

another. We shall, however, refer only to the way in which the Government dealt with the Mackenzie-Mann claim last session, which was settled by a reference to the Hon. Mr. Justice Burbidge, sitting as a Commissioner.

The vote came before the House on 12th May last year (1902). The Minister of the Interior said neither the Government nor any member of it had instructed the contractors to proceed with the contract until ratified by Parliament. The contractors, however, did so at their own risk on a mere understanding with the Government, and the claim was allowed by the House, both sides agreeing that it should be paid. The Prime Minister took part in the debate, and said:—

"Of course I am bound to say at once that there is no legal recourse against the Canadian Government which can be enforced in a Court of Law, but we admit that Mackenzie and Mann have a moral claim against the honor of the Canadian people, against the honor of the Canadian Government, and against the honor of the Canadian Parliament for the money which then they expended," etc.

Now, the equities are far stronger in the case of the Chignecto claim than they were in the one referred to, and all the Prime Minister said regarding the Mackenzie-Mann claim applies to it with greater force. The Chignecto Company had a contract settled after its terms had been discussed in Parliament for five* sessions, and the question at once arises why was everything granted by the Government in the case of the Canadian firm and denied to the English Company? How are we to satisfy these English investors, who came here with their cash and spent it on our scheme by our invitation, that there is not one law for Canadians and another for them? Now, however, when the Government has concluded to pay compensation, some method of fixing the amount should be agreed upon. While this remains unsettled, the Company is being treated with injustice.

From "The Ottawa Citizen," 23rd April, 1903.

A DEBT OF HONOR

It has been pointed out that the principle in the case is parallel with that of the Mackenzie and Mann claim in connection with the Teslin Road, settled in 1901 by the present administration, but the moral obligation is very much stronger. The real obstacle is that the obligation was created by a former political administration, and settlement is now sought with its successors, who are perhaps naturally loath to meet the expense. At the same time the obligation is admitted, the

* seven sessions.