

Company. I do not think an interchange is provided.

Mr. EMMERSON. Yes, it is.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. I do not agree with the minister.

Mr. M. S. SCHELL. If you will assure us and the country that it is reciprocal interchange on an equal footing in proportion to the service rendered and to the business transferred, personally I am satisfied with the resolution as far as it goes. I would go further—I agree with the hon. member for Centre York (Mr. Archibald Campbell)—and favour a complete interchange. I believe this country wants such interchange.

Mr. EMMERSON. As I stated the board will have the power to fix the terms, and I cannot conceive the Board of Railway Commissioners permitting the patrons of one line having connection with the patrons of another without reciprocal advantage and upon equal terms. I have no alarm with respect to that feature.

Mr. M. S. SCHELL. I would like to put in the words 'an interchange of business that is transmitted from one line to the other.'

Mr. EMMERSON. I have no doubt on the question as it stands. It would hardly do to leave the discretionary power in the hands of the ministers and by the same enactment tie their hands. That would be restrictive and in my judgment unwise legislation. We had better trust to this tribunal that is to determine the question.

Mr. M. S. SCHELL. With regard to the original section I would prefer to have seen that passed as it was introduced. I believe this country is going to be covered with telephone lines from one end to the other; rural sections that are not now covered will have telephone connection practically all over this Dominion and we believe that it would be better to give an interchange even in towns and villages. Of course the company having the larger number of telephones installed, would be entitled to the larger consideration in proportion to the business rendered, but I believe that a basis for interchange without infringing on the rights of the larger companies might be provided for by the Railway Commission.

Mr. BERGERON. When I read the first part of this amendment as drafted by the minister which says: 'any province, municipality or corporation,' I thought it meant that any municipal system or any provincial system would be entitled to have what is sought here by this amendment, but when I heard the discussion by hon. gentlemen I learned that any company in the country, any one of these sixty or seventy-five companies would be entitled to use the long

distance line and I say we are making bad legislation. We are supposed to be here with the object of legislating for the public good, and I contend if we force long distance to carry the messages of all these companies, we are not passing good legislation and not working in the interests of the people who use long distance lines. Our working for the public good does not entail that we should commit any injustice. To hear some of these gentlemen talking you would imagine that the Bell Telephone Company is a bugaboo as the member for Centre York (Mr. Campbell) has said. Nothing bad enough can be said against the Bell Telephone Company; a stranger coming into this House would imagine that they are public malefactors and should all be put in jail. It seems to me it is most unjust; the Bell Telephone Company has been the pioneer in this country; when they came here in 1881 and asked incorporation, people were merely laughing and any gentleman who looks at the statutes will see that everything they asked was granted. They made a success of their enterprise, they went at it, they worked, they were very energetic and they are giving a good service to the people of Canada, the best service, as we found in the Telephone Committee, in the world. They have accumulated money. They are reproached to-day because their stock is high. It is a guarantee that these people are able to give the service, that they have the money, they can provide telephones to any municipality, as long as telephones are required. I am in favour of the conditions being submitted to the Railway Commission; that is a guarantee to the public, but do you think this amendment would be for the good of the man who wants to telephone over the long distance line, I have heard it stated in the House that if it pays the Bell Telephone Company to carry messages on the long distance line, why do they not allow the small companies to use their lines. That is very extraordinary reasoning. The telephone system by itself is the essence of monopoly in the good sense of the word. It is not like a railway. We grant running rights over a railway to another company. The New York Central has running rights over the Canadian Pacific Railway line into Montreal, but that does not prevent the Canadian Pacific Railway trains arriving and departing on schedule time. The New York Central pays a large amount of money for that privilege.

A telephone system is an entirely different thing. One man in the city of Ottawa and one in the city of Montreal who are talking to each other occupy the whole line. There are six lines from Montreal to Ottawa, but they are all employed to such an extent that we have to wait sometimes three-quarters of an hour or an hour to telephone to Montreal. And that only for subscribers. If every little local telephone com-