calls for the appointment of auditors for the Canadian National Railways. This year the appointment is sought for the firm of George A. Touche and Company of the cities of Toronto and Montreal.

Motion agreed to, bill considered in committee, reported, read the third time and passed.

On motion of Mr. Mackenzie the house adjourned at 10.55 p.m.

Friday, May 2, 1947

The house met at three o'clock.

STANDING ORDERS

First report of standing committee on standing orders—Mr. MacLean.

PETITIONS

PROPOSED SEPARATION OF CERTAIN PARISHES FROM TEMISCOUATA CONSTITUENCY—STANDING ORDER 68

Mr. JEAN-FRANÇOIS POULIOT (Temiscouata): Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I see by *Votes and Proceedings,* Nos. 58 and 59, that two petitions from hundreds of electors of Temiscouata county have been turned down because they had not been drawn in proper form, "and therefore should not be received." We go by standing order 68 which says:

> A petition to the house may be presented by a member at any time during the sitting of the house by filing the same with the Clerk of the House.

These petitions were sent to the house and were tabled in the house. At the time of presentation there was no debate. They were endorsed by the member. The only difficulty is that they were addressed to Mr. Speaker and to members of the House of Commons instead of to the Honourable the House of Commons in parliament assembled. That is the first point. On this first point, the fact is that those petitions which have been tabled could not have been mentioned in *Hansard* if the House of Commons had not been assembled. It is a matter of using or not using sacramental words. The wish of the electors of my county has been conveyed to you, sir, and to my hon. colleagues by that petition.

Mr. IRVINE: To whom is the petition addressed?

Mr. POULIOT: It is addressed to Mr. Speaker and hon. members of the House of Commons. There were three words missing—"in parliament assembled." The House of Commons was in fact assembled, because if the House of Commons had not been assembled the petition could not have been tabled. Then there should be the words "The petition of the undersigned... humbly sheweth"; these are not on the petition. I regret that, but I wonder if those words are indispensable. Then the citation says: "Follows the subject matter on the petition, in the third person through, and commencing each paragraph with the word 'That'." It was not necessary to have several paragraphs; my electors are not strong on red tape and they cut it short. They said in very clear and plain language what they wanted done. Then there is the prayer. The prayer is the expression of the wish.

Mr. IRVINE: What was the prayer? That is important.

Mr. POULIOT: The prayer is that they did not want to be taken away from Temiscouata county as it is now. That was the prayer, and it was set out in fair language. There is some confusion about the prayer—and I am speaking about the lay prayer, not the religious prayer. Then there is the conclusion, which we very often see in petitions, "And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray." That is not in there. Those are the sacramental words that are not in this petition. Everything else but that is in accordance with the spirit of parliamentary practice and tradition; everything else required by the standing order is complied with by the petition. Therefore, sir, if the house is generous enough to give unanimous consent, I would move that this petition be referred to the redistribution committee.

Mr. GRAYDON: Mr. Speaker, I think the house ought to give unanimous consent to the suggestion made by the hon. member for Temiscouata (Mr. Pouliot). We should not be governed so much by the form as by the substance of a petition such as this. When the common people of Canada decide that they want to petition the House of Commons, we should place as few obstacles as possible in the way of their getting their views tabled in the house. I suggest that we waive any technicalities in this matter and allow the petition presented by the hon. member for Temiscouata to be tabled as he suggests.

Mr. POULIOT: Thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: May I point out to the house that I have already refused some petitions because they were not prepared in accordance with the rules of the house. I should not like to put before the house the motion to