

company have been trying, not only on the continent of Europe, but also in America, to float this scheme, and no doubt it is a well-known scheme in financial circles to-day, and if they have been unsuccessful up to the present time, notwithstanding the strong commercial and financial interests engaged in the scheme, how much more reasonable is it to suppose that it would be unsuccessful for a length of time in the future if it was placed in the hands of the Government, and a Bill were passed committing the work to any person at all; because the old saying, what is everybody's business is nobody's business, would apply to this scheme. If men of enterprise and ability have been unable to carry the scheme through up to the present time, is it reasonable to suppose that some other company, that we know nothing of, would take hold of it and would build fifty miles by next December? This company gives reasonable assurance that this may be accomplished by it; and we have reason to believe from the external evidence we have of the ability of the company, that that may be accomplished; and if it is accomplished, it will give the very strongest assurance that the whole road will be built in the interest of the settlers, and that those poor unfortunate laborers who lost their all in the Souris and Rocky Mountain Railway will be paid at an early day. In view of these considerations, and remembering that there has been no documentary or other evidence adduced showing that anything wrong has been done by the promoters of this company, we have a right to grant this Bill. A great deal is made out of the fact that the principal promoter of the Bill was handed \$386,000 of Souris and Rocky Mountain Railway stock; but what did that represent? With the liabilities standing against the old company of \$140,000, it represented that he assumed those liabilities, without receiving anything in return, not even a single foot of land; and he took that stock over, although there was only 10 per cent. paid on it, and thereby assumed the liability of 90 cents on the dollar for every dollar of the stock, to those parties who are now in litigation, endeavoring to recover their claims against the Souris and Rocky Mountain Railway Company. It was not only a very hazardous, but a very critical obligation—an obligation that very few men would assume; and it cannot be claimed in all fairness that there was any advantage coming to him in assuming that stock. Now, I say this House has a reasonable hope that that railway will be pushed forward rapidly at an early date, giving the settlers what they want, and securing the payment of those unfortunate laborers. Therefore, I say that we are in duty bound to grant this Bill, to extend the time asked for, and to renew the charter; and in doing that we shall be violating no principle of the independence of Parliament. The only result will be a good to the country, and a good to the parties most interested.

Mr. CHARLTON. To me, Sir, it is an astounding fact, that the Government of Canada, after all the revelations that have been made in regard to the transaction now under the consideration of the House, should insist on granting this charter. The hon. Minister of Finance tells us that he has been waited upon by delegations from the North-West, and has been urged by the hon. member for Marquette to grant this company the charter. Well, I suppose the hon. member for Marquette, and the delegations from the North-West, were influenced by the belief that the promoters of this scheme were acting in good faith—that they intended to build the road, and had the means to build it. The hon. Minister of Finance also tells us he had no knowledge at that time that they were trafficking in the charter. Can he tell us that is the case to-day? He does not say he believes at present they were trafficking in that charter, and the very fact, admitted by the promoters of the road, that they are seeking men of capital to build the road, is an admission that they

cannot and do not intend to build it. They obtained the charter without the purpose or expectation of building the road themselves; it was a purely speculative transaction on their part. They obtained the charter expecting they would be able to induce men of capital to take it off their hands. They have admitted they are traffickers in this charter and are looking for men of means to purchase it from them. The Minister of Public Works practically condemns this whole business as wrong. He tells us, if we think best to turn over a new leaf, impliedly admitting it is better we should do so, that he will do so next Session, but to pass this measure now. Well, if the character of this business is such as to render it advisable for Parliament to turn over a new leaf, is there a better time to do so than now? If this transaction is of such a nature as to compel the Minister of Public Works to admit that a new leaf should be turned over, why should he and how can he urge that there should be any delay in taking that necessary and proper step? This business of contract and charter brokerage is a disgrace to this Parliament. A great number of members are admittedly engaged in promoting railway schemes; there are members in this House who have urged the granting of bonuses by, and have received bonuses from, this Government to advance railway schemes in which they are interested, and their conduct is morally just the same as if they had induced the Government to grant them money to put into their own pockets. The whole system is one that ought to be abolished. We have in this case a member of this House in the possession of \$386,000 worth of capital stock, which he admits, and which his hon. friend from Richmond and Wolfe (Mr. Ives) admits, has not cost him a cent. The stock has been issued to him, not for the purpose of building the road, but for the purpose of controlling the road. That hon. gentleman has got the capital stock in his possession, not because he has advanced the money to pay for it, not that the capital stock represents actual capital, but he has got this fictitious capital into his possession for the purpose of controlling the enterprise, and having obtained it, he is using it in manipulating the concern for the advancement of his own pecuniary interests. That is admitted, no man in this House can doubt it, the circumstances of the case prove it. What those manipulations may be, what is concealed under the surface, I do not know. We are told he has made a contract, but we are not informed what its character or nature is. I am in ignorance as to whom it is made with, as to what the terms are, as to what the hon. member is likely to make out of the transaction in which he has invested no money, in which he has invested nothing but a little time and trouble. The hon. gentleman, in his speech, has made a pitiful appeal to this House not to make him the scapegoat for the sins perpetrated by other members. He does not deny he has perpetrated a sin, and deserves punishment, but he beseeches us not to select him as an example, not to make him a scapegoat for a state of things which has existed for years. It is high time somebody should be made a scapegoat; it is high time we should retrace our steps; it is high time that the independence of Parliament should be more strictly guarded than it has been for some years passed. The hon. member for Richmond and Wolfe (Mr. Ives) said he would not take up the political aspect of the case. In that he showed a great amount of discretion. The political aspect of the case is the important one; it is that which makes this transaction and transactions of this nature dangerous to the country. Here is a Parliament elected by the people to guard their rights and to look after their interests, but in this Parliament, there are a certain number of members who are looking after their own interests. Now, we have a Statute which imposes a fine of \$2,000 on every member of the House for every day he sits in the House, while he has a contract with the Government.