

tax the property of this and all other corporations just as are the other provinces.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

That may be a rather far-fetched resolution but it points to a grievance. Hon. gentlemen say the King's government must be carried on. So it must, but the King's government must also deal with the grievances, to give better and improved laws to the people, and now that this grievance does exist I say it is the duty of the government to remedy it. They may be bound by the clause in the original charter just read, they may be bound to put this clause in the Bill but they are also bound in some way to secure commutation of this right that the Canadian Pacific Railway have acquired. The Canadian Pacific Railway had other rights in the original charter; they had the right to prevent the running of lines to the American boundary; they had also certain rights which they surrendered in the negotiations in connection with the building of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway, but the grievances in connection with the law which prohibit the building of lines and the grievances which existed in regard to the freight rates which were commuted at the time of the building of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway were not equal to the grievances which exist now in regard to this exemption from municipal taxation. We are asking settlers to come to Canada, to take up lands, to go to the great wheat fields of the Northwest, to settle there, establish themselves on farms and bring up their families and in order to give the poor man a fair show—and every man is entitled to a fair show—I say that some steps should be taken by this parliament to commute these rights of the Canadian Pacific Railway in regard to exemption, and while the hon. gentleman may say that he is obeying the law he may state what is true, but he has a duty to discharge to the people of the west and I am surprised that the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Oliver) does not speak for the people of the west in this matter, and that all the members from the west are not aiding in it. I hope he will join with me because in other days he did join with me on the floor of this House in pointing out how widespread and serious this grievance was to the poor settlers in the west. I am not proposing any confiscation here to-day, but I am asking the members from the west to join with me in pressing upon the government to secure in some way commutation of this right to exemption now enjoyed by the Canadian Pacific Railway which we acknowledge to-day by this clause. I say it is not progressive legislation. We are actually committing, as I believe, a wrong. We may be respecting a right of the Canadian Pacific Railway, but we are permitting a wrong against the settlers of the west. The Canadian Pacific

Railway is well able to pay this taxation. It is a rich company, it is increasing its service every year, it is expanding and, as one of its directors said the other day, there is no other railway company in the world whose credit is so good and which can borrow money so cheaply as the Canadian Pacific Railway. If that is the case why should the richest corporation in Canada, the company in receipt of the largest revenue and which has the greatest prospects in the world, have this exemption which the poor man has not? It may have been improvident legislation when it was made originally, but it is worse than improvident to allow it to continue if there is some way of securing its removal, and I believe there is a way for securing its removal; that is by negotiation with the Canadian Pacific Railway just as Sir John Macdonald cancelled the right to prevent lines running to the American boundary and the right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) cancelled their rights in regard to certain freight rates, when he made his arrangement with them for the building of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway. Now let him come forward and let him negotiate and in some way remove this grievance, a most substantial grievance as it has proved to be to the settlers of the west. In the province of Manitoba the Canadian Pacific Railway pays municipal taxes on their lands, but they do not in the west, and yet for some of their lands in the west they are getting \$10 and \$20 an acre, and as soon as the lands are sold they are of course liable to municipal taxes. But as long as the Canadian Pacific Railway hold them they pay no taxes on them, and I say to the right hon. gentleman and to the members from the west that I hope they will join with me in urging upon the government to do something to remove this grievance and not to re-enact it as they propose to do by this clause in the Bill.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. My hon. friend has changed his front and very properly so. The ground he took at first was that we should have clause 23 of this Bill excised altogether; now he says that it would not be possible to do so without being guilty of a breach of faith with the Canadian Pacific Railway. He quite understands that that would be altogether reprehensible; we cannot do that. We have to abide by agreements whether they are good or bad. My hon. friend says we are committing a great wrong to the settlers of the Northwest Territories. We are committing no wrong towards the settlers but a great wrong was committed towards them twenty years ago when this Bill was passed against the protest of the party to which I belong. We pointed out then the very thing which is pointed out by my hon. friend, the great mistake, the very great mistake of passing such legislation.