

because there are hon. gentlemen here who have not heard it—that the old charter has lapsed. I have also from the Secretary of the Railway Department a statement that the subsidy has lapsed.

HON. MR. McMILLAN—Will the hon. gentleman tell us the grounds on which the charter was granted to the Ottawa and Waddington road last year, and the extension given to them?

HON. MR. READ—They said they would commence construction at once, and go on with the work.

HON. MR. McMILLAN—Have they commenced? Or have they done anything?

HON. MR. READ—I will read an affidavit that they have not, if necessary, but I think it is hardly worth while occupying the time of the House with doing it.

HON. MR. SCOTT—I think the fair question for us to consider is, whether it is just or equitable that, in granting a charter to a new company we should in any degree disregard rights that my hon. friend who moved this amendment has properly considered vested rights? We are not going to saddle this new charter with anything heavy or burdensome; but we should do what is fair and equitable. We should remember that when Parliament granted a charter to the Ottawa, Waddington and New York Railway and Bridge Company the promoter of the Bill before us was one of the principal parties in the promotion of the other Bill. The people who were associated with him got on very well. They agitated for the construction of the road. They got out plans, and did the preliminary work that all companies have to do in the initiation of such projects. In 1886 they unfortunately had dissensions amongst themselves. Who is to blame for it I am not now going to say; but they did quarrel amongst themselves, and it became, therefore, perfectly apparent to everybody that it was utterly hopeless for either party to obtain money or float the scheme successfully while these dissensions lasted. They did last, however, one party, the majority of the stockholders, opposing the proposition to grant a charter to the other party. It must be quite obvious to any gentleman who has experience in these matters that the effect of all

was simply to destroy the possibilities of either company taking action. This House thought that the promoters of this Bill were the principal parties to blame. I am not now going to join in that censure, but there is the fact, that for two years that was the position we took. Now, we remove this opposition and say: Give these gentlemen an opportunity to try their skill; give them a new charter, ignoring entirely the rights of those who obtained the former charter. It is a recognized practice in Parliament, and a recognized principle, that if you are doing away with any vested rights in a project the successors who take up that project have to adopt them. That is a well recognized principle, and I think one that is eminently fair.

Hon. Mr. POWER—Are we taking away the charter from the original company?

Hon. Mr SCOTT—Practically we are. The moment we grant this charter the other is utterly hopeless. There is no intention to renew the other charter, because it would simply destroy the chances either company would have to build the road. I would rather now see the new company have an opportunity of building the road. It would be still better if the two companies would combine, but it appears to be utterly impossible to have a fusion of the two interests. We are therefore practically destroying the old charter. Whether it has a life of a year and a-half or a year I cannot say, but we are practically superseding the old charter by this new one. Hon. gentlemen will agree with me, if a new Bill were not before us, and the promoters of the old company should come before us for a renewal of their charter we would grant it. We have done such things every session. Companies come to us with the simple proposal that they require a renewal of their charter, because they have some prospect of building their road, and it is always granted. We are not going to do that again in this case; we are giving it to an entirely new company, and therefore I say it is eminently a fair and reasonable proposition to say to these gentlemen who are getting the new charter: Your predecessors have incurred certain expenditures which must be reimbursed to them. The president of the road, Mr. Hickey, at an earlier date than my hon. friend's quotation,