

in your hands the resolution which I propose to move. I will first deal with the assertion that this Act was retrospective and overrode a judgment of the Court. I find, Sir, that the Parliament of Ontario passed a Statute intituled "An Act to enable municipalities along the line of the Grand Junction Railway Company to grant aid thereby and to legalize certain by-laws granting such aid"—to legalize by-laws, which were wholly illegal. This Act came before the Minister of Justice. It was protested against and objected to. Some of its provisions were clearly retrospective. It interfered with private rights. But what did the hon. gentleman say in reporting on the Bill? That many petitions were presented against it, but that as it was within the competence of the Local Legislature, it should be allowed to come into operation. Now, Sir, here was a Bill which expressly interfered with private rights, which made that legal which was not legal before, which made a corporation responsible and liable for debts for which they were not liable before, and which imposed on them responsibilities and duties that were not imposed on them by law, and yet the hon gentleman allowed that Bill to go into operation, while the late Minister of Justice disallowed the Streams' Bill, which is no more retrospective, and no more interferes with private rights than the Bill to which I have just referred. Now, Sir, as to the other branch of this objection, namely that the Bill in question overrode a judgment of the Court. I find that on several occasions Parliament did pass Bills, the effect of which was to override a judgment of the Court. Some of us have a lively recollection—and I dare say also, the hon. Prime Minister—of the case of Hammond vs. McLay. In 1839, Hammond was appointed registrar of the county of Bruce. Under 9 Victoria, Chapter 34, this Statute enabled the Government to dismiss the registrar upon certain grounds specified therein. Hammond was dismissed by the Government upon a ground which was not mentioned in the Statute. He was superseded under the great seal of the Province of Ontario, and another man by the name of McLay was appointed in his place. Hammond brought an action for the fees, contending that the Government had no power so to dismiss him. Pending the litigation, and before a judgment was finally rendered by the Court of Appeal, the Government passed a Statute which changed the tenure of office from good behavior to during the will of the Lieutenant-Governor. Now, Sir, this was an *ex post facto* Act, which interfered with the judgment of the Court. This Act, Sir, was not questioned. It is true that it was before Confederation, but then the Imperial Gov-