

debentures. We want to know whether Mr. Chateauvert, whom we have always known to be a Tory, but whom we have also known to be a good and respectable citizen of Quebec, is to be branded publicly as a liar or whether the Ministers referred to made the promise, and, if so, whether they are prepared to redeem it. Let them say whether they are or not; let them say whether the promise was made or not, and, if it was not made, we shall know how to deal with Mr. Chateauvert in Quebec. We do not want to be fooled any more. We want to know whether the citizens of Quebec have been shamefully deceived by Mr. Chateauvert or whether Mr. Chateauvert has been shamefully deceived by the Minister of Public Works and the Minister of Militia.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. I would say a few words in answer to some of the observations which the hon. member for Quebec (Mr. Langelier) has made, because some of the matters he has touched upon happened to come under my notice in a departmental way. I presume that the speech he has made this afternoon is not intended to elicit the policy of the Government upon this question of the million dollars of bonds, because the hon. gentleman and the House have been promised at an early part of the session that a measure on this subject will be brought down during the session, and it will be more convenient for him, as well as for us, to discuss that question when the papers and the correspondence and the documents are accessible to members on both sides of the House. The hon. gentleman is quite misinformed, or else he has unintentionally misstated the question as to the betterments required from time to time to be made by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. The hon. gentleman stated, for instance, that we did not wish betterments to take place in connection with the North Shore Railway. He also stated that a great deal of difficulty occurred in the negotiations between the Canadian Pacific Railway Company and the Government in relation to repairs which were actually necessary for the safety of the travelling public, and he intimated that, at one time, there was a serious danger of the road being closed because there were bridges which were not safe for the travelling public. I beg to say that there is not the slightest foundation for the supposition that we did not wish betterments to take place on the road, or that there was ever any delay on the part of the Government of Canada in regard to the necessary repairs taking place on the bridges on that road. The single question that arose in regard to betterments was as to whether we were bound by the terms of our contract with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company to allow them to increase the capital expenditure on that road at our expense. They were entitled by the terms of the contract with us, according to our interpretation of it, to make renewals from time to time, but if they were to substitute, for instance, steel bridges for wooden bridges, we had no objection to their doing so and they did not require our consent, but they did require our consent to charging against the capital sum the additional cost of steel as compared with wood. In that respect we felt we would not be warranted, without coming to Parliament in regard to the matter, in assenting. We felt that our position under that contract and under that lien might be changed, but

in regard to necessary repairs or betterments, the Canadian Pacific Railway were always free to make any betterments, to substitute steel for wood wherever they pleased, to make repairs where they were necessary, or to substitute wood for wood. In these matters they were at perfect liberty, because they would involve no extra capital charge whatever. As to the question which was put to us across the House the other day by the hon. gentleman, and in regard to which he has made some complaint in reference to the answer he received, I think the answer was pretty full, considering that there was a definite promise that a measure would be brought down in regard to the million dollars of railway bonds. The hon. gentleman finds fault with us, and indicates that we could not have paid very close attention to the progress of the election contest in Quebec or we would have discovered that the *Quebec Chronicle* did contain the article which he has read from *Hansard*. I might with equal justice say that the hon. gentleman did not pay much attention to his own election contest or he would not have had to come to the House of Commons to ask if that article had appeared in a paper published in his own constituency. The Government had no official knowledge of the publication. He had the same knowledge as the Government had on that subject, and his question was not a fair one. As to whether Mr. Chateauvert has deceived the electors of Quebec or Ministers of the Crown have deceived him, the hon. member will find, when the measure comes to be laid on the Table of the House, a full answer to that question, and he will find that, in any indication that Mr. Chateauvert has given of any pledge on the part of the Government of Canada, there will be no difficulty in carrying that pledge into effect. The measure will be brought down in the course of a few days, and the hon. gentleman will be able to see from its details whether it corresponds with the promise Mr. Chateauvert gave to his constituents or not. What may have transpired between the Minister of Public Works and the Minister of Militia and Mr. Chateauvert I do not know, but the Government of Canada will keep faith and will ask the House to ratify whatever promise was made by the Government of Canada, upon which no doubt the statement of Mr. Chateauvert was based. I will not go further, because I presume the hon. gentleman desires to have the returns and it is close to six o'clock.

Mr. LAURIER. It is, perhaps, to be regretted that, in the discussion of a matter of this moment, the Minister of Public Works and the Minister of Militia are not present to defend their own course, and to explain the promise which they gave.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. They will be here when the matter is before the House.

Mr. LAURIER. But they are not here now.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Six o'clock.

It being six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

### After Recess.

#### SECOND READINGS.

Bill (No. 87) to revive and amend the charter of the Quebec Bridge Company.—(Mr. Desjardins, L'Islet.)