

Whether the railway managers of this Dominion are sufficiently open to public opinion to be acted upon in that way, or not, I am not prepared to say. It has not been found efficient in other places, though it does appear to act in Massachusetts, and to meet with the approval of Mr. Adams, who has been for many years one of the Commissioners. I do not know that I need say anything more; a good deal might be said on the subject. The difficulty is, to what particular point to direct one's attention; but I venture to think that to most hon. members the necessity of compelling railway companies to obey the law, and carry out the purposes and objects for which they were incorporated, is sufficiently obvious. If that be so, the next question is, what is the means to obtain that desired end? I venture to think there is no other means except a tribunal such as this, because, as it is stated, the railway problem itself is an anomaly, and can only be dealt with in a manner different from all other subjects. It has to be dealt with in a different sense because of its peculiarities. Then the objection is made that we have already sufficient courts in existence, and the expense of these courts is as much as the people are able to endure. Well, as to that, all I can say is, that this Bill would certainly not make litigation more expensive than it is. It would not promote litigation, but it would have a tendency in the opposite direction, and the expense, of course, is a matter which I cannot deal with as a private member, and which must ultimately, if the House pass this Bill, be dealt with by the Government. In most of the States of the Union, I believe, though I am not positive on that point, the expense is borne by the railway companies, and there is no reason why, to a certain extent at all events, the expense should not be borne by the railway companies here. I, therefore, move that the Bill be read the second time.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I do not propose, at this stage of the Bill, to detain the House with any very lengthened remarks; but it will be naturally expected that, in relation to a matter of such great importance as this, some notice will be taken of the speech which has just been addressed to the House by my hon. friend, who has again brought forward this measure. There can be no doubt whatever as to the great importance of the subject which he has brought before us. There cannot possibly be any question as to the great importance of the railway interests of this country, and of those interests receiving such attention at the hands of this Parliament as will lead it to do all that it is possible Parliament can do to promote the interests of the people, and, at the same time, to avoid such interference with railway interests as might be prejudicial to those interests themselves. The hon. gentleman has not, I think, dealt with two of the very important difficulties to which I drew his attention when he submitted his Bill to the House on a former occasion. One of those was the want of power on the part of this Parliament to deal with the railway questions of this country in the manner which he proposes. It is known to the House that, under our Constitution, the powers of Parliament are confined to a certain class of railways, and that over a great many of the railways we have no jurisdiction whatever. They obtained their charters, they operate them under laws passed by the various Local Legislatures of the Dominion; and I think the hon. gentleman should provide some means by which that difficulty would be obviated, and by which it would become practicable to deal with this question as a whole, as otherwise it is perfectly apparent that, to a very large extent, the very important objects he has in view—and no one questions their importance—will entirely fail to be attained. The hon. gentleman has stated there are over 8,000 miles of railways in Canada, and the bare statement of that fact is quite sufficient to show the enormous interest that is at stake; and I think he might have gone further, and have stated that never was there an amount of capital

Mr. McCARTHY.

—the enormous amount of capital that has been required to be invested in the construction of these 8,000 miles of railway—that has proved more productive for the benefit of the whole of this country from end to end. Every one who knows anything of the value of railway accommodation, and what it has accomplished for the people, must recognize the fact that to these railway companies and capitalists who invested their money in the construction of those 8,000 miles of railway which we have in Canada to-day, we are more deeply indebted for our progress and prosperity than to any other cause.

Mr. MILLS. Hear, hear.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I do not intend, at this moment, to be diverted from the very important question under consideration in order to enter into a discussion of the National Policy with the hon. gentleman who favored us, on a recent occasion, with his views at very great length. The proper time will, no doubt, arrive to deal with the opinions of that hon. gentleman; but I have no hesitation in saying, in relation to the National Policy, that these 8,000 miles of railway have proved one of the great factors of the progress and prosperity of this country. The hon. member for North Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy) knows I drew his attention to another important point in connection with this matter, that is, not only the difficulty which exists owing to part of the railways being under local jurisdiction and the remainder under Federal jurisdiction, but the fact that we occupy a very different position in this country from that of the country from which the hon. gentleman has taken his Bill, that is, Great Britain. Great Britain is isolated, and the country being insular it has no connection with any other country. What is our position? I may, however, say, before leaving the point of the enormous amount of capital that has been invested in Canadian railways, that not only has it been productive of incalculable benefit to the development of this country, but there has never been a corresponding amount of capital invested that has been, at the same time, so advantageous to this country in which it was invested and so little profitable to the parties who furnished the money and invested it. There is no country which has benefitted more than Canada by the construction of railways, and there are no capitalists who have benefitted less than those who have invested their money in Canadian railways. Therefore, it is of great importance, while recognizing fully the value of the measure proposed, to bear in mind the magnitude of the railway interest, and the claim that it has on our most favorable consideration. Unlike the railways in England, Scotland, and Ireland, the railways of Canada are, many of them, lying in close proximity to the railways of another country—the United States—over whose legislation and the management of whose railways we have no control. It, therefore, becomes very evident that we should deal with this matter in such a way as not, by hampering and interfering with the free action and operation of our railways, direct the traffic and trade which they now control out of our country into the neighboring Republic. It is very well known that the Grand Trunk Railway, through almost its entire extent, is in close, keen competition with the railways of the United States, and that a very slight thing will transfer the traffic from one side of the St. Lawrence to the other, and thus deprive Canada of the expenditure of millions of dollars per annum now expended here. While every one must admit the importance of the views expressed by the hon. gentleman, we must not forget that—in our anxiety to meet every emergency, protect every interest, and establish what we believe to be a just and legitimate control over the management of these railways—we may so hamper and embarrass these railways as to prevent them competing in the race between our own roads and those of the adjoining country, and thus inflict an irparable and