

date; the only correspondence we have, took place at the time of the granting of the subsidy and refers exclusively to that subject. There is no manner of doubt but that the condition which the hon. gentleman refers to is a serious one, but I question whether, even if there had been correspondence it would have tended to assist us in solving the difficulty which exists. The road is not being run—not as I understand it because it is unsafe to run it; it is not that the road is not in a fit condition, but it is that nobody connected with it in any way finds it to his interest or advantage to keep the road in operation. That is the real reason I apprehend why it is not operated. It is not because legal difficulties have occurred which we might legislate away. I do not understand that to be the cause; but it is simply that in granting the subsidy in aid of this road, parliament has not given assistance to an undertaking of sufficient merit in itself to justify its construction. That is apparently the difficulty. It is not only in this particular locality that we have cases of that kind occurring. I am happy to say there are not a great many roads in the same condition, but there are others. Now and then a road is closed down; business has fallen away; nobody will be responsible for the wages; the men leave the employment of the road, and the road stops. There is no remedy, as it appears to me. If anybody can suggest a remedy he will possess a great deal more ingenuity than I possess. What I mean to say is that there is no practical remedy. It cannot be suggested that the government would assume the responsibility of bearing the cost of running the roads that are thus unprofitable to companies. That cannot be done. Now, what is the remedy? If my hon. friend (Hon. Mr. TARTE) can suggest any remedy, I think he would find a ready disposition on all sides to give to his proposal every possible consideration. Unfortunately it is the case that such roads do now and then stop until something occurs to revive business or to encourage some one to take them up. I again say that there is no correspondence in the department except with reference to the subsidies, and if the hon. gentleman would like to have that I will be glad to furnish it.

Hon. Mr. TARTE. Let me say at once that the minister is altogether wrong in his supposition that the South Shore and the Eastern Valley Railways are going through a country where the trade is insufficient to maintain them. That impression is altogether wrong. This railway runs through a fertile and wealthy country.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. Then, why is it not done?

Hon. Mr. TARTE. My hon. friend has just asked me if I have a suggestion to offer. I think the suggestion which would natur-

ally present itself to any government would be to see first that the subsidies are properly applied. If the subsidies are diverted from their proper use, those who build the road and those who exploit it afterwards are short of funds. I do not mean to make any insinuation. I only state what I believe is in the mind of any public man of experience; and in these two cases I do not hesitate to say that it is within the knowledge of those who know anything of affairs in the province of Quebec, that the subsidies have not been properly applied from the start. When this parliament votes money the government should see that the money is applied for the purposes for which it has been voted. If that had been done in this case, I firmly believe that the road would have been to-day in full working order. The reason the road is not working is not because there is no trade, but it is because the road has fallen into the hands of people whom I may call schemers, speaking without any offence to them at all—men who have no money. Could not this be prevented? Is it not possible, when this parliament votes hundreds and thousands of dollars by way of subsidies to any railway, to provide that the road shall not change hands without the government being informed, or being in a position to prevent it falling into the hands of people who have no money to exploit it? I call the attention of the House to the position of these two railroads. In both cases large parts of the subsidies voted by this parliament and by the Quebec legislature have not been employed as they should have been. Nor are these the only cases. I might refer to the Baie des Chaleurs Railway, about which we had a great deal of trouble, and for just the same reason. I do not make any party reference, because that railway was built under the Conservative regime. This is no party question; it is a question of public policy. This House should not vote any more railway subsidies without taking the means to see that those subsidies are properly applied.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. Will my hon. friend permit me to ask him a question? I understand that this road is not now running and has not been for some little time. Is my hon. friend's object to have this road run? It has not been built in my time, so far as my memory serves me. Suppose there is something we could do in the future to see that the subsidies granted, if any are granted, shall find their way exclusively into the construction of the road. Is that going to help towards getting the present South-eastern Valley Railway into operation?

Hon. Mr. HAGGART. Is the whole of this road not operating or only a portion of it?

Hon. Mr. TARTE. The whole road from Iberville to Sorel is not running and has been closed for two months. My hon. friend