

the books, my recollection is that the province of Quebec contributed \$250,000 towards that bridge. That does not indicate that they regarded the company as being worthless, or as being composed of men of straw. The city of Quebec contributed \$300,000 in cash and placed it in the hands of the company to assist in the construction of the bridge. Surely that does not indicate that they regarded that company as being a worthless company. The parliament of Canada, without a division, agreed to contribute \$1,000,000, in cash towards the construction of that bridge. Again I am speaking from memory, but my recollection is that not a voice was raised in this House against the passing of the Act to give that company \$1,000,000. Yet to-day the hon. gentleman treats this company as a bankrupt, worthless concern and does everything within his power to condemn it and make it appear ridiculous in the eyes of the country.

This great enterprise was undertaken by these gentlemen in the city of Quebec from high-minded and patriotic motives. They desired to advance the interests of their city and of their province. They were men of high standing; some of them were men of large means, and surely it is not fair to treat these men as being animated by any other purpose than that of carrying on a great public work which was going to be a benefit to the city of Quebec, to the province of Quebec and to the Dominion at large. Before they began work they had the aid of the city of Quebec, they had their private capital, whatever it may have been, they had the aid which the government of the province of Quebec had given them and they had the grant of this government—\$1,000,000—out of which we have actually paid something less than \$400,000. I submit that this is an indication that this was not a worthless and bankrupt company. The company was a company of serious, high-minded men animated by the patriotic motive of doing something for the good of the city, the province of Quebec and the country at large. Like other companies they found that the obligations laid upon them were more than they were able to meet. They found that the enterprise was a costly one, as the work went on they found difficulty and they came to this government for further aid. The government agreed to come to their aid. My hon. friend (Mr. Barker) says that when we granted that guarantee it was the last thing that any sensible man would vote for. Every man in this House voted for it. The one member who has the right to qualify that statement is the hon. member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) who made a speech in which he questioned the wisdom of the course that the government was taking, but even he did not record his vote against it and the records of parliament show that this vote

was carried through this House without any division. I submit that it is not fair and decent treatment, after what has happened to come in at this eleventh hour and say: No sensible man would vote for it. If our foresight were as great as our hind sight, a great many things that we have done would be left undone. But when the government brought forward that scheme for guaranteeing the Quebec bridge bonds it was a scheme which, with the exception of a single hon. member, commended itself to the judgment of the House. The hon. gentleman says that it was rushed through the House. The records will show that there was no objection on the part of the hon. gentlemen opposite in point of time. The hon. gentleman did not ask that the matter be held over; it was a large and important question and they would have had the right to a reasonable delay, but the fact is that so far as the records show the hon. gentlemen conveyed the impression that they wanted to help the Quebec bridge and they allowed the matter to pass with only the little remonstrance that came from the hon. member for Jacques Cartier. We did not bring that guarantee before the House without some good reason. Long years ago estimates were made by competent railway men which went to show that the earning power of the bridge would probably be sufficient to pay the interest on its cost, and in later years we had further estimates made. The hon. gentleman has referred to Mr. Schreiber; Mr. Schreiber would not do this and Mr. Schreiber would not do that. Mr. Schreiber made a report—it was either made by Mr. Schreiber or was confirmed by him—to show the volume of traffic that would pass over that bridge and the effect of the report was that, taking the probable volume of traffic and making a fair and ordinary charge for every car which passed over the bridge, the interest on the cost of the undertaking would be earned and the government would be protected absolutely against loss. We had the reports of railway experts and either Mr. Schreiber made a report himself, or, at all events, it was made by the Railway Department of which he was the chief engineer.

The hon. gentleman said that no engineer would approve of these plans. If we were discussing this question with the proper information before us, if due notice had been given of a motion in this House, and if the papers had been brought down, we would be able to go into all the details of this matter, but in so far as I had any knowledge of the transaction in connection with the Quebec bridge nothing was ever done in reference to the engineering of the bridge that was not done with the full approval of the chief engineer of the Railway Department. My hon. friend has asked me: Was this or that plan approved by the Governor in Council. I could not tell him without