

given solemnly and formally, is not redeemed in its spirit by the statement that when two months of the Session have elapsed the Government will begin to consider how that pledge shall be redeemed. I say it was then their duty to have formulated a policy during the recess, and that they should be ready, when they met the people's representatives in Parliament, to bring down that policy at an early day.

Mr. BOULTBEE. I think it was somewhat questionable whether the establishment of this Court was an advantage to the country or not, and it is more than questionable whether it fully carries out the objects which those who established it had in view. I also think that it is a matter for grave consideration whether we have not too much litigation in the country caused by the multiplication of Courts, and whether the people would not be better served if we had fewer Courts—whether it would not be better to have matters in litigation, small in amount as they generally are in this country, tried before a Judge of Assize, for instance, and a jury, and then go to the full Court for final decision, instead of having them brought before a Court of Appeals and then to the Supreme Court. The truth is, that in many instances railway and insurance companies, and other litigants of that kind, keep on litigating for the purpose of having their own way and driving out of Court those who are unable to stand such litigation. I think it ought to be fully and carefully considered whether it would not be well to do away with this Court altogether and provide some means of deciding constitutional questions, and I think they could be decided, perhaps, quite as well as now, and certainly at less expense. This and the question of whether this Court can be so altered with regard to its administration as to be more satisfactory to the country, are matters for grave consideration; but I agree with several hon. members who have spoken, and notably members of the Government, that we cannot deal with questions like these in the way in which they are sought to be dealt with by this Bill. I think it would be improper for a legislative body suddenly to legislate away a Court like this on a short debate, and by a Bill which makes no provision for many necessary matters which would have to be attended to if the Court were abolished, such as the settlement of pending claims and other matters of that kind. I shall, therefore, vote for the amendment.

Mr. LANDRY. Mr. Speaker, an hon. member who has lately spoken, has pretended that I had taken the House by surprise. Has he then forgotten that ever since 1878, the question, we have taken up to-night, has come up every year? He had, therefore, better keep his surprise for another occasion, and waste less of it on the subject now before us. A moment ago I also heard some one say that I had not given notice, either to the House or the Government, of my intention of taking the place of the hon. member, who first introduced this Bill, and who wished to ask the House to abolish the Supreme Court. It is true, Mr. Speaker, that I did not inform either the House or the Government of the intention I had of taking this step, but if my information is correct, if I have understood the words spoken in this House, it seems to me that it was agreed that when the second reading of the Bill should come up, the Bill was to be allowed to fall through of itself, if no one would, at the time, take it under his protection; on the contrary, if any one was ready to take charge of it, and propose its second reading, it was to be taken up as introduced by its original framer. The House, the Government, every member, Mr. Speaker, had consequently reason to expect that this Bill would come before us to-day in some shape or the other; that it would come before us to die or to be subjected to a debate in this House. No one could be taken by surprise, as every one was expecting this. A certain promise of the Government has been mentioned. When we discussed this question last year,

there was a considerable amount of uneasiness in the House; the greater part of the members rose and expressed an opinion adverse to the Supreme Court; the same thing takes place to-day. Last year the members from the Province of Quebec would no doubt have voted against keeping up the Supreme Court, and for the measure then introduced, but the hon. Minister of Public Works rose and asked us to vote in favor of keeping up the Supreme Court, promising us that the time was not far off when the Government itself would grant the remedy asked for these evils, or at any rate an efficacious remedy. Well, Mr. Speaker, the Government has had sufficient time between last Session and the present one to prepare that measure; yet what does it say to-day? That since the beginning of the Session all its time has been taken up with the debate on the Pacific Railway, and that it has not yet prepared the measure promised last year. Now that the Bill is before the House, what is the Government waiting for? It waits that another Bill, introduced by the hon. member for Jacques Cartier, should be discussed, in order to be able to decide what it shall do. That is not, I think, what Government promised us last Session. If, in the interval between the two Sessions, it has not had the time to prepare that measure which it had, nevertheless, solemnly promised us, I do not think that now, when its time is all absorbed with getting its Bills carried and with enforcing its policy, it has the time to prepare what is expected of it. But there is more. When the Government asks us for another delay, when it asks us to wait, at least, for the reading of the Bill which the hon. member for Jacques Cartier is about to introduce with regard to the Supreme Court, it does not even give us the assurance that it will adopt that measure. The Government is cognizant of its tenor; it knows what that Bill asks for; it is not ignorant of the fact, that if passed it would do away with one of the strongest objections brought against the Supreme Court by the Province of Quebec, and by the other Provinces of the Confederation. Nevertheless, the Government has declined to bind itself; it has not declared that it would adopt the measure now introduced. Under these circumstances, I think that we, members of the Province of Quebec, must enforce our rights. I heard the hon. Minister of Public Works say that the question was not one that should be submitted to the people. I do not pretend, Mr. Speaker, that we have come hither with a *mandat impératif*, but after the elections of 1878 we made promises to the people in order to gain its confidence. With regard to certain questions, which had become subjects of public discussion, we had to make sacred promises, which we are in honor bound to keep. We promised to the people that we would work against the Supreme Court when we should be here, and that, for several reasons; not only with the object of diminishing the expenditure, but also to cause to disappear the wretched state of affairs now existing, and about which all the members who have risen in this House have expressed their discontent. Who is the member who has spoken this afternoon to defend the existing state of things? All agreed to say that it could not be allowed to exist any longer. Well, if it cannot exist any longer, then let us vote for the Bill that I have the honor of introducing to the House. It simply asks for the sweeping away of the Supreme Court, and with it will be swept away all obstacles which have been raised by its creation. An hon. member, the one for Montreal East (Mr. Coursol), has asked, I think, what tribunal we should substitute for the one which we wish to abolish? Well, Mr. Speaker, what was the tribunal which the Supreme Court superseded? Before it existed, where was the tribunal that it could have superseded? Nowhere. And yet, in those days, the country was not more in debt than it is to-day; the country was making just as rapid strides towards progress. Several members seem desirous of veiling their decision and of rallying in favor of the