

RAILWAY AID.

On the motion of Mr. CROOKS, the House went into Committee on the Bill respecting aid to certain railways and for other purposes, Mr. Clarke (Wellington) in the chair.

Mr. MEREDITH asked if the Government were satisfied with the financial basis of the Credit Valley Railway Company, inasmuch as the promoters had represented that they could not complete the road with less aid than \$3,500 a mile, and the Government proposed to grant only \$2,000 a mile.

Mr. CROOKS said railway companies, when they applied for aid, represented themselves as very impecunious, apparently believing that this Legislature had large bowels of compassion. He had already shown on the first reading of the Bill that this Company had a satisfactory financial basis, and that there was every probability of the completion of the road. It had, in fact, a better basis than that on which the narrow gauge lines were predicated, though the cost per mile was greater.

In answer to Mr. BARR,

Mr. CROOKS said the Government had never intended to aid the road to Orangeville, which was no part of the original scheme.

In answer to Mr. FLESHER,

Mr. CROOKS said the road had already been aided as far as Alton.

Mr. WILSON did not believe the refusal of the extra \$1,500 a mile would prevent the completion of the road from Toronto to St. Thomas. The road would ultimately be one of the great competing lines between east and west, and when it was connected with the Canada Southern and the Ontario and Quebec Railways, it would form a competing line with the Grand Trunk from Chicago to Montreal. It would be to the interest of the city of Toronto to give another \$100,000. He considered that the Government had acted liberally in reference to this line.

Mr. HARDY said that beyond the exorbitant demands of a man who was becoming dangerous to the country, the road had no claim to additional Government aid. He believed the country was more Conservative in the matter of railway aid than the House was, and was not in favour of much additional aid to railways. He was willing to leave the measure as the Government had brought it in, but he thought that the line from Tilsonburg to Brantford was reasonably entitled to aid. He believed the eastern part of the Province had on the whole received its full share of aid as compared with the west.

After some remarks by Mr. SCOTT,

Mr. GOW said the Credit Valley was the first road to inaugurate the grouping of municipalities for bonus purposes, a system which he considered a most objectionable one. (Hear, hear.) By this grouping clause men of small property had the power of obliging farmers who large farmers to mortgage their property in order to aid roads which they did not desire to aid.

Mr. HAY said he was sorry that the member for South Brant had spoken of the President of this road as a dangerous man. That gentleman had, he believed, acted with thorough honesty in all his railway enterprises, and he had certainly not made any money through them.

Mr. CHISEOLM referred to the amounts of bonuses given by the county of Peel to this road as showing the interest the people had taken in the line. He regretted that the Government had not seen their way to giving more assistance to the road, but he did not think, however, that the money the road had received would be allowed to be lost by those interested in it. He held that the only means of fairly regulating the tariff of the Grand Trunk and Great Western roads would be for the Government to give a fair amount of assistance to a competing line. What the farmers and manufacturers wanted was a through competing line.

Mr. LAUDER thought the remark of the member for South Brant regarding the promotion of this road was not called for. That gentleman had been of great service to the country through his railway schemes, and he had not gained anything by his advocacy of them.

The Committee then rose and reported progress.

It being 1 o'clock, the Speaker left the chair.

After recess,

Mr. CAMERON said he did not think the

Government had done right in meeting the views of the Credit Valley half way. The railway would, no doubt, benefit Toronto and other municipalities, but it did not come under the original Act. The Government ought either to have given larger aid or to have refused it altogether.

After a few remarks from Mr. LONG,

Mr. DAWSON said he thought the policy of pushing roads into the back sections of the country was a wise one. He did not believe that the Georgian Bay branch would be without trade, and it would have the effect of opening up the country. The geological survey had recently extended their survey through Muskoka, and it had been found that the back ground was more rich in minerals than had been supposed. He referred to the mineral richness of the Lake Superior country and the remunerative copper and iron mines on the south shore of that lake. He believed that the north shore of Lake Superior, north shore of Lake Huron, and northern country of Muskoka would prove to be equally as rich in minerals as the American shore of Superior. It was desirable that these regions should be developed, and lines such as North Hastings and Belleville had that object and should be aided. Algoma could not participate in the railway grants at present, it being cut off from the rest of the Dominion owing to the want of railway communication. Algoma had, however, contributed in one year \$800,000 to the general revenue of the country, and when the time should arrive for railway extension in that district, he believed its claims would receive fair consideration. The railway measure of the Government must be considered as a whole, and in that view he gave it his cordial support.

Mr. GRAHAM (Lambton) supported the railway policy of the Government, because the measure was just and economical.

All the clauses were passed.

Mr. CROOKS moved the addition of two clauses to the Bill. The first was to secure the protection of all parties in the matter of the grouping of municipalities, so that when any disagreement arose, it might be referred to arbitrators, who were to be the County Court Judge, the County Registrar, and an Engineer appointed by the Department of Public Works. The other amendment was for the purpose of making certificates issued in favour of companies under the Railway Subsidy Act more convertible than at present, especially when they were taken to England.

These clauses were adopted.

The Committee reported the Bill as amended.

CONCURRENCE.

Concurrence was taken in a number of items in the Supplementary Estimates without discussion.

Upon the item to provide for an increased salary to members of the Executive and additional indemnity to members,

Mr. CAMERON said that with reference to that resolution he thought it right, in consequence of what had appeared in the public press on this matter, to say that in his opinion the House had acted perfectly right in that matter; that he believed the members of the Government were not sufficiently paid; and that, as he had stated when the matter was discussed with closed doors, he entirely approved of the course of hon. gentlemen in that respect. He had said, with reference to the indemnity to members, that in his opinion \$300 was not more than an adequate amount to compensate them for their labour and expense here. He wished to assume his full share of the responsibility that might attach to the action of the House in regard to this matter, though he might say that he was speaking for himself and no one else.

Mr. MEREDITH said that though he had made no remark in reference to the matter when it had been discussed with closed doors, he wished to say that he entirely concurred in the observations made by hon. members on both sides of the House as to the propriety of the course the Government had taken. He felt that the salaries paid to members of the Government were not adequate to the important duties and to the important positions they were called upon to fill. With regard, also, to the increase in the indemnity of members, he would say that he strongly felt that the House would be compromising its dignity if it did not unanimously concur in the resolution.

Mr. HODGINS said he had previously pointed out that the salaries of the members of the Executive in this House were not equal to those given to similar officers in