

Welland Vale Co.'s Bill in 1876. The Welland Vale Co.'s Bill is almost precisely the same as this, and the House has never refused to pass such measures, that I am aware of, after the merits have been satisfactorily proven. There was another Bill for the relief of Otto Morin, passed also in 1876, but not precisely in character the same as this.

HON. MR. DICKEY—There is a notice on the Paper in my name proposing an amendment to this Bill, which I will now proceed to move, and in answer to what my hon. friend has just said, I may say that I retain my opinion, which I expressed at a former stage of this Bill, that this legislation is of a character that ought not to be encouraged in this House, and I think there is a decided objection to the principle of the Bill, which objection was reserved as a matter that should be considered at this stage. But my hon. friend has adverted to two or three precedents, and by his courtesy I have been enabled to refer to them myself, and I find that they are not on all fours with the principle of this Bill. This Bill contains an allegation that by an accident the application was not made until after the long period of three months had expired, and it was explained, although it is not in the preamble, that that was done by the petitioner's solicitor. It occurred to me, as it did on a former occasion, that if there was ever a case in which a party ought not to have relief it is that in which an employed solicitor neglected his duty. It is a matter that should be settled between them, and for which the solicitor ought to be liable. It was not, in either of the cases referred to, the ground upon which the application for relief was made. In all cases the application was made before the five years had expired. I have not been able to look at the law in the seventies when this legislation took place, because of the short time I have had since I was informed of those precedents, but they were all based upon different facts. For instance, the application made in 1876 was on the allegation that there had been an inadvertent omission without any fault or negligence on the part of the parties for a period of five weeks. In the other case that has been adverted to, in 1873, the renewal was legislation for the purpose of giving effect to a patent which was

granted under a law of the old Province of Canada. It was not a patent that had been granted under our laws at all, but it was asking power to give effect to a patent which had been granted in the year 1857, and to remove doubt as to the position in which the parties stood with regard to that patent, and whether he could make it a Dominion patent. It was no question of delay or negligence, the object being simply to remove any doubt that might exist as to a patent obtained under the law of the old Province of Canada. In another case, the petition stated that the petitioner had forwarded the money to the Government, but by some accident the petition reached the proper office eleven days too late. He had done everything he could, but the petition did not reach the office in time. In another case the money was placed in the hands of the clerk, to be transmitted to the office, and the clerk either supposed he had transmitted the proper amount or retained part of the amount—at all events, he only sent half the \$20, and that was the amount that reached the office, and when he went a few days afterwards to get his patent, as he supposed, he was told that the whole amount had not been transmitted. It was a special case, and under the circumstances he was allowed a renewal of his patent by legislation. These are the precedents; but it is my duty to call the attention of the House, as this is a public matter in its bearings, to the singular fact that after all these cases occurred the objections which were so forceably and well put by the leader of the Government on a former occasion were made in Parliament by several distinguished men on both sides of the House against this class of legislation; and the result was, as far as I can ascertain by looking at the books, there has been no such application since that date—for the long period from 1876 to the present time. That is the position in which the matter stands. I content myself, therefore, with stating my views on that point, and reserving all the objections that I made to the Bill, and having stated them, I leave them in the hands of the House and of the Government to be dealt with as a matter of policy as they choose. But there is a principle in this Bill which seriously affects the interests of the public, whose interest is, to a certain extent, antagonistic to that of the man who claims an exclusive right,