

Railways incorporated and built under the law indicating to everybody that they are properly protected in some way where they cross the highway at rail level in thickly peopled portions of cities, towns and villages, and the Railway Commission not elected by the people, having no general power to amend the law would be practically changing the law by saying that as parliament does not deal with that question, as parliament does not insist that this matter must be carried out, we do not suppose that parliament is unanimous in the opinion that the people have the rights that are contended for and we will say, seeing that parliament votes down a Bill of that kind, that they have as much right to pay part of the expense as the railway has. As the right hon. Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) is in the House and knowing that he cannot always be here in the evenings—I am not finding fault with him because he cannot always be here in the evenings—I would like to ask him if he does not think some remedy for the existing condition of things should be carried through by this parliament.

Rt. Hon. Sir WILFRID LAURIER. All I have to say to my hon. friend is that rightly or wrongly this matter has been referred to the Railway Committee and the Railway Committee has passed upon it. I may say that the invariable rule of the House is to adopt the report of its committees, unless there are strong reasons shown to the contrary.

Mr. LANCASTER. Is not that limited to private Bills?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I see no reason why the same rule should not apply to public Bills. If a Bill is of such a character that the House thinks it advisable or proper that it should be referred to a committee of the House and the committee reports upon it, it would be expected that it would adopt the report of such committee. I cannot see any reason why there should be a difference in this respect between a public Bill and a private Bill. Whether it be a private Bill or a public bill, the moment the House has thought proper to refer it to a committee, the rule has been that the House should abide by the decision of the committee. It is not binding upon us; we can do the reverse, but it is a safe rule.

Mr. LANCASTER. What about the merits of this Bill? *

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The merits of the Bill were dealt with by the committee to which it was referred.

Mr. HAGGART. It is about six o'clock and as this is almost the last order of a private nature that is on the paper, and as we could hardly conclude the discussion on it to-night even if we did come back, I do not see the absolute necessity of calling us to—
Mr. LANCASTER.

gether to-night. I suppose the government are not ready with any of their work to go on.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Oh, yes, we are always ready. This is a private member's day, and if there is a desire on the opposition side to adjourn I have no objection. I move that the committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Motion agreed to and progress reported.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. Is the House not going to sit to-night?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I understand that is the wish on the opposite side of the House, for a very laudable object, that there should be no sitting of the House, and I therefore move that the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to, and House adjourned at six p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, February 28, 1905.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

FIRST READINGS.

Bill (No. 83) respecting the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company.—Mr. Turriff.

Bill (No. 84) respecting the Huron and Erie Loan and Savings Company.—Mr. Calvert.

Bill (No. 85) respecting the Bay of Quinté Railway Company.—Mr. Harty.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES AUTONOMY BILL.

Mr. SPROULE. I desire to ask the right hon. the First Minister if any special instructions have been given regarding the number of Autonomy Bills to be printed? We received one each this morning, and were informed that we could not get any more. It is very desirable that a large number should be printed, because there are many applications for them.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The government have no objections to printing a sufficient number.

INSPECTION AND SALE OF SEEDS.

House in committee on Bill (No. 7) respecting the inspection and sale of seeds.—Mr. Fisher.

Hon. SYDNEY FISHER (Minister of Agriculture). When this Bill was before the committee last, some hon. gentlemen took the ground that clause 11 went further than my explanation of what I considered