

Regarding the amendment proposed by Mr. Birkett, then member for Ottawa, let me draw attention to the fact that the Bill went through committee in Mr. Birkett's absence. I am not making any charge or finding fault with him, but merely stating that he was not present when the Bill went through committee. When it came before the House and he saw that the Bill was likely to carry, the amendment he proposed was conceded by the city only because they thought they could not get better. But the point of the present Bill and the subject now really before the House, is whether this House shall pass a Bill to enable the Ottawa Electric Company to abolish competition. So far as the mayor's statement in the committee is concerned, it is well known that immediately after the meeting of that committee, the city council was called together, and, by a vote of nineteen to five, decided to oppose the adoption of the maximum rate of the Consumers' Electric Company. So, we have to-day before us not the question whether this was acceptable to the mayor, or whether it was acceptable to the corporation of a previous year, but we have the statement of the corporation of Ottawa that they are opposed to the abolishing of competition, which is the principle underlying this Bill. And I think that the promoter of the Bill, if he would tell us all he knows about it, would say that the idea of increasing the capital is that the company may be able to absorb the Consumers' Electric Company and thereby destroy competition.

Mr. KEMP. Might I inquire from the hon. member for Ottawa (Mr. Belcourt) why it is necessary for this company to come here for legislation? If they wish to override the city of Ottawa why do they not go to the provincial legislature of Ontario?

Mr. BELCOURT. The charter which it is proposed to amend is a Dominion charter. So, they must come here.

Preamble agreed to, yeas 82, nays 59.

The hour for private Bills having expired, the Speaker took the chair.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT IN THE NORTHWEST.

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

Mr. R. L. BORDEN (Carleton, Ont.) I have pointed out that it is not a question of introducing into the Dominion in this year, 1905, provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, but of creating out of the Northwest Territories of Canada these provinces under the Bills which have been introduced. And the right hon. gentleman continues as follows:

Mr. STEWART.

Would he tell me that when you would say to Ontario and Quebec: You shall have your separate schools, Alberta and Saskatchewan would be denied that privilege? The thing is preposterous. Let us rise above such considerations.

Well, I ask him why he conveniently leaves out of sight in that illustration, the cases of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island? He himself, has pointed out in an earlier passage of his speech—indeed to-day he has gone into the historical aspect of that matter—that these clauses, so far as Ontario and Quebec are concerned, were introduced into the British North American Act by virtue of a compact, and that no such compact existed in respect to the three maritime provinces. Well, if my right hon. friend will show me that the case of these proposed provinces—because they are not yet provinces—comes nearer to the case of Ontario and Quebec than it does to the case of the maritime provinces, if he is able to show me that there is in respect to these proposed provinces any such compact as that which was made before confederation between Ontario and Quebec, I will then readily and gladly accept his illustration; but until he does so I contend that his illustration is of not the slightest value.

Mr. Speaker, I am opposed to section 16, because it is opposed to the spirit and the letter of the constitution. I am opposed to the substituted section because it is not different in principle from that for which it is substituted; and indeed it is difficult to understand why there have been three weeks of delay, why there have been three weeks of negotiation, why there have been three weeks of turmoil, why this measure has been postponed from the 21st of February up to the present time, simply for the purpose of bringing down to parliament as a substitute that which is to all intents and purposes, in principle and for the most part in detail, exactly the same as the original section. Is this the result of the efforts of the ex-Minister of the Interior? Is it for this that he resigned office? Is it to accomplish this that he laid down the seals of office and placed himself before the people of this country as the champion of provincial liberties? Is this the result of the unceasing and untiring efforts of the seven hon. gentlemen from the Northwest Territories who sit on the other side of the House? Sir, the mountains have been in labour, and a ridiculous mouse has been brought forth. What does section 16 as proposed to be amended accomplish? It stereotypes for ever the ordinances and laws of the Northwest Territories in a portion of the country where extraordinary progress and development must be expected. I venture to think that an Act of this kind will be productive of more harm in that portion of the country than anywhere else in