

country: for, having accepted himself, he is not in a position to raise the voice of protest, though every man in the House should be a transgressor in the same line. For this reason the people's interest demands that their representatives in Parliament should be truly independent men. It has been found in the history of free governments that the importance of having independent members of Parliament, members free from the control of the government, members honest in the discharge of their duties, cannot be overestimated. In fact, Sir, without an independent Parliament, it is impossible to maintain free institutions. The fact that a Parliament is under corrupting influences is a menace to the liberties of the people whose interests are in the hands of that Parliament. But, Sir, a corrupt government cannot carry on its operations with a free and independent Parliament; it is essential to a corrupt government that it should be supported by a servile Parliament; and for that reason all corrupt governments have found it necessary, in order to carry on their operations, to debase and corrupt Parliament, to impair its independence by the use of corrupting measures and means. Now, when this policy is adopted, the country adopting it has at once yawning before it an immeasurable abyss of concession and demand—of concession on the part of the government for the purpose of debauching Parliament, and of demand on the part of corrupted members for favors from the government. If we look back for a moment over past history, we shall find that the disregard of the people's rights in England ought to possess for us at this juncture great interest. When Charles I sought to subvert the liberties of England, he strove to get along without the use of a Parliament at all. Under Strafford, with his policy of Thorough, the attempt was made to organise and maintain a standing army, and to raise the revenue necessary for this purpose without calling on Parliament to impose taxes. Various schemes and devices were resorted to to raise taxes without the intervention of Parliament, such as ship money. When John Hampden resisted the payment of a few shillings of unjust taxes, and carried his case to the highest courts of England, and spent thousands of pounds in fighting the king and his unjust exactions, he was thought by Strafford to be a fanatic, and Strafford expressed a desire that all individuals like Hampden should be whipped into a sense of their duty. The result of this struggle was that Parliament triumphed; the attempt to rule England without a Parliament was a failure; Strafford was executed, Archbishop Laud met with a fate that is a warning to all prelates of his character, and Charles I was himself brought to the block; and the right of Parliament in England to levy taxes, and to exercise its functions within its own legitimate sphere, was vindicated and maintained. Then, Sir, more refined methods were resorted to. Charles II, surrounded by worthless men and more worthless women, resorted to the policy of corrupting Parliament by direct bribes to members of money and offices of profit. This evil went on increasing until, after the revolution of 1690, a great popular ferment broke out in consequence of placemen being in Parliament, in consequence of corruption, in consequence of the House of Commons becoming a mere junto to record the decrees of the court. In 1695 an investigation was demanded. A parliamentary committee, headed by Thomas Wharton, investigated the affairs of Parliament. Sir John Trevor was expelled for receiving money, not to promote Bills in his own behalf, as is done in this Parliament, but for receiving money to promote Bills for others. The Duke of Leeds was impeached, and died in disgrace for exercising similar tactics to those that have been exercised since nearer to us, I venture to say, than the British House of Commons. After that came the corruption that existed in the days of Walpole and in the days of Newcastle; and at last an Independence of Parliament Act was passed which

forbade any members of the House of Commons receiving emoluments from the Crown except as a Minister of the Crown. We have an Independence of Parliament Act of the same character. We have an Act on our Statute-book which provides that any member of this House entering into a contract with the Crown and receiving emoluments from the Crown, shall be liable to a fine of \$2,000 for every day he sits and votes in this House. Will any man of this House venture to say that the spirit of that Independence Act is not daily violated in this House? Will any member venture to say that infractions of the spirit of that law are not of daily occurrence, and that hon. members who occupy seats here are not guilty of greater infractions of that law in its spirit than if they had contracts with the Government for public works. Will we be told that the member who receives a timber limit, that the member who receives a colonisation grant, that the member who receives a coal land lease, that the member who receives a pasture land lease, that the member who receives a railway charter, and then goes hawking that charter about, seeking parties who will build the road and pay him a handsome price for his influence and his charter—will any member say that these men are not guilty of violations of the spirit of the Independence of Parliament Act, and that members of Parliament can be guilty of these acts and at the same time retain a spirit of independence and act as independent members of Parliament? We have in this House, I will not venture to say how many members who are interested in railway subsidies, or in railways that have received subsidies, and who have voted for these subsidies.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Name.

M. CHARLTON. You will have the names in good time. There are Ministers of the Crown in this House, there are private members here, who are interested in railways that have received government bonuses; millions of dollars have been voted, which are devoted to advancing the interests of members of this House, associated with other individuals in promoting railway enterprises. We have members here forming railway companies; we have had recently transactions revealed in regard to a road, of which the president, and every member of the directorate, is a member of this House, in which there is not a dollar of capital invested, of which the stock is bogus stock, placed in the hands of the president to enable him to manipulate the concern. These members received a charter from the Government, carrying with it a land grant of 6,400 acres per mile. Was that not engaging in a contract with the Government more nefarious than if they had made a contract to perform a public work? This case is but a type of many others. Members of this House are engaged in procuring speculative charters, without the intention or the purpose or the ability to construct one mile of road, and placing these charters upon the market, hawking them about, resorting to the usual low, disreputable methods connected with railway steals. There is not a greater depth of infamy in business transactions in America than the infamy connected with railway construction, and members of this House are engaged in railway brokerage of a nature as infamous as any in the history of railway manipulations.

An hon. MEMBER. Steel rails.

Mr. CHARLTON. And we have had here very recently the open washing of dirty linen. We have had exposed a quarrel over the subsidies connected with one of these railway corporations; and we have had what is worse. We have had the Government taking part in this quarrel, giving sanction to this crime, selecting its favorites out of the number of those engaged in the quarrel, and carrying his interest through this House upon a division. The spectacle of the Government of this country sully its reputa-