

and from the province of Nova Scotia a better line than the Grand Trunk Railway offers. I should be very sorry to see an important measure of this kind blocked by a mere technical objection, taken in this way at the close of the session. With respect to the question of order in this House, while the decision of the Speaker is always treated with respect, the Rules provide that, when it comes to an interpretation of a Rule, the House has a right to deal with the matter. If there is any doubt as to the meaning of a Rule, the House has a right to decide what shall be the interpretation of that Rule, and, if it is the decision of the House that the Committee could meet to-morrow and consider this Bill, there is nothing to prevent the House so deciding.

Hon. Mr. MASSON—The hon. gentleman from Halifax asks why this Bill is opposed. The hon. gentleman from Sorel explained in French that the Bill is distasteful to the province of Quebec—that it was presented to the Legislature of Quebec at its last session, and was thrown out. These parties, having failed there, have come here for legislation which is distasteful to the province.

Hon. Mr. POWER—It does not follow that it was distasteful to the people of Quebec because it was rejected by that legislature.

Hon. Mr. MASSON—Oh! oh!

Hon. Mr. POWER—One can readily understand how that would happen. The Great Eastern Railway Company, represented by the hon. gentleman from Sorel, have a right to build a line close to the south bank of the St. Lawrence river. There is a considerable population there, much more than in the interior where this road proposes to go, and one can readily understand that where the majority of the votes are, there the majority of representatives would be also. I can readily understand that the representatives of the counties facing on the St. Lawrence river, would not—looking at the thing from a local point of view—be anxious to have this road constructed, because they might be under the impression that that would interfere with the construction of the other road. The Great Eastern Railway Company has had a charter for I think fifteen years, and has made almost

no progress. I do not think that the older company ought to be allowed to stand in the way of a live company which shows what it is prepared to do by what it has done.

Hon. Mr. DE BOUCHERVILLE—I do not think the question is whether the Bill should be supported or not; the question is as to the interpretation of the rule of the House. Although the hon. member from Halifax is generally in the right, he is a little mistaken in the way he has put the question to-day. If this Bill had been read the second time at the first sitting, this sitting might be considered a whole day, and to-morrow a whole twenty-four hours on account of there having been a sitting between the second reading and the reference to the committee, but in this case there will be no sitting between the second reading and the sitting of the committee, and, therefore, I do not think the interval can be taken as a day. Certainly if we were discussing the details of the Bill the reasons given by the hon. member from Sorel are very strong. If any one is interested in this Bill it is certainly those who come from the province of Quebec, and I dare say a majority of them would be opposed to this Bill. But that is not the question; the question is shall the rules be adhered to or not. If any one is opposed to the Bill he has a right to take advantage of the Rules of the House and these rules cannot be changed except by unanimous consent. No notice has been given of the proposition to suspend the rule and the question cannot be discussed. I do not see how my hon. friends can think there is any doubt that twenty-four hours cannot be interpreted in any sense than at least one sitting having taken place between the second reading and the reference to the committee.

Hon. Mr. McMILLAN—I move

That in the opinion of this House the construction of the rules will permit the committee to meet and consider this Bill to-morrow morning.

Hon. Mr. DE BOUCHERVILLE—There must be a notice of that motion.

Hon. Mr. MASSON—Such a motion cannot be put without notice.

Hon. Mr. POWER—I do not see that the motion is out of order. The question of order has arisen with reference to this Bill, and the hon. gentleman wants to take