

tended would build the line within a time short enough for all practical purposes. He urged the construction of the road from Lake Superior to the Rocky Mountains, proceeding with such haste only as the progress of settlement might require. This portion completed and a traffic assured, it could be handed over to a company as a bonus for building the other portions of the line. By such a plan, he contended, the country would save at least twenty-five millions in money, and the whole enormous land grant of twenty-five millions of acres of land. The fight over the Franchise Act is one not soon to be forgotten. The effort of the Liberals to compel the modification or withdrawal of the bill when the Government pressed it in the session of 1885 led to the longest session on record. The Opposition, roused to exasperation by the determination of the Government to press the measure through, blocked the progress of business so as virtually to compel the withdrawal of features which they regarded as objectionable. Mr. Charlton was persistent in his opposition to the measure, and even after its adoption he scored many points in his platform and parliamentary addresses by dwelling upon the costly and cumbersome character of the new law, and upon what he regarded as its essential unfairness. He also introduced a resolution in the session of 1887, squarely demanding the repeal of the act, and has twice introduced a bill to make the provincial franchise in each province the Dominion franchise. In the session of 1891 he presented a bill to provide that where the provincial voters list was later than the Dominion list, the former should be used in Dominion elections. These were, of course, voted down by the ministerial majority. In connection with this may be mentioned an amendment to the election law which Mr. Charlton has very strongly urged upon the House. The use of the power of spending money on public works, to advance the interests of the dominant party, has become a crying abuse in Canadian politics. Mr. Charlton seeks to meet this evil by a proposal to declare it a corrupt practice within the meaning of the act to give or promise openly or tacitly any public work to any locality with a view to affecting a pending election. This measure he has twice, though vainly, introduced. In no way is the member for North Norfolk better known than by the statute which is commonly known as the Charlton Act. The object of this measure is to protect women against the wiles of unscrupulous men. As first introduced in 1882, this bill was one to declare the seducer a criminal, and punish him accordingly, and to visit with still heavier punishment anyone enticing young girls to disreputable resorts, or seducing a woman in his employ or placed under his guardianship or control. With his usual thoroughness, Mr.

Charlton, before presenting the measure, had made himself familiar with the statutes upon this subject throughout the civilized world, and presented to the House such a list of precedents as revoked the expressions of contempt with which his proposal was at first received. Year after year for four successive sessions did he propose his bill without effect. In the session of 1886, however, he had the gratification of achieving a partial success by seeing his proposal embodied in the statutes in a modified form. In the following year the bill was strengthened on his own suggestion, and as it stands to-day it is a strong protection to youth and innocence, at least against the calculating debauchee and the soulless trafficker in vice. In much the same line as the last named act is Mr. Charlton's bill respecting Sabbath observance. This bill was first presented (backed by numerous petitions from churches and other religious societies, and from individuals), in the session of 1890. Its objects were to prohibit Sunday newspapers and all Sunday work in newspaper offices, save that necessary to the issue of the paper on Monday; to prohibit canal traffic between six o'clock a.m., and ten o'clock p.m. on Sunday; to regulate railway traffic on Sunday, so as to reduce it to a minimum, and to prohibit Sunday excursions by boat or rail. The bill was among the "slaughtered innocents" at the close of the session. In the following year it met the same fate. But Mr. Charlton has not only his natural determination, inspired by a cause which most men will regard as a worthy one, but also the memory of his own success after repeated defeats, to cause him to persevere. He declares his intention of keeping on with this bill as he did with the other until he succeeds or ceases to be a member of the House. Mr. Charlton was one of the "noble thirteen," as they were called, who voted to condemn the Government for failing to disallow the Jesuits' Estates Act. And not only did he vote, but both in the House and on the platform he denounced with eloquence and power what he considered as a great wrong to the people of the whole Dominion. He contended that the question of the act should be referred to the Supreme Court for an opinion as to its constitutionality. He attempted, on April 30, 1889, to present a resolution in favour of that course, but the Speaker gave the floor to another gentleman who rose at the same time. Mr. Charlton hotly contended at the time, and has always since believed, that a deliberate arrangement had been made to juggle him out of the opportunity he desired, and there were certainly strong reasons for believing that the Prime Minister of that day, Sir John A. Macdonald, put up one of his supporters to "head off" what threatened to be a very awkward proposal. By a singular co-