

intemperance. He said it would be within the recollection of members that, last year, the effort made by the House to interfere directly with the question of the liquor traffic failed, on account of the inability of the House to take the action they inclined to take. Certain questions had afterwards been proposed to be asked of leading gentlemen in reference to the matter, but when the House rose these questions had not been answered. The answers were on hand now, and the object of the motion was to utilize these answers. He explained that the Committee was as nearly as possible the same as that he proposed last year.

The motion was carried.

RAILWAY FUND AND RAILWAY SUBSIDY FUND.

Hon. Mr. CROOKS, in moving the second reading of the Bill respecting the Railway Fund and the Railway Subsidy Fund, said that hon. members would remember that, by previous Acts of the Legislature, certain portions of the Consolidated Revenue Fund had been set aside in order to form funds for the purpose of aiding in the construction of railways in the Province of Ontario. The first Act passed during the session of 1870-71, set apart \$1,400,000 to form this fund, and in 1871-72, by the Railway Fund Act, this original sum was increased by half a million dollars and \$100,000 yearly for twenty years. Certain inconveniences had been the result of these two funds. There was an express provision which prevented any portion of the Railway Subsidy Fund being appropriated in aid of a railway until the grant set apart by the Railway Act had been disposed of; and in the next place it was difficult to say whether or not the appropriations under the Order in Council would not have the effect of exhausting the Railway Aid Fund, or bribing railways to take whatever aid the Government might give from the Railway Subsidy Fund. This difficulty existed at the present moment, for there were Orders in Council appropriating two millions and some hundred thousand dollars in respect of existing railways. He explained the conditions requisite in the state of a railway before the amounts payable are claimable, and showed how the difficulty arose as to which fund the amount was to be paid from. As a matter of fact, the Railway Aid Fund was already exhausted, but he explained that several railways had not fulfilled the conditions under which they were entitled to the grant, and the grants would, therefore, he thought, lapse. Another difficulty which arose from this Act was the indefinite language used for the purpose of defining the class of railways which are meant to be included in the Act. Although there was some attempt at definition, yet the Orders in Council and the resolutions of the House had, in fact, determined that the class of railway which it is proper to aid under the Act means any railway of utility in the Province of Ontario. He thought the mind of the House was fully in accordance with this view. He then explained the provisions of the Act clause by clause. The first clause proposed to remove the restrictions which the existing Act was supposed to impose, if it could be shown that it was of public utility or advantage. The second and third sections were intended to make the two Railway Funds work as one, and give railways the right to demand payment without being in any way interfered with by any provisional order which may now keep in suspense any portion of the first fund. The fourth section had the same object in view. The fifth section was intended to enable the Government, with the sanction of the House, to free these funds from Orders in Council and provisional orders in favour of particular railways. In conclusion, he said he had calculated that as nearly as possible half a million of dollars would never be claimed, and the Act required to be revised for the purpose of loosening the amount which is thus tied up, and, provided sufficient cause is shown to the Governor in Council, to revoke such previous Orders in Council as might be necessary. To protect the companies concerned, and keep the power of the Government in due check, a provision was contained

in the Act that no order should have any effect until it received the sanction of the House. (Hear, hear.) Hon. members would understand the object of the Bill fully; the provisions were such as the practical working of the funds required; and general benefit would be the result of the removal of the difficulties which now exist. (Cheers.)

Mr. BOULTBEE referred to the debates on this subject during the existence of the Sandfield Macdonald Government, and said that the specification of the particular railways which were to be aided was a question which the leaders of the Reform party then urged with great vehemence, because otherwise, they argued, too much power would be in the hands of the Government, and the chance of corruption given. He thought the power asked by the Government was more dangerous than that asked for by the Sandfield Macdonald Government, and was opposed to granting aid indiscriminately to all railways which the Government thought public works of utility. He thought, seeing our great surplus, that the Government should remove the provision by which future generations were called upon to contribute a yearly sum for railway purposes.

Mr. LAUDER thought it would have been better had the Government accepted the amendment moved to the Port Perry Railway Bill last year, and he was glad to see that the principle then contended for by the Opposition had now been accepted by the Government. He promised the Government all the aid in the direction generally signified by the Bill it would be in his power to give.

Mr. MEREDITH thought the provisions of the third clause were dangerous, and likely to do mischief to railways in course of construction upon the faith of \$3,000 per mile of a grant.

Hon. Mr. MOWAT said it was apparent from the few objections raised against the Bill that it was generally acceptable. He effectually disposed of Mr.

Boulton's objection that it placed too much patronage in the power of the Government, and reminded him that as soon as the Reform party came into power they amended the former measure so as to meet this difficulty, and the House had the power of refusing to accede to any measure of aid proposed by the Government. He showed that the existing Act was extremely vague in terms, and although it applied as a matter of fact to all railways, it had the appearance of restrictiveness which was embarrassing, and he frankly asked the House to remove it. There was no reason why the House should restrict itself in this matter. If a road was such a road as this House thought ought to receive support, why should there be any restriction upon in granting that support? The Government were entirely in the hands of the House in that matter, and could make no grant without the assent of the House. In reply to the objection against the third clause of the hon. member for London, he said that the amount granted to any railway out of the one fund would correspond exactly to that which they should have under the proposed Bill. He was sure the House would give the Bill a liberal and hearty support. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. STEPHEN RICHARDS criticized the speech of the Attorney-General, declaring that the scheme of the Sandfield Macdonald Government was one which had been advocated and initiated by the Reform party, and gave less power of corruption to the Government of the day than the measure proposed by the present Administration and their friends. He declared that he had been a Reformer when Reform meant something, and he declared that the present Reform Government came into power upon a false cry. He declared that the system of submitting these Orders in Council for aid to railways was subversive of the principle of Responsible Government. Referring to the motion of Mr. Lauder for a comparative statement of the salaries paid by the Government, and was characterizing the action of the Government in that matter in very strong language, when

Mr. SPEAKER called him to order for referring to a debate which had taken place during the present session.

Mr. RICHARDS said it would have been better for his party, and better for the country, if the Sandfield Macdonald Government had not proposed to legislate upon this railway question before going to the country, and perhaps they would have yet been in power had they not done so. He explained that the original intention of that Government in proposing the Subsidy Act, was to aid railways going North and South, considering