

hon. gentleman has explained to the House that it is partly in vindication of the position and reputation of his bank that he desires this motion to carry. I think, so far as that is concerned, the facts he has stated to the House, and which I understand appear on the public records, are sufficient for his purpose, and that it will be preferable to wait until the action of the bank with respect to its guarantee to the Government is in some way impugned before the motion should be pressed on that ground. But it has a second aspect, upon which the hon. gentleman addressed the House with great earnestness and fervour, that with respect to the claims of the workmen themselves, who, I understand from his remarks, as well as from the little I know of the case otherwise, had some right under the terms of the contract with this Government to claim the protection of the Government in respect to their wages and supplies. Perhaps it is stating the case somewhat too strongly to say that they had a right to claim the protection of the Government, but, at any rate, the Government in such contracts reserves to itself the right, at any time, to step in and make payments to the unpaid employes with a view to prevent disturbances on the work. Possibly, in consequence of some view of that kind, it was that the late First Minister made an arrangement with the Ontario Bank by which a portion of the subsidy which had been earned by the company was withheld until the guarantee of the Ontario Bank was given that the wages would be paid in due course. But, with regard to that aspect of the case, whether we consider the position of the unpaid employes—if there are any still—or whether we regard the alleged misapplication of the fund, I have to remind the House that the whole matter is practically *sub judice* now in the Province of Quebec. The Provincial Government, as every member of the House is fully aware, has appointed two royal commissions, and I understand that this subject forms a matter of enquiry for both of them. At any rate, it forms a matter of enquiry by one of these royal commissions, and I believe that the other has taken some evidence on the subject, and that really it is from the proceedings of that second commission that the facts have transpired which the hon. gentleman referred to this afternoon. It would, therefore, serve no practical purpose whatever for the House to enter on this enquiry by a committee now. We may fairly assume that the authorities which have been constituted by the Province of Quebec will make a full and searching enquiry into such features of the case as appear to call for it, and that in due course of time that matter will be properly dealt with. After it has transpired what the result of the commission has been, and how this whole subject has been dealt with, would certainly be a more suitable time, if the House thinks it desirable at all, to appoint a committee to make enquiry into the subject. I think for both reasons: because of the complaint which the hon. gentleman makes with regard to the statements made against the bank, and on the ground that the rights of the persons who are alleged to have been unpaid are being enquired into and being dealt with now by the Provincial authority—I think it would be inexpedient for the House to yield to the motion and to appoint a com-

mittee at the present time. At a future time there may possibly be a case for it.

Mr. COCKBURN. I beg to withdraw the motion.

Mr. LAURIER. I am not at all surprised at the announcement just made by the hon. gentleman for Toronto Centre (Mr. Cockburn). I thought from the first that this motion was simply intended to give the hon. gentleman an opportunity to make the stump speech which he has just delivered; but perhaps it would have been more in accordance with the effect he wanted to produce, if he had gone to Quebec where there is an election just now pending and delivered that address. The hon. gentleman is a good French scholar, I know, and whether in French or English he could have explained to the electors what he has just stated; but there is nothing new in his remarks, for all these facts have been long before the public.

Motion withdrawn.

#### GOVERNOR GENERAL'S WARRANTS.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT moved:

That all payments made since the last session under the sanction of the Governor General's Warrants be referred to the Committee on Public Accounts.

He said: Mr. Speaker, before placing the motion in your hands I would just say that I am glad to find that the admonitions from this side of the House as to the abuse of Governor General's Warrants have apparently borne some fruit, and that the warrants brought down are much fewer in number and much smaller in amount than has been the case hitherto. I congratulate the Minister of Finance on the improvement in that respect. As to the desirability of referring these warrants to the Public Accounts Committee, I should think that probably the Minister of Finance himself and the Government will see no objection. These are extraordinary payments made in extraordinary circumstances defined in the Act, and having been actually made and the money gone out of the public treasury it is obviously desirable and convenient that they should be examined into, if necessary, before the Committee on Public Accounts. Frequently when discussions have arisen about them in Supply we have been told that it is no use discussing them because the money has actually gone, or that in any case it is not convenient, as it might lead to prolonged and unnecessary discussions on the floor, of a character which I think would be much better conducted in the Public Accounts Committee. I, therefore, make this motion, and I trust there will be no objection to it.

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, this motion, although a little unusual, may, I think, be very well permitted to pass. I, at least, have no objection to make to it. This is an appropriation of some kind, part of which has been expended, and in that way, it is before the House, having been brought down and laid on the Table. I am sorry, however, that my hon. friend has shown his accustomed lack of generosity towards us, and has not allowed for any good intentions on our part.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I am praising you for what you have done.