

“me to whom the contract must be given. I now write to know what you intend to do for me in this matter. I will await your reply. Business is business, as you know.”

And inquire whether it is the intention of the government to take steps to have the writer of the said letter prosecuted under the provisions of paragraph (f) of article 133 of the Criminal Code, which reads as follows:—

“Everyone is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to a fine of not less than one hundred dollars, and not exceeding one thousand dollars, and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year, and not less than one month, and in default of payment of such fine to imprisonment for a further time not exceeding six months, who by reason of, or under the pretence of, possessing influence with the government, or with any minister or official thereof, demands, exacts, or receives from any person any compensation, fee or reward, for procuring from the government the payment of any claim, or of any portion thereof, or for procuring or furthering the appointment of himself, or of any other person, to any office, place, or employment, or for procuring or furthering the obtaining for himself, or any other person, of any grant, lease, or other benefit from the government.”

He said: I do this, I can assure the House and the hon. leader of the House, not with any factious desire to embarrass the government, or to do anything which would militate or interfere with the administration of justice, or the proper carrying out of any contract, or any action of the government in reference thereto, but from a sincere desire to have the law upon the statute-book enforced to the furthest possible extent against contract brokers, or against those who attempt to levy blackmail, as is evidently indicated in this letter, upon those who are obtaining contracts from the government; or otherwise to use the influence which they are given by any minister of the Crown to enforce a payment of money for the service which they render in obtaining the contract from any government. We all know the reasons why the criminal law was amended in this particular respect. Those who knew the late Sir John Thompson know how bitterly and how honestly he was opposed to any attempt on the part of contractors, or those who had intercourse with the government, to obtain any undue advantage, and obtain rewards therefor, from the parties who were to receive those contracts. So decided was his view, sustained as it was by the members of both Houses of parliament, that this very strong clause was placed in the criminal code for the purpose of meeting just such cases as this, if on close investigation the Minister of Justice

comes to the conclusion that the case is not reached by this clause of the act, and there may be—I am speaking as a layman—some little doubt on that point, though the last words of the clause seem to me to be sufficiently clear to cover any case and more particularly this one when it refers to obtaining any “other benefit from the government.” That is, the contractor would receive the profits arising from the contract, and this man Petit says directly, I will obtain for you the contract from the Minister of Public Works if you give me a proper consideration for it. Whether that would be covered by this clause must be left to the decision of those whose duty it is to carry out the law, and I think I can safely say my hon. friend, the Minister of Justice, is just as anxious as any member of this Senate can possibly be to prevent this kind of brokerage. In times past, I remember well, his former leader took high grounds upon questions of this kind. He, no doubt, will remember, as many others do, that in 1873-74 when the Liberal party was seeking the confidence of the electors, that his late leader, subsequently premier, Mr. Mackenzie, used these words: “We come to raise again the standard of public morality.” That, I think, is part of the language which has been used by the opponents of the late government during the late contest. “Which our opponents,” he continues, “have done so much to debase.” Well, we find that high standard of public morality very well exemplified in the quotation from the letter of Petit, which reads:

I write to know what you intend to do for me in this matter. Business is business, you know.

Now, that might be treated with the contempt it deserves had not the policy of the Department of Public Works been such as to place it within the power of Mr. Petit to write such a letter and to make such a demand. We know that it has been stated, and stated very freely, that the defeated government candidates in any of the counties who were running in the interest of the government, are to be consulted in the letting of contracts under certain circumstances. It has been declared, as well by the leader of this House as by the leader in the House of Commons, that presuming they were respectable people, presuming that they must be so because they were selected by their party to contest the election in the interest of the govern-