Mr. Wigle-From the Town Council of Archersburgh, praying that no Act may pass to change the location of the county town of Essex; and eight others to the same effect.

Mr. Scott (Grey)-From the Township Council of Holland, praying for the establishment of a school for the blind; and ten others to the same effect.

## REPORTS OF COMMITTEES.

Mr. CARNEGIE presented the report of Wooden Railways, recommending the adoption of the system of Wooden Railways for the development of the backwood districts of the country.

Atty. Gen. MACDONALD presented the report of Standing Committee on Private Bills; and also of the Railway Committee, communicating the result of the meeting of the Committee held this morning. (A full report of the proceedings of which will be found in another column.) He moved the adoption of the report.

Hon, Mr. RICHARDS said with a view to test the opinion of this House upon the course pursued by the Committee in negativing the preamble of this Bill, he had moved that the evidence on which that decision was arrived at should be submitted to the House. He had said then that he should take a second course with regard to the Bill. The report that the Committee had submitted stated that they could not produce the evidence since it had not been taken. He had placed before the Committee an amendment to the effect that petitions had been before the Committee which proved the facts of the preamble. He believed that as these petitions must have been before the Committee, they having been referred to the Committee, and, therefore, the preamble was proved. He thought In the face of the fact that there was such a large majority in favour of the Bill, that it would not be safe nor advisable to order that the Bill be referred to that Committee With due deference to the Committee, he submitted that as his opinion. There was also an evident determination on the part of the majority of the Committee that the Bill should not pass, and that being the case, he found that the House could either send the Bill back with a resolution that the preamble had been proved, or could pass a resolution to proceed on to the next stage of the Bill. He proposed to take the latter course, for the reason that he thought it would be hopeless, judging from his experience of the Committee, to attempt to get that Committee to pass the Bill. He appealed to the good sense and fairness of the House to allow them to carry on this Bill, if the House on the present occasion allowed it to pass. With respect to the argument that it could not do this, he would refer to the case of the town of Cornwall when petitioning for the legislation of their by-laws. The House then resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole, and passed the Bill without amendment, and it was then read a third time. They could not do this, as the Bill had not been read a second time; but he would propose to pass the Bill on a further stage by reading it a second time, and if that was adopted, then to refer the Bill to a Committee of the whole House. There was nothing which prevented the House taking the Bill out of the hands of the Committee, although it had decided against the preamble of the Bill. He held that there was no rule which would substitute a Committee for the whole House as was attempted in this case. The House might give a special order to have the Bill placed on the orders of the day. He admitted it was not the course regularly adopted, but he held it was within the powers of the House to do so. It was true there was alleged against the Bill that there was a suspicion that the old Company could not carry out their charter. But the majority of the people in the locality through which the route lay had petitioned in favour of this Bill, and not one, so far as he knew, had petitioned against it, while there had been an almost universal expression of the people against the Great Western Railway Bill. So far then as the desire of the people went, there was everything in favour of the one, and nothing in favour of the other. He considered the evidence which these petitions expressed in favour of the Bill outweighed any evidence against it. The persons who voted against this Bill had voted for the rival scheme, so that it would be useless to refer it back to the Committee. It was evident that those who had voted against it once would hardly be induced to vote for it now. The Committee declined to allow time to bring witnesses to prove that the preamble of the rival Bill was correct.

Mr. RYKERT rose to a point of order. The question under discussion was Bill No 36, and the hon. member had no right to mention any other.

Hon. Mr. RICHARDS contended that he had a right to mention the proceedings of the Committee.

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Mr. COYNE hoped the House would allow the hon. gentleman to proceed. He would soon convince the House that he was in the wrong. (Hear)

Hon. Mr. RICHARDS continued that the promoters of the G. W. R. Co.'s Bill refused to bring up members of the Board of that Corporation, to establish the correctness of the statement that they were prepared to help the new Company through with their scheme. Now, under all these circumstances, it was apparent that it would be useless to send this Bill back to the Committee. There could be no hope of obtaining fair play there. The old Company had to contend with the broad gauge which had been forced on them, and the hostility of the G. W. R. Co., which was practically a rival Company. It was rather hard after all this opposition to refer it back to the Committee where it might be considered to be disposed of. He therefore moved that the Bill be placed on the orders of the day, following the passage of this resolution, among the private and local Bills, and after being discussed in its proper order, that it be afterwards referred to a Committee of the Whole House.

## THE MEMBER FOR RENFREW.

The newly elected member for Renfrew (Mr. Murray) was introduced by Messrs. Lyon and Code, and took his seat amid applause.

