

Committee by a vote of thirty-eight to thirty-four and it is my duty to say that the apparent connection of Mr. Armstrong with this measure was the sole and unique cause of its defeat in the committee. There was no other cause; because under no circumstances since I have been a member of this House has a Bill of that kind having so much merit in it been defeated. On the documents produced, Mr. Armstrong had nothing to do with the Bill whatever, but it was the idea that he was possibly behind the Bill and that he might have some remote interest in it, which caused its defeat. I will go further, and it is my duty to say it to this House, that the personal animosity existing between the Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Hon. Mr. Préfontaine) and Mr. Armstrong was the sole cause of the defeat of the Bill. It was in my charge and I have here a mass of correspondence which I have had with Colonel McMullen, the president of the company. My hon. friend (Hon. Mr. Préfontaine) although a political opponent of mine, is not my enemy I hope; and I am not his. But the hon. minister is an enemy of Mr. Armstrong, and because he is an enemy of Mr. Armstrong I am bound to say that he seems to use his official position in order to defeat a measure of this kind which is of interest to the public, and which is promoted by men who have never done the slightest harm to the Minister of Marine and Fisheries. These four counties are consequently to be deprived of the chance, because it is a chance, of having this railway. I cannot vouch that the railway will be built or will be begun within a year, but on account of this personal animosity and in order to gratify it against Mr. Armstrong, the minister deprives these four counties of the chance of having the railway. Now, my hon. friend (Hon. Mr. Préfontaine) knows that for years he was a personal friend of Mr. Armstrong. They have fallen out. I do not pretend to judge who is right or who is wrong, but until two years ago they were friends. They have had lawsuits, they have had difficulties, and they are at loggerheads now. But the Minister of Marine and Fisheries was for a long time closely connected with Mr. Armstrong in the Atlantic and Lake Superior Railway Company and was a director of that company if I mistake not, and they were advancing together the interests of that company which to-day my hon. friend invokes against my application and against my Bill. The Minister of Marine and Fisheries and Mr. Armstrong were closely linked in promoting the Montreal Bridge Company as well as the Great Northern Railway Company, the Great Eastern Railway Company, the Montreal and Sorel Railway Company. I might go very much further upon this theme, but I do not wish to do so, because I do not wish more than is necessary to take up the time

of this House, but I appeal to the members of this House and I ask: is it fair, under these circumstances, and in view of all the restrictions with which we have offered to surround this Bill—offering extraordinary guarantees that are not required in any other Bill and appearing as if instead of being straightforward men to be open to every kind of suspicion—is it fair under these circumstances that we should be deprived of reaping the advantage of all we have done in this matter. The committee was not a very large one this morning and I would like to have an opportunity of laying once more before that committee the merits of this application. My hon. friends who were present know that I represent the county of Jacques Cartier and supported this Bill. My hon. friend from Two Mountains (Mr. Ethier) on a previous occasion declared himself publicly to be in favour of this Bill with the restrictions which I think it is quite proper to impose. My hon. friend from Argenteuil (Mr. Christie) has met the Bill in a fair spirit. If at the end of the year nothing is done, the existence of the Act will probably induce other people to come forward and to begin the construction of this road which is absolutely necessary for that part of the country.

Mr. CHARLES MARCIL (Bonaventure). I deem it proper to explain why I took objection to this Bill from the very beginning. I find in the annual report of the Department of Railways and Canals the statement that the Atlantic and Lake Superior Railway comprises the Baie des Chaleurs Railway; the Montreal Bridge Company; the Great Eastern Railway; and the Ottawa Valley Railway Company. The Baie des Chaleurs Railway runs through my constituency, and its history is familiar to this House, familiar to this country and more especially to the electors whom I have the honour to represent. The scandalous transactions in connection with the Baie des Chaleurs Railway in the past are too numerous to be rehearsed now. The Atlantic and Lake Superior Railway is merely a new name for the old concern. There is at the present time as far as we can ascertain, some \$300,000 due to the people of Bonaventure, both Conservatives and Liberals, for right of way, labour and material supplied, and this money is due to poor people for the most part. When I saw that an application was made to this House to revive the Ottawa Valley charter which is comprised in this Atlantic and Lake Superior scheme, I thought it was my duty to my constituents to see that this Ottawa Valley line was not taken out of the Atlantic and Lake Superior system and put into another corporation, for the reason that the claims which the people of Bonaventure have are against the entire Atlantic and Lake Superior system which, as I have stated, comprised originally the Baie des Chaleurs section, the