

THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. Let my Hon. friend remember that if these gentlemen go on with the work it will be always our right to take possession of the work by only paying the amount that will have been actually spent; so there is no great danger after all.

MR. SPROULE. But we all know how these accounts are usually made when the Government comes to take them over.

In his reply to Mr. Sproule Mr. Tarte did not correctly state the obligations imposed upon the Government under Section 43 of the Company's Act of 1894. Under that Clause the Company was entitled to compensation for the value of the Canals and Works of the Company, and all its rights and privileges, the Arbitrators having power to take into consideration the expenditure with interest and "the past, present, and prospective business" of the Company.

The Com-  
pany's Char-  
ter further  
Amended.

14. In 1906 the Government were advised to still further whittle away the powers granted to the Company under their Charter by altering this Arbitration Clause so as to limit the right and privilege of the Canal Company in a way which was not originally intended.

In other words the Government used the machinery of Parliament in 1902 and again in 1906 to take away by Statute from the Canal Company and their British associates powers which were granted by Charter in 1894 and for which the British Company had paid, and upon the faith of which they had even then expended large sums of money.

The Government thus deprived the British Company of their rights, contrary to the express language of Section 43 of the Company's Act of 1894, without one penny of compensation.

Why this was done I cannot say. At this very time the Government were encouraging the Company to proceed with their surveys. It is, however, somewhat significant that in a recent discussion in Parliament, when reference was being made to the fact that the Canal Company had not made an issue of its bonds, it was remarked by a member acquainted with the policy of Mr. Tarte that with new Clause 5 inserted in the Company's Act of 1906 no Bonds could have been subscribed.

Whether this is so or not, the insertion of this clause in the Act of 1906 seemed then and seems now to the British Shareholders an unjust interference with their statutory rights.

The injustice  
of varying  
a Parlia-  
mentary  
Charter  
without com-  
pensation on  
which British  
investors  
have ex-  
pended large  
sums.

If this principle of varying Parliamentary Charters upon the faith of which large sums have been expended may be applied in the case of the Canal Company, no reason can be urged why it should not also be adopted in the case of some of the great Companies, Railway, Dock and otherwise, which have raised such enormous sums of money for Canada in London.