

charter, but he thought that the charter of the Great Western Railway was a matter of necessity, and he therefore gave it his support.

Mr. FAXTER said he represented a northern constituency, and had no hesitation in supporting the Bill that was now before the House.

Mr. HAYS was perfectly disinterested in this matter, and he was induced to take the position he now maintained with respect to these Bills solely from the reasons urged by the promoters of Bill No. 43. Last session they opposed this Canada Air Line Railway Company because it was calculated to injure the Great Western Railway; but this session they opposed it because Mr. Thomson might not be able to build it. The truth was that the Great Western Railway wished to crush their poorer rival out of existence. He hoped the House would do justice to Mr. Thompson, and give him, at least, till the expiration of his charter to organize and commence his line. The Great Western Railway never proposed to construct a line along the North Shore of Lake Erie till Mr. Thomson asked for a charter. They then came forward and said—"We will get a charter ourselves, and crush out Mr. Thomson." And the reason they allege was, that Mr. Thomson had not commenced work on his line yet. Hon. members would remember that the Great Western Railway Company did not commence their road till fifteen years after their charter was granted. The Great Western Railway Company had thrown every obstacle they could in the way of Mr. Thomson, they had never lost an opportunity to do all in their power to prevent him from organizing and commencing the construction of his road. Now, finding that all they had done had not succeeded in preventing him from securing the assurance of support from American capitalists, they came forward and endeavoured to crush him by asking for a charter for a rival "line over the same route." The request of Mr. Thomson was a reasonable one, and he hoped the House would not refuse it.

Mr. PARDEE said if this second section were passed without amendment, it would have the effect of granting charters to two Companies for the purpose of building railways over the same route. Such a thing was unprecedented. Surely the House would not refuse to allow Mr. Thomson the two months remaining to complete the terms of his charter. If, after that time, he had not commenced work, then let Mr. McMaster step in and build the line if he wished.

Hon. Mr. CAMERON said that the whole of the aid promised by the Michigan Air Line was a contribution of \$200,000 to enable Mr. Thomson to organize. He (Mr. C.) did not know what the expenses of the organization were, but if the money was intended to pay for the expenses incurred in promoting the charter in this legislature, he thought it an immoral transaction.

Dr. MCGILL, Mr. OLIVER, and Mr. SCOTT (Gray), spoke in support of the Bill.

Mr. CARLING desired to state his reasons for the vote he intended to give on this measure. On a former occasion he voted for the charter of Mr. Thomson but he would now vote for the rival Bill. This seemed somewhat inconsistent. He had listened to all the speakers during the debate, and they were, most of them, from sections of country interested in the matter. His opinion from what he had heard was, that Mr. Thomson only desired to put off the Great Western Railway as long as possible, and deprive the people of a road. He would therefore vote for the Bill as it stood.

Mr. SCOTT (Ottawa,) considered that the Thomson Charter partook of the character of vested rights, and that until the two months yet unexpired under its provisions have elapsed, that it was not right that another charter should be granted over the same route.

Hon. Mr. RICHARDS said it was admitted that there was a charter already existing over the line proposed by the Canada Air Line Company. The House would find that parties would not apply for Charters when they found that no respect was paid to their rights obtained under them. It was conceded that a road was required, and the question was who should make the road? Who ever heard of a rival line being constructed by a Company who, for eighteen years had opposed the line. There could be no doubt that the proposed line would cut off a large amount of traffic from the Great Western, and it was almost absurd to think that they ever would construct it. It had been argued by the hon. member for Hamilton, that the line was overstocked, but why was it that this argument had never been used before. He did not think that there was any likelihood of the proprietors of the Great Western Railway carrying out the project.

Mr. CHRISTIE said the whole question resolved itself into the respective value of the Thomson line and of the Great Western Railway Company's line. That the Charter of Mr. Thomson was a valuable one, the very fact that such efforts were being made to deprive him of it was sufficient evidence. Now, he had no objections to the Great Western Railway Company obtaining a charter if Mr. Thomson should not be able to construct the line, but until his charter should expire it would be unfair to deprive him of his vested rights—of rights which had been proved to be most valuable. He hoped the House would not be guilty of such an act of injustice as the passage of the measure before the House would certainly be to Mr. Thomson.

