

company. I am bound to pay my hon. friend the compliment that he is a very regular attendant in the Railway Committee, for which I give him credit, and there is little legislation before this House in which he does not take an interest. Although he cannot vote in the Railway Committee, he has a right to raise his objections against any Bill that may be under consideration in that committee. I agree with him, that where there is anything extraordinary in a Bill, if it is in the power of the promoter to give the explanation to the House, he should do so, because there is a much larger number of members in the House than in the committee, and it may be better in that way. But our Railway Committee is composed of nearly two-thirds of the whole House, and there has never been any objection taken—in fact no objections can be taken—to a member going to the Railway Committee, as far as that is concerned. My hon. friend knows very well that it is not in the power of many members, off-hand, to give an explanation of a Bill, they rely upon the explanation being given to the committee by the promoters when it comes before them.

Hon. Mr. WILSON—The hon. gentleman insisted strongly upon the fact that this legislation is absolutely necessary to be passed by this House. Will he tell me whether it is per se a provincial or a Dominion Bill? Does this come under the jurisdiction of the province according to the rights of the province, or does it revert to the Dominion?

Hon. Mr. GIBSON—I have no objection to answer my hon. friend. I think if he would listen to what I say he would be satisfied. I was in favour—and I am proud to think a large number of this House are in favour—of all railway charters emanating from the Dominion parliament, so that our legislation would be effective upon every railway, and all roads should be treated alike. I judge from the nature of the Bill that this railway is wholly within the province of Ontario; but, supposing it is, the other railways cannot be forced to accept the traffic that comes over this line, and the sooner these restrictions are removed from the railways the better. What we want in

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Canada, and what I am sure does most for the development of the country, is railway enterprise.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—The opinion expressed by the hon. gentleman, and his whole speech, would necessitate a change of the constitution before we could act on it. We are not here to legislate in accordance with individual opinions as to what the constitution should or should not be. I am fully in accord with the sentiments uttered by my hon. friend, and have been for a great number of years, that all railway companies should be incorporated by the Dominion parliament so as to avoid many difficulties which have occurred in connection with crossings and connections; but we cannot deal with that question here until we change the constitution, and it is utterly useless to discuss it unless it is upon an address to change the constitution as we find it to-day. But the point raised by the hon. gentleman from St. Thomas is a different matter. It has been pointed out by my hon. friend opposite, the first lieutenant, that we are not incorporating a company, we are dealing with an Act already upon the statute-book, which has been passed by the parliament of Canada. The incorporators have failed to carry out the provisions of that Act, and the question before us is to say whether we shall extend the time for the commencement and completion of the road. If we think they have had sufficient time, and that there has been nothing done towards the surveying or the commencement of the work, and that we conclude it is one of those bogus, speculative charters, then it is our duty to reject this Bill. Otherwise, if they give a bona fide proof of their intention and their ability to construct the road, even in the near future, then there can be no objection to giving an extension of the time in order to enable them to do so.

Hon. Mr. WILSON—While I hope I may improve very much by the lecture I have received from my hon. friend from Beamsville in reference to what is right and proper and my duty, I must confess that his line of argument would not be the same if I were considering a matter of any importance, because, forsooth, he says there are a large number of members of this