

which is now before the House that the promoter of the Bill or some member of the government should enlighten us on that question in order that we can form a better judgment as to the propriety of assenting to the proposition that is contained in this Bill.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM MULOCK (Postmaster General). I agree with my hon. friend (Mr. Henderson) that it is extremely important in the public interest that the government system of railways should be enabled to obtain access to the great Northwest, but it is unnecessary for us at this late date to consider how we can obtain access. It has already been obtained under the Transcontinental Railway policy adopted last session.

Mr. HENDERSON. But not for ten years.

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. The hon. gentleman will observe that the government is entitled to send Intercolonial Railway trains over the Transcontinental Railway from Moncton as far as the system extends.

Mr. T. S. SPROULE. Moncton is on the other end of the system. It is westward that my hon. friend from Halton (Mr. Henderson) is inquiring about.

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. Well, that is what I refer to.

Mr. SPROULE. If the Intercolonial Railway reaches the Georgian bay what then is the policy of the government with regard to extending that railway westward in order to get into Manitoba and the Northwest Territories as early as possible? It does seem to me very strange that the government have adopted a new policy, one which they practically condemned a year ago, involving a very heavy outlay, and yet they have no special information to give the House and the country regarding it. It is almost inexplicable that the government, after taking the position they took a year ago in regard to the extension of the Intercolonial Railway westward should now do the very thing that they opposed a year ago and yet be unable to give the House or the country any definite information as to their purpose for so doing and as to what they are likely to accomplish after it is done.

Mr. S. BARKER. Mr. Speaker, I would like also to know whether the government has come to any conclusion in regard to the running powers that it is proposing to take under another Bill in regard to this railway, in this respect; I understand it is contemplated that running powers shall be accorded by the Grand Trunk Railway Company, as owning the Canada Atlantic Railway, not only to the government but to the Canadian Northern. I would like to know from the government whether there have been any negotiations, or whether there has been any understanding between the gov-

ernment and the Canadian Northern as to their relations mutually in the running powers over this railway. They will be in rivalry; they will be competing for the same traffic going eastward from Depot Harbour for the government evidently has it in mind that it will be to the interest of the Intercolonial Railway to have its freight trains over the Canada Atlantic Railway. I would like to know whether there has been any discussion or negotiation between the Intercolonial Railway and the Canadian Northern, both of which are likely to seek running powers over this railway, as to the terms upon which they will carry traffic in competition with each other. I can hardly imagine that the Railway Minister and the Canadian Northern looking forward to active competition over nearly 400 miles of railway, knowing that this road is passing now into the control of a third company in rivalry with each of them, should not have come to some understanding or discussed the matter as two business men or two managers of railway corporations would discuss such a subject. It may be said that it has nothing to do with this Bill but we are asked here to authorize certain things to be done with the view of placing the Canada Atlantic Railway in the control of a third company, and, speaking on behalf of the people of Canada who own a railway that will seek to run over this road, it is desirable that we should know how far the ministers have been awake to what may be the possible result of the Grand Trunk Railway Company acquiring ownership rights in this railway and having the power as owners to obstruct if they please the facilities which the government contemplate taking. There is that point and there is what I spoke of as to the Canadian Northern which also will be coming in and it does seem to me a most extraordinary thing while all this is going on we cannot hear from the government that they have had five minutes talk with anybody as to what they are to do about it.

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. Carried.

Motion agreed to, and Bill read the third time and passed.

SECOND READINGS.

Bill (No. 130) for the relief of Jane Marie Fitz-Simons.—Mr. Calvert.

Bill (No. 131) respecting the Vancouver and Coast-Kootenay Railway Company.—Mr. Macpherson.

PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY IN THE NORTHWEST.

House resumed consideration of the proposed motion of Sir Wilfrid Laurier for the second reading of Bill (No. 69) to establish and provide for the government of the prov-