

through refusal, a railway company is liable in an action for damages. Surely these provisions must be all in the same line as that on which the hon. gentleman has argued, and must operate as an interference with the rights and privileges of the railway company. I am not aware of any case in point in Canada, but I believe on the other side of the line there have been cases brought by men of colour, negroes, who have been refused admission to trains, and in such cases there must have been a strong interference with the rights and privileges of the railway companies, because they were forced against their will to accept passengers whom they did not desire to ride on their lines. If, however, it is good law for the Government of this country to intervene, and say that no railway shall carry a passenger at a higher rate of fare than 3 cents per mile, surely it must be an interference with the profits and earnings of railway companies for if there were no statutory enactment of that kind, they might have power to charge what they wished, which would result in a considerable advance in their earnings. On the principle of reason and common sense, if these cases afford examples of the fair exercise of parliamentary power, even though they do conflict with the rights and privileges of the railway companies, surely it is only fair to say to the companies that second class passengers must have the same rights and privileges as are accorded to first class passengers. The hon. gentleman makes the complaint that the law is only applicable in the present case to railway companies and not to steamboat lines. Well, that is only one of many reforms desirable, but every reform cannot be secured at once. If the hon. gentleman's Bill goes to committee, and comes back and is moulded into legislation, the effect will be such, I trust, as to compel some hon. gentleman to feel that it is his duty in the interest of the travelling public that they should have the same rights accorded them in regard to steamboats as, I trust, this Bill will accord over lines of railway.

Mr. CAMPBELL. I do not agree with the provisions of this Bill. I think it is small for Parliament to legislate in a matter of this kind. I do not consider this House has any right to dictate to railway companies what they should charge for carrying passengers, any more than it has the right to regulate the rates of freight, except so far as that is provided for in the company's charter. The hon. member for East Simcoe (Mr. Bennett) has referred to the fact that we make laws that railway companies shall apply automatic couplers to their cars. That is in the interest of public safety, and it is our right and duty to protect life and limb, and, therefore, Parliament has wisely taken action in that direction, and I believe during the present session a measure will be placed on the Statute-book which will largely pro-

tect and safeguard the people in that respect. But here is a Bill providing that railway companies shall issue second class return tickets at reduced fares because they issue first class tickets at reduced fare. I think it is beyond the duty of Parliament to pass this Bill, that it has no right to interfere in these matters, and that if it possesses such powers, it should go further and provide that steamship companies, stage coaches, and other conveyances carrying passengers should be placed under like provisions to those applying to railways. But he has not gone that far, and he has only introduced this Bill for the purpose of affecting railways alone. To my mind the public has very little to complain of, because second class tickets are generally issued at a very low rate indeed. Since I have had the honour of a seat in this House, I have never heard any request from the public for a Bill of this kind. In no other country that I know of has such legislation been passed, and I believe that the less we interfere with the internal affairs of a railway company the better it will be for all concerned. As has been pointed out, railway corporations are not so flourishing in this country that we need to hamper and obstruct them in every way we possibly can. When we have protected the safety and convenience of the public, I do not think we should go any further. This law might have more effect upon the financial standing of railways than the hon. member (Mr. McLennan) has probably foreseen, and it should be remembered that passenger rates at the present day are down to the lowest point ever known. The railway companies, no doubt, see for themselves that it is in their own interests to reduce rates as far as they can. There has been no grievance pointed out in this matter, and there has been no public demand for such legislation, so that I believe the Bill is not one which should receive the sanction of this House.

The PRIME MINISTER (Mr. Laurier). Mr. Speaker, the House I am sure, readily appreciates the motive which impels my hon. friend from Glengarry (Mr. McLennan) to again introduce this Bill. The reason which he gave is in itself a very commendable one, his object being, as he says, to come to the help of the poorer classes who travel second class on railways. I do not see, however, that the ground which he has taken can meet with the acceptance of this House. As the law exists at the present time, there is no injustice so far as I can see, done second class passengers. If the law compelled railway companies to issue first class return tickets, then the argument of my hon. friend would be irresistible, and railway companies should give the same privilege to second class passengers, but there is no law at present to compel railway companies to issue return tickets at all,