Mr. McKELLAR, in seconding the resolution of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, said he had never, within his recollection, heard of such an unprecedented course as had been pursued by the Committee with respect to this Bill. He was confident that If it were referred back to the Committee, after the spirit which had been manifested so far, that it would certainly be burked. He believed it would be better to discuss it on its merits, and he was convinced the House would not deny this reasonable request to change the gauge. The Committee had shown a disposition to furnish as little of the evidence adduced in this case as possible. He would support the motion of the Hon. Commissioner of Crown Lands, for it would be neccessary to meet the extreme measure on the part of the rival company with this unusual course of proceeding. Hon. Mr. CAMERON said it was admitted

that there should be strong reasons before the House adopted the unusual course proposed. He had listened to his hon. friend, and the hon. member for Bothwell, and had not heard anything that indicated that this Bill did not receive fair consideration before the Railway Committee, who were charged with its consideration. He thought that all the evidence that could be brought forward in support of it, and that all that was asked was done in order to place the matter fairly before the Committee. There was no charge of venality against the Committee, and no charge that they had not discharged their duties faithfully. They argued that because the preamble of this Bill simply showed that petitions were received, and that these petitions were placed before the Committee, that therefore the report of the Railway Committee, that the preamble of the Bill was not proved, must be incorrect. He presumed that every private Bill must have something more than the petition to recommend it, and that it must have a clause, saying that it was expedient that legislation should take place, and it was on that part of the preamble that the Committee decided. Now he believed that Mr. Thompson, one of the Provisional Directors, had given his evidence fully before the Committee, and in place of his satisfying the Committee that he was able to accomplish this work, he was not in a position to do it. It was on that ground that he personally voted against the Bill. He thought that the district referred to should have railway accommoda. tion, and when he found that there was another scheme that would give this accommodation, he thought it was his duty to suppert it to all in his power. The charter of the railway now held by Mr. Thompson provided that before this railway could go into oreration there must be \$2,000,000 stock with 10 per cent of the stock paid in-that it must be bona fide subscription, and the stock be paid between the 20th February, '68 to the 20th February, 1870, but Mr. Thompson had declared that the sources to which he looked for assistance had failed him; but now he said that a new enterprise had sprung up, and upon that new scheme he hoped to accomplish his wishes. But that enterprise was but a new line, striking on the other side of the St. Clair, called the Michigan Air Line, which depended upon the municipal asistance that it could obtain to carry on its works. The whole of the assistance that they were to give was a contribution of \$200,000 to meet the expenses of organisation whatever they might be. The Company was not in a position to assist this line, nor would it aid it unless the line was changed altogether, and the point at which it reached the boundary of the United States would be at least 60 miles from the point at which the original charter proposed to reach the Detroitriver. Under these circumstances, he thought it would be inexpedient to have this charter continued in their Statute Book longer, preventing them from granting a charter to another com pany to whom he locked for the means of accomplishing this great work. But he did not wish that the House should take his statements, and he would, therefore, propose an amendment, as follows :- " That the said Bill be recommitted to the Standing Committee on Railways to reconsider and report thereon, and that it be an instruction of the said Committee to take the evidence down in writing and report the same to this House. He thought that the House would then be able to judge of this scheme, or whether some enterprize with greater prospects and greater evidence of success might give to that country, which had desired it so long, some chance of obtaining a railway. Mr. Rykert would second his amendment.

Hon. Mr. RICHARDS said the numerous petit ons praying for the extension the old charters afforded a strong reason why the Bill should be allowed to pa's The opinions of the people interested in the construction of the line were more worthy of consideration than the opinions of the Committee. He submitted that the weight of evidence was in favour of the

Mr. RYKERT only wished the hon member would pay the same attention to petitions on all occasions as on this. He remembered an instance wherea number of petitions were presented to the hon. gentleman's department, praying for reform of abuses, which were disregarded. He (Mr. R ) said the course which the Committee had pursued with respect to this Bill had been a fair one. Mr. Thompson had a fair opportunity to state his case to the Committee, and, after receiving the patient hearing he had, it was hardly fair to come to the House and ask them to reverse the decision of the Committee. He hoped the House would not establish such a precedent. The promoters of this Bill complain that they were hampered with a broad gauge, but no one ever heard anything about it till this session. Mr. Thompson did not come down to the House last session with this complaint, although his charter had been in existence a whole year at that time. The real cause of this complaint was that Mr. Thompson had met with a few gentlemen of Michigan who desired to obtain a short route through Canada with a narrow gauge railway. The Committee did not refuse to give Mr. Thompson a charter, but they refused to allow him time to send away to another country for witnesses to prove that Mr. McMaster and others were men of no standing. Two years ago these men supported the Bill, and they were considered people of no small importance. He (Mr. R.) hoped the House

would not establish such a precedent as the Hop. Commissioner of Crown Lands desired. If it were once established that there could be appeals from the Committee in this way, they would lose all power. The hon, memher for Bothwell said he had never heard of a Bill being burked in Committee like this. The hon. gentleman forgot the many instances which occurred in the old Parliament of Canada, where Bills were voted down by the French majority. Fair play had been shown to this Bill by the Committee, and he considered it an unwarrantable charge against them to say they had rejected the preamble without good reason.

