause, on which I would ask the opinion of the Minister of Justice. As I understand, the company for which the subsidy is provided in the first clause of the Bill propose to build, or are already building, a narrow gauge road to the Canadian Pacific Railway, a road with a gauge of three feet six inches. Now the inconvenience of that system, I think, is plain on the face of it: that when the coal comes down from the mines of this company it cannot be carried on the Canadian Pacific Railway to Winnipeg or any of the places where it is likely to be consumed, but has to be transhipped where the branch railway reaches the Canadian Pacific Railway, and I think it is a doubtful policy, to encourage the construction of a road of that sort. It would cost very little more in that country to build a road of the ordinary gauge, from which trains could be run over the Canadian Pacific Railway without any change or expense. I think it will tend to increase the price of coal to the people of the North-West considerably.

HON. MR. KAULBACH — That should be a question entirely in the hands of the company themselves. If they consider it in their interests; if it is more economical for them to build a line that gauge, I do not think this Parliament should interfere.

HON. MR. POWER—If they did not ask a subsidy from us, of course, it would be a matter for themselves to decide.

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL—The North-Western Coal and Navigation Company got a charter to build their railway on the narrow gauge. It is not for us to say, because they adopt what I agree is not the best gauge, that we should not give them assistance. They got a charter to build on this narrow gauge: they have gone to great trouble and expense: they have raised money in England and in this country for the purpose of building the road on the narrow gauge system. If they have chosen to adopt a bad gauge, it is their misfortune. At the same time their object is to transport coal, and to accomplish the end of their existence as a company. I should be very sorry to think that if they had made a mistake in that way, as alleged, we should withhold assistance. The House will see that they receive only 3,800 acres per mile, while the others get 6,400 acres. There are facilities now for transshipping coal which did not exist in other years, and which make a narrow gauge road much less objectionable than it would have been under the old system, and the expense of transshipping is not by any means great.

HON. MR. VIDAL, from the committee, reported the Bill without amendment, and it was then read the third time and passed.

INSURANCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

The House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole on Bill (20), "An Act to modify the application of the Consolidated Insurance Act, 1877."

In the Committee,

On the second clause,

HON. MR. POWER—I wish to call attention to the fact that it has been suggested that another amendment is desirable, and I submit the suggestion to the Minister of Justice. I understand that there are certain companies which do