

present law has been found insufficient to meet a case of this kind?" I wanted to know whether there was any truth that additional legislation was needed. I got no answer to that question. A long address about generalities was, of course, delivered, and a statement made about these petitions. Hon. gentlemen know what these petitions mean. It is not difficult to get petitions signed when they are presented by influential persons, and especially when they ask for increased privileges and powers, as these do, for the municipalities. But I hold that these petitions are no proof, such as the House requires, of any public demand for a change in the statute. We want proof that the statute has failed in any case. That proof has not been brought forward in a single instance. I think in the Bill itself there are elements of what will probably lead to confusion and litigation. For instance, very large power is given under this Bill to the municipalities. Now we all know what municipalities are composed of: they are, no doubt, intelligent men, but they are not familiar with engineering questions, and yet they may pass resolutions and impose restrictions which this House is not cognizant of, and the railway companies will be brought under these restrictions, however absurd or injurious they may be. Surely that is something that should not be done. We ought not to delegate power to municipal bodies—excellent bodies, no doubt, but not possessed of the knowledge and information which would enable them to legislate for the country and control the railway companies. I think that is an element of danger; but my main objection to the Bill is that it is unnecessary, that it interferes with the statute now on our books, which it is a great deal better to keep intact. I am persuaded, if the promoter of the Bill and those working with him could show to the Railway Committee a single instance in which a thing of this kind had been sought and refused, which should have been granted, they themselves would take care that the law should be so amended that it should not occur in the future. This is one of the Bills which ought to be admittedly under the special care of the Government. I think the Railway Act which we now have—while, of course, it is susceptible, as any human legislation is, of improvement and amendment—works satisfactorily, and that any improvements and amendments

that may be required should only be obtained when a necessity for them is made apparent, and when that necessity has been properly brought before the Government.

The Senate divided on the amendment, which was rejected by the following vote:—

CONTENTS :

Hon. Messrs.

Almon,	Lacoste,
Armand,	Montgomery,
Baillargeon,	Murphy,
Botsford,	O'Donohoe,
Cochrane,	Ogilvie,
Girard,	Prowse
Glasier,	Scott,
Guevremont,	Smith,
Howlan,	Vidal.—18.

NON-CONTENTS :

Hon. Messrs.

Archibald,	McInnes (B.C.),
Boucherville, de,	McKay,
Boulton,	McKindsey,
Casgrain,	Macdonald (B.C.),
Chaffers,	Macfarlane,
Clemow,	Merner,
De Blois,	Miller,
Dever,	Pâquet,
Grant,	Perley,
Haythorne,	Power,
Kaulbach,	Read (Quinté),
Lewin,	Reesor,
Loughheed,	Reid (Cariboo),
McCallum,	Sanford,
McClellan,	Stevens,
McDonald (C.B.),	Sutherland.—32.

HON. MR. SCOTT—I wish to say one word to remove a serious misconception from the minds of some hon. gentlemen. It is conceded that the Railway Committee have the widest possible power. The argument that has been used is that it is unfair that municipalities in remote parts of the country should be obliged to come to Ottawa or be represented before the Railway Committee of the Privy Council in order to obtain what they consider fair and equal justice. Now, I beg to assure hon. gentlemen that I am not aware that the Railway Committee have ever required a municipality to be represented here. One hon. gentleman who spoke in support of the Bill said, by way of illustration: Suppose a grievance arose in British Columbia, would it not be reasonable that the party or municipality making the application should be obliged to attend here or be represented by counsel. Now, it just so happens that, either at the last meeting of the Railway Committee, or the meeting immediately preceding that, an application