Mr. FERGUSON did not think it would

be honest, just or reasonable to adopt the

regolution of the hon. Commissioner of Crown Lands, and thus take all power out of the hands of the Committee The hon. Commissioner of Crown Lands had no precedent for the course which he desired the House to pursue. There were no less than three rival companies asking for a charter. Now, which of those was to receive a charter? It was evident it would not do to give a charter to each. He would refer for precedent to the action of a Committee of the British House of Commons in a similar instance, when four rival companies asked for charters. The Committee could not give them all charters, so they adopted the other alternative and did not give a charter to any of them. Now if the Committee in England possessed this power, surely a Committee of this House should possess an equal power. It was beneath the dignity of this House to discuss the details of this matter. The proper course to pursue was to refer it back to the Committee, let the evidence be taken down in writing and submitted to the House. The House could then judge whether there was sufficient reason for rejecting this Bill. But it was unfair to charge seventeen members of this House with acting in a partial, unfair manner-to charge them with having been bribed to render a certain decision.

Hon. Mr. RICHARDS denied having made any such assertion.

Mr. FERGUSON said the hon. member would not deny having passed some very severe strictures on the Committee. It was in order to put the matter in its proper position before the House and the country that he should support the amendment. The hon. Commissioner for Crown Lands would be able to take the step he now proposed to take after the report of the Committee.

Mr. HAYS voted in the majority in the Committee, and he would not stand up in this place and say a word against a Commit tee; yet he must say, that the proceedings of the Committee were objectionable. He charged the chairman of the Standing Orders Committee with asking hon. members to burke the Bill, before it was heard before the Committee.

Mr. FERGUSON said the member who had done so ought to be named.

Mr. HAYS said he would name him. It was the hon. member for Lincoln, (Mr. Rykert). Was that the proper position to

Mr. RYKERT-No, no.

Mr. HAYS said he would never pledge himself to any Bill before he heard the evidence before a Committee. With regard to the floating of the scheme, the promoters of the Bill could not obtain the required capital while the present gauge was maintained, and they therefore came to the House and asked them to alter the gauge. He had referred to the question of an attempt to burke the Bill, and he again repeated his charge. It was no use to be dishonest about those things. The hon. member for Lincoln should be the last one to charge hon. members with burking measures, for he himself had desired members to vote against a Bill, without hearing the evidence.

Mr. RYKERT said the hon. gentleman had attacked him in such a personal manner that he found it necessary to reply. The hon. gentleman shifted round so much that it was hard to know where to find him; but tonight he came out in his true colours. He (Mr. R.) was not ashamed of the course which he had pursued. It was justified by the result of the Committee. The Committee themselves reported that the rules of the House were not complied with, and asked this House to rescind them so far as these questions were concerned. It was his duty, as Chairman of the Committee, to point out the necessity of observing the rules, and when he found out that members of this House were asked to vote it through in spite of the rules of the House, he asked hon. members to support the rules.

Mr. HAYS thought his word was as good as that of the hon. member for St. Catharines. He (Mr. H.) repeated that the hon. member asked him to burke the Bill.

Mr. RYKERT-I distinctly deny it. Mr. HAYS appealed to the hon. member for West Peterboro' to say if the hon, member for St. Catharines had not asked him to

burke the Bill? Mr. CARNEGIE-He asked me to give my vote against it without hearing the evi-

Mr. RYKERT said he told the hon. gentleman to stand by the rules of the House. If that was not his duty, he did not know what his duty should be. Day after day the rules of the House were being violated, and yet, forsooth, he was being taken to task by the hon. member for North Buron, who had not yet made his mark in the House and never would.

