

and winter, is generally a little lower to Boston than Montreal, and a little dearer out of Montreal than from that point, and Montreal, as a matter of fact, cannot stand squeezing in the way it is proposed to do in this bill. Not only so, but if you take points in Ontario and the west, the principle upon which railways appear to go is this: to get the most they can for any trade that is in sight, but to get it. The distances are disregarded; past rates are disregarded. Everything is disregarded except getting the business. We know perfectly well that from New York and from Boston to points in the west the rates of freight are just about equivalent to what they are from Montreal to the west. If you handicap Montreal by expensive works which are not called for by the community, which are not called for by the shipping interest, you will punish yourselves, if you consider you are dealing with Montreal only in this matter. I once more, at the risk of repetition, beg to enlist every man who is doing business or who lives in Ontario or in the North-west, in what I consider to be the duty of the Dominion, which is to make the port of Montreal the cheapest port on this side of the Atlantic. It would pay you to do it, and if you are acting under the delusion that Montreal can very well afford to be squeezed, you are acting under a delusion which some day or other will receive an awakening. I shall oppose this bill to the utmost of my power, and I trust I have said enough to enlist on my side of the question a large proportion of the present House. Once more, let me repeat, any attempt to enlist the east end against the west end is absolute humbug. There is no such question in the present issue at all. I am satisfied that the French who live in the east end are as much interested as I am in seeing that the port of Montreal is kept one of the cheapest ports of the Dominion, and the aspiration should be to free it, sooner or later, from all port charges whatever. Every one knows, I suppose, that the commissioners have carried on their operations up to a recent period by an issue of bonds and debentures which have been a favourite investment. In the new era of things, instead of going to the public for the money, and paying the interest regularly as they have done in the past, I am not sure but that the new business of getting money from the government, when you have appended to it stipulations requiring you to

misspend a large proportion of it, will not more or less affect the value of those debentures. In any case I shall oppose any measure whatever which calls upon me to burden the port with more than it ought to bear of fair and reasonable charges.

The motion was agreed to, and the bill was read the second time.

The House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole on the bill.

(In the Committee.)

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—If I am properly informed there is, of the money that was agreed to be advanced in 1896, a balance still on hand held by the government of \$750,000 or \$800,000. That and the \$2,000,000 now proposed to be advanced would make \$2,750,000. The portion proposed to be spent under this bill in docks, wharfs and other structures at a particular point in the city is \$750,000, which would leave a balance of \$2,000,000 to be expended unconditionally in such manner as the harbour commissioners thought best. It would leave them \$2,000,000, which probably would be a sufficient amount, to re-arrange the docks under the plan that I understand has been approved of, of running them out angularly to the stream rather than at right angles as formerly. If that statement is correct—and I believe it is—the harbour commissioners would not seem to have very much ground of complaint, because they would have the \$2,000,000 to expend in any way they thought wise and prudent, and it may be that the docks and the wharfs in the eastern part of the city do require considerable improvement. I cannot say what proportion of the amount was to go into the dry dock; I am not advised on that point. I presume the most important expenditure will be on the improvement of the wharfs.

Hon. Mr. MACDONALD (B.C.)—Have the harbour commissioners applied for money to improve the wharf accommodation?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Yes, they have been pressing the government for a long time.

Hon. Mr. DRUMMOND—Did they apply for the reservation in the east end?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—No, I think not. The hon. gentleman asked me whether they applied for the loan. They have applied