

patronage. He thought, notwithstanding what his hon. friend from South Bruce might say, that it was unseemly, in this country, that the gentleman who had the power of patronage, the prerogative of the Crown in his hands, by which he could confer a favour upon the Judge before whom he pleaded, and when it was his duty by every honourable means in his power to induce that Judge to give the case to his client, should have the power to plead in the Courts. It was unfair to the Judge to put him in such a position, more unfair to the client, and unfair to the public sentiment of the country to allow it to be said anywhere that a man possessing such power should go before a Court in order to plead, and who would be opposed by counsel who could not command the same influence. The administration of justice, under the British Constitution, had been granted, not only as to the actual results, but against the suspicion of wrong, and in no case had he found that a Cabinet Minister had gone into a British Court of Justice to plead a person's case. The hon. member for South Bruce said his opinion was he could properly do it. Perhaps he could. But he (Mr. Palmer) held that it ought to be a principle in the Government of this country to prevent such a thing being done. His hon. friend said the reason why he had quitted doing so was not on account of public opinion. He said the outcry made, by what he called the Tory Press, had no earthly influence on him. It might be so; it might be that the Tory Press, as he called it, did not really interpret the sentiment of this country; but it was passing strange, if that was so, that, although he was not influenced by it, his own opinion and actions should have gone with it. If it was not the Tory Press, or, rather, the public sentiment which it expressed at the time that influenced his hon. friend, it must have been his own sense of what was right. Whichever way he put it, the result was the same. The fact remained that he, himself, either voluntarily came to that view, or was obliged to adopt it, and the Press would care very little whether the result was brought about by its influence

or not. He did not propose to discuss this matter further. He would not have troubled the House at this length, did he not see in the principle which underlined this Bill, one the most vicious to the administration of justice in this country, one fraught with more evil than any single measure introduced in this House since Confederation, one that could not be justified on any principle whatever. He presumed his hon. friend had brought it forward, honestly, to do the work of the country. All that he could say, was that a move was made in a wrong direction. The means pointed out by the right hon. member for Kingston, to have a Solicitor-General, he confessed, did not approve itself to his mind, because he did not see why the Attorney-General or the Minister of Justice should have any offices in this country except those in the Department at Ottawa. Whatever number of assistants might be required in this Department to do the work, should be procured. He believed, nay, he knew, that that would be done more cheaply by not asking a man to go before a constituency to obtain the position of Cabinet Minister, to take the responsibilities of an office which must necessarily take away the greater part of his time from this work required. Instead, they should simply employ a man who, from his education, and habits, and ability, was fitted for the work. The country would not begrudge the number of men the public service required. For these reasons he opposed this Bill. He was opposed to dividing the responsibility. He was opposed to allowing more than one head to each Department. If the Government could divide any Department of the public service, he thought the Department of the Minister of Public Works might be more readily divided than any other one. He could quite understand why the system of railways in this country might possibly become a Department itself. But a Minister of the Crown, a Cabinet Minister, going around practising in the Courts all over the Dominion as an ordinary lawyer, would degrade the office, and not serve the public service or be approved by the people.