Mr. HAYS-I hope I never will make such a mark as you have done. (Laugh-

ter.) Mr. OLIVER said he believed it was thirty years since a railway route was surveyed in that country, and the people were yet without a railway. There had been a strong argument advanced by everyone who supported the Bill that the people petitioned for it. He admitted the argument was a powerful one, but perhaps it might not be known to a great many hon. gentlemen that several, in fact the majority of, the petition. ers, when they signed those petitions were not aware that there was a rival company in existence. He felt convinced that Mr. Thompson had had his day, and it would be only fair to let some one who was able to buil 1 this line, undertake its construction.

ber for Huron had given the most colourable character to what had occurred. He never had any confidence in Mr. Thompson, and the rules of the House had not been complied with. But the Committee decided that the question should be decided upon its merits before the Railway Committee. He thought that Mr. Thompson should have shown to the Committee his ability to make the line. He desired that the section of the country should be served with railways; and he looked at the question with a view to a decision as to which line the district would be best served by. The delegates sent to the Committee were now becoming in favour of the Great Western scheme, being of opinion that the promoters of that Bill were really in earnest; and also believing that Mr. Thompson would never build the line. It was on the ground of Mr. Thompson's inability to complete the line that the Committee had arrived at the decision it had. An extraordinary remedy was proposed for the extraordinary disease. Was it fair to allow the minority of a Committee to ask this House to say that Committee had not done its duty. The House should at least have all the evidence taken in the case brought before them before condemning the Committee.

Mr. COYNE thought that the non, men

Mr. TROW had no interest in either line; but he would like to see fair play. Mr. Thompson still held his charter, and till it expired it was hardly fair to discuss the matter. It was very questionable whether the G. W. R. Co. would build the line if they got the charter. Certainly, they would not build it west of Glencoe. He wished to know if the Great Western Railway Company could undertake this great work while they owed such a large amount to Government?

Hop. Mr. CAMERON said the Great Western Railway did not owe the Government anything. An arrangement had lately been effected by which their debt was discharged.

Mr. SMITH (Kent) could not see any good reason for refusing Mr. Thompson's request, He had presented over twenty petitions from his constituents, and he had not heard of any opposition to the scheme except by this rival Company.

Mr. McDOUGALL believed the Committee should be allowed to make another report on this Bill. Let them take the evidence and bring it before the House, and if it should not be considered sufficient for rejecting the Bill, the House could then take up the matter themselves. He would vote to have the Bill referred back to the Committee; but in doing so he hoped everything would be

done to expedite the passage.

Attorney-General MACDONALD desired to settle the question, if possible. The hon. Commissioner of Crown Lands had made a metion to place the Bill on the Orders of the Day, and an amendment had been moved to refer it back to the Railway Committee. He (Mr. M.) thought that the opinion of the House was that the preamble ought to have been proved. It was a mistaken idea to suppose that it was obligatory on the Committee to pass the Bill because the principle of it was admitted. He believed that the House considered the preamble ought to be proved, and he took to himself some blame for having put the motion to the Committee, "shall the preamble pass?" He should have said, "Is the preamble proved?" The Committee could have proceeded with the Bill, and struck out every clause, and reported it back to the House, and the House could afterwards deal with it on its merits. The smendment to the resolution of the hon Commissioner could hardly effect any good purpose. It was proposed to send it back to the Committee to take the evidence again How could that be done? When was the evidence to be brought before the House? Why, it wouldn't be completed before the end of the Session. In the meantime the other Bill would be progressing. He did not desire to have either Bill burked. He thought this Bill should be sent before the Committee, not restricting them by a refusal to consider the clauses on their merits. He therefore moved, seconded by Mr. Blake, in amendment to the amendment, that Bill No. 36 be recommitted to the Standing Committee on Railways, with instructions to consider the preamble thereof as proved, and proceed to the consideration of the several clauses on their merits. (Hear, hear) This, he considered, was the fair course.

Mr. McKELLAR suggested that the hon. Commissioner of Crown Lands should withdraw his motion.

Mr RYKERT expressed his readiness to withdraw his

Mr. BLAKE understood by this motion that the preamble amounted to nothing, but that the Committee was to go on to consider the clauses on their merits.

After some further discussion the motion was carried, and the House rose for recess. After recess,

## FIRST READING.

Mr. EVANS-Bill to further extend the Registration of Conveyances to Religious Institutions in Ontario.

## PRINTING PETITIONS.

Mr. LYON moved that the petition of the members of the Civil Service, Ottawa, with reference to assessment, should be printed. He was not in favour of the petition; but he thought, as it was a very important one, it would be very well to have it printed. There was no doubt of the fact that people were assessed in very different degrees. Aldermen, under the present system, elected for three years, assessed very arbitrarily. He desired to see all parties treated equally. The parties to the petition were assessed at the full amount, and the only difficulty was to get at the real amount of the income of private persons. He did not desire to see the system at present existing at Ottawa continued. If the petition was printed, it might call the attention of other towns to the facts mentioned in it.

Mr. McKELLAR thought the matter should be referred to the Printing Committee. They might prepare an abstract of it. It would be expensive to print it in extenso.

Atty.-Gen. MACDONALD said the House had the power of ordering petitions to be printed. There were facts in the petition which would be of great assistance to the Assessment Committee. No petition had been presented for many years which was so forcible, or which so much deserved the attention of the House.