

motion was the railway expert of the opposition, the hon. member for South Lanark (Mr. Haggart). My hon. friend from Compton (Mr. Pope) made a two hours' speech the other day on government ownership, but three or four months before the hon. member in this House voted against government ownership. I see the veteran from Halton (Mr. Henderson) is in his seat to-night. We shall hear from him no doubt upon this subject.

Mr. HENDERSON. Certainly.

Mr. FIELDING. And I have to remind him that only a few weeks ago he voted against a straight motion for government ownership.

Mr. HENDERSON. Oh.

A LONG LIST OF THEM.

Mr. FIELDING. My hon. friend from North Lanark (Mr. Rosamond) is in his place to-night. He may need to be reminded that he voted against government ownership. I do not see the genial face of my hon. friend from Northumberland (Mr. Cochrane), but some of his friends may remind him, lest he goes astray, that he voted against government ownership only a few weeks ago. The late lamented Mr. Cargill was amongst those who recorded his vote against government ownership. The hon. member for Charlotte (Mr. Ganong) voted against government ownership. The late Minister of Public Works (Mr. Tarte) only a few weeks ago voted against government ownership. I find that the hon. member for West Durham (Mr. Ward) voted against government ownership. I find that my esteemed friend from Sunbury and Queen's, New Brunswick (Mr. Wilmot), who is now manifesting a warm interest in government ownership, voted against government ownership only a few weeks ago. I hope my hon. friend will not forget that fact when the vote is taken to-night upon this amendment. My hon. friend from Northumberland, New Brunswick (Mr. Robinson) is not here, but he was amongst those who voted against government ownership only a few weeks ago. My hon. friend from Nicolet (Mr. Ball), who, I think, is here, also voted against government ownership. The name of my hon. friend the leader of the opposition does not appear in that vote. He was absent, but I am going to pay him the compliment of believing that if he had been present he would have voted with his expert, the hon. ex-Minister of Railways and Canals. Seeing my hon. friend from Sunbury and Queen's in his place, reminds me that in the speech which he made recently in the debate, in which he suddenly expressed opinion favourable to government ownership, and a very sudden change it was, as I have pointed out, he said upon that occasion that he was in favour of government ownership on the condition that you put your road into the hands of a commission absolutely independent of the government.

QUEER GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP.

Would my hon. friend tell me what kind of government ownership that may be, if it is placed in the hands of a commission absolutely independent of the government? What is the underlying principle of government ownership? It is the control of these great public utilities by the people. Whether it is in the municipal council, the city or the town council, or the provincial or national government, public ownership means public control by the people, and public control by the people means public control by parliament, and public control by parliament means public control by the government, who are a committee of parliament. The present system may be bad enough in dealing with corporations, but heaven preserve us against such a monstrosity as government ownership placed in the hands of a commission absolutely independent of government or parliament.

RECORD OF MANITOBA CONSERVATIVES.

I believe that the Conservative party has a further record on this question of government ownership. I have been dealing chiefly hitherto with what has occurred in this House. I was reminded to-day that the Conservative party in one of our provinces had dealt with this question. I am only speaking from general