Hon. Mr. CAMERON spoke at some length, and a long discussion ensued, in the course of which,

Mr. BLAKE said the charter of the Erie and Niagara Railway Company did not expire until the 1st March, and the course which had been taken in proposing to give the Great Western Company power to build a line over the same country while the other charters were yet in force was unprecedented; at least it struck him as very extraordinary; but to propose that the Company should go into operation anterior to the period at which the former Company had been given, in which to organize, seemed to him to be extremely unjust. He failed to see any reason why this course should be adopted on this oc-

casional. There was no necessity for this hurry on the part of the G. W. Railway Company to deprive Mr. Thomson of the time to elapse till next March, for they had two years in which to organize their Company. But it was said that a sham organization might be got up by the 1st of March; and he thought, having regard to the Woodstock & Fort Erie Company and the old Southern Railway Company, and having regard to the fact that no substantial progress had been made by this Company, there might be some force in the remark, were it not that his hon friend proposed, on behalf of the Company, to embrace in their organization a clause providing that the sum of \$300,000 should be deposited with the Provincial Treasurer, not to be removed before the 1st of October, in case they should have expended \$1,000,000 on the road, and in the case of no such expenditure, the deposit should be forfeited to the Province. He thought that that made it impossible that there should be a sham organization, because they could not suppose that that these capitalists would place their money in the hands of the Treasurer unless they had the means and intended to go on. He believed, therefore, that a sham organization was out of the question. But, with regard to the main question, the reason on account of which it was desired to throw out this rider was undoubtedly because the Great Western felt that it would give Mr. Thomson a chance of completing the scheme. This was the conclusion at which he was compelled to arrive, and that being so, he felt compelled to vote in favour of the clause which his hon. friend had introduced in Committee.

Mr. McKELLAR said he had written the proposition that Mr. Thomson was prepared to make on behalf of the Southern Air Line Company and it was to the effect that on an extension of the charter to the 1st of May, a clause should be inserted in the Bill providing that the sum of \$200,000 should be placed in the hands of the Provincial Treasurer to remain there until \$500,000 was expended in iron or steel on the construction of the railway, and if the said \$500,000 was not expended before the 1st day of October, then the sum of \$200,000 should be a forfeit to the Province,—any charter now granted to the Great Western (McMaster, Joy & Co.) to be voided provided the Erie Company did not fail in the \$200,000 on the 1st of May. This was but two months beyond the limit of their charter as now fixed, and he could not conceive that any reasonable person would refuse to extend the time on these conditions.

Mr. RYKERT said that he was fully persuaded that this offer had been made without reasonable consideration. It was said that the present position was unparalleled, but was the Buffalo and Lake Huron Railway, now the same route as when Mr. Thomson carried his charter two years ago. The same arguments would equally apply to that case which they have now brought forward as arguments against the House granting his charter.

Mr. BLAKE said that the Buffalo and Lake Huron did not oppose Mr. Thomson's Bill.

Mr. RYKERT—They did oppose it.

Mr. McKELLAR—Mr. Brydges did not oppose it.

Mr. RYKERT said it was because that gentleman did not believe the line would be built, and preferred to see the charter in the hands of Mr. Thomson than in the possession of a Company who would be able and willing to construct the road. The manner in which Mr. Thomson had gone first to one and then to another with his charter, proved his inability to obtain the requisite funds for the construction of the line, and both the West Shore Hudson River Company and the Michigan Air Line Company were not in a position to afford him any assistance. The witness representing the former Company met the Committee with an offer that the Charter shall be conveyed to that Company forever on condition of their finding \$200,000 to float the scheme. There are over one hundred petitions in favour of the Great Western line, and the interests of the country demanded a line of communication, and the Canada Air Line Bill was the only probable means of

their attaining it; he hoped the Committee would treat the matter upon its merits.

Mr. OLIVER and Mr. McCALL (Norfolk) made some few observations. In the course of the remarks of the latter four o'clock arrived, and the Committee rose, without coming to any decision on the amendment.

#### COMMITTEES.

Reports were presented from the Committee on Standing Orders and other Committees.

The House rose at 4 P. M., till Monday.