

now before the House has been thoroughly discussed in the committee, and the usual course is to allow it to pass. The hon. gentleman from Hamilton, in saying that all this must be contingent upon the character of the rates which we may charge, is travelling very far from this Bill now before the House.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. What I wish to submit to the hon. member for Pictou is this. If the government has a proposal which is in effect to carry through freight from the lake ports to the maritime ports of Canada, might not parliament, in considering that proposal, come to the conclusion that it could be carried out with greater advantage to the people of this country by the acquisition of the Canada Atlantic Railway? And would it not be rather late to discuss the matter contained in the proposed Bill of the government if parliament had already given its assent to legislation which authorized the vesting of that very line in the Grand Trunk Railway Company? That is the consideration that has appealed to me throughout the discussion of this Bill, and I would be inclined to think that it would commend itself to the logical mind of my hon. friend from Pictou, and that he would see that there is some justification for our asking that the details of the government's proposal should be placed before the House. My hon. friend the Minister of Railways will remember that on Wednesday he promised us that we should have a full explanation of the government's proposals to-day; he expressly mentioned to-day.

Mr. EMMERSON. No; I think not.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Yes; I will read what my hon. friend said:

On Friday when the Bill is introduced, I will explain all the details and give my hon. friend the information which he asks.

My hon. friend has forgotten that.

Mr. EMMERSON. No; I have not forgotten it—when the Bill is introduced.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. But my hon. friend mentioned Friday. My hon. friend has changed his mind for some reason, and we have not all the details of the government's proposal.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. In reply to the hon. leader of the opposition, let me suggest that if the government comes to the conclusion at any time to expropriate what is called the Canada Atlantic Railway, it would certainly be open for them to do so; and if the simple proposition that the Grand Trunk Railway Company shall have the right to purchase a certain amount of stock in a certain other railway company is accepted by this committee at this time, it would not prevent that being done. The proposition to take over the line of railway from Côteau to Parry Sound, in the in-

Mr. MACDONALD.

terest of the country, is a proposition entirely apart from that contained in this Bill. The Bill is merely an empowering one, and the principle contained in it was not questioned for one moment in the Railway Committee by the hon. member for Hamilton (Mr. Barker), nor by any other member of the committee. When this company asks for ordinary and reasonable legislation, why should it be refused or delayed because, forsooth, it may be thought in the interest of the country that the government should be given power to expropriate certain railroads which are not affected by this Bill, except in so far as the purchase of stock relates to them? I fear that my hon. friend the leader of the opposition is more concerned in a question which is foreign to the merits of this measure than he is in the merits of the measure itself.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. What does my hon. friend mean by that?

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. My hon. friend is more interested, for instance, in considering the Bill on the order paper entitled an Act to amend the Government Railways Act than he is in the Bill respecting the Grand Trunk Railway Company of Canada. The legislation contained in these two Bills is of a character that has not been subjected to any criticism in the past. Two years ago this parliament gave to the Canada Atlantic Railway Company practically the power asked for in section 1 of this Bill; and, on behalf of the companies interested, I submit that it is not fair for this committee to refuse to agree to a proposition which a committee of this House considered carefully, and to which no objection of the slightest kind was taken by anybody, simply because there is a Bill on the order paper relating to an amendment of the Government Railways Act, which will be discussed here, if not on Friday, then on the first day that the Minister of Railways moves his Bill, when the subject which is of so much interest to the hon. leader of the opposition and the hon. member for Hamilton can be fairly threshed out. I submit, therefore, that this measure should not be considered on the basis of the government's Bill.

Mr. BARKER. I wish to make quite clear the ground upon which I desire that the whole subject relating to this Bill or connected with it shall now be fully discussed, and I think I can point out to the Minister of Railways, a railway manager, as he practically is, why it should be discussed. I am not looking at it from the point of view of the hon. member for Pictou, who is pressing this Bill on behalf of the Grand Trunk Railway Company; but I am trying to present the interests of the people of Canada on this question, and I am sure that in what I am about to say I shall have the sympathy of the Minister of Railways, whether he agrees with me or not. The proposal in the clause now before the com-