

Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright) or I should say that my hon. friend ably supported by the 'Globe' succeeded in convincing nearly half the people of Canada that the giving of that money to Sir John put him under an obligation to the contributors of that money and that it amounted to a scandal, because if Sir John Macdonald should ever have judgeships to grant, or contracts to let he could not help being influenced in favour of those who had contributed.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—He was out of power when that was given to him.

Hon. Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—My hon. friend is mistaken. I know the facts, and for the matter of that I may tell him I was a subscriber to the fund collected for Sir John Macdonald. It was given to Lady Macdonald at least a couple of years before Sir John was defeated, which was in 1873. It was while Sir John Macdonald was Prime Minister that the subscription referred to was made.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Not entirely. The subscription was completed and given to him after he left power in 1873.

Hon. Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—My hon. friend is mistaken. I speak with knowledge on the subject. I tell him I did not disapprove of the subscription being made for Sir John Macdonald at the time. What I did disapprove of was the fact that a number of corporations had been asked to subscribe to the fund. That I objected to very strongly, but the subscription itself I thought was reasonable, and, as I tell him, I was myself one of the parties who subscribed to it, although then in opposition to Sir John Macdonald.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—I must with this explanation withdraw anything which might appear like an accusation against the hon. gentleman personally, but he admits that he did object, although he gave his own subscription, to corporations contributing. Therefore my argument is not weakened by the hon. gentleman's explanation, but on the contrary, made all the stronger. If Sir John Macdonald was in the government at the time, it makes the argument all the

stronger than it was as I originally stated it.

Hon. Mr. POIRIER—There was another subscription.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—There was an occasion when the Hon. Alexander Mackenzie was leader of the opposition. Mr. Mackenzie was not a rich man and his friends made provision for him when he was in opposition. I have it on excellent authority that one of the objects in forming the North American Life Insurance Company, was to provide a position and adequate salary for Mr. Mackenzie as its president. The suggestion came from Geo. Brown to solicit subscriptions for the formation of that company, one of the objects being to obtain a position for Mr. Mackenzie which would enable him to remain in public life. With all the noise we hear to-day about Insurance companies in the United States and their political affiliations and their subscriptions to political funds, I ask whether the voting of the sum of money out of the public treasury to a man who is performing a valuable public service is not better than the method to which I have referred? I might quote a later case, that of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. If the principle was wrong in the one case it would be wrong in the other, because subscription to such funds would be putting the leader of the government or opposition for the time being, being under an obligation to the contributors. Now here we have had several attempts by both political parties to deal with this question, and the legislation of last session was in my opinion, the first attempt to deal with the question properly. My hon. friend has referred to the case of Sir Wm. Meredith in the province of Ontario. I have taken the trouble to look up that case carefully and read the discussion that took place upon it, and the reasons given by Sir Wm. Meredith for declining that vote. It was not a proposition to put a law on the statute-book making permanent provision for the leader of the opposition. It was a proposition to put an amount in the estimates for the current year. Hon. gentleman will see at once why Sir Wm. Meredith would not accept that. The government could give it one year, and withhold it another year, and it would be a