

speaking, the captain understood how to sail the pirate ship, but sometimes he had men on board who thought themselves better seamen than he, or thought themselves vested with more force of character. There was no bond of law and authority, only that of plunder. Looking across the House, it seems to me that there is there something like what used to be witnessed on board the pirate ship. You have the first mate from Quebec, and the second mate from Manitoba, and now they have hoisted the black flag. I think that originally the captain had better intentions because I can never believe that the captain of that ship yonder would have originally allowed his men to bear down upon this magnificent galleon; no galleon that ever went out of Cadiz could compare with it in wealth.

What I would like to see, Sir, and what I hope to see is enough of public spirit in this country to send out a frigate or ship of war, like the rescuer of other days, floating an English flag, which will bear down upon the pirate ship, take her and her prize, and lead both safely to English justice, so that the pirates may be sent where they ought to be, which certainly would not be a place from which they could rule a country.

Mr. LEMIEUX. (Translation.) Mr. Speaker, at this late stage of the debate, I do not rise to participate at any great length in the discussion of the important measure placed before Parliament, and which has been so thoroughly threshed out on the floor of this House; but, as one of the representatives of one of the great eastern provinces, I feel it my duty, under the circumstances, when the best interests of the country are at stake, to give expression to my views, with no faltering voice. And at the very outset, Sir, I may say that if there is a fact upon which there exists a perfect consensus of opinion in this House, it is the absolute necessity of providing the earliest possible means of railway communication with the extensive gold fields of the Yukon region; and on that policy, Sir, I do not think there is a single dissentient voice in this House. I am free to say here that it would be a suicidal policy to neglect adopting every measure necessary not only to facilitate the access of the Canadian territory to those who are going to the Yukon, but also to put down in a prompt and efficacious manner the troubles and disorders which are of so frequent occurrence in mining districts. Should we not be lacking in public spirit ourselves were we to surrender with wantonness, by a policy of inaction, and allow to be diverted from us the immense trade to which the discovery of these gold fields will undoubtedly give a fresh impetus? Within a few days of the opening of Parliament it was stated in the public prints by pessimists that Parliament had been dethroned and had abdicated its powers, or rather that the Government had trampled

under foot the franchises and privileges of Parliament, and why? Because the Mann-Mackenzie contract had been signed without our being consulted on the matter. Sir, if I read aright what is stated on the matter by writers on parliamentary government, I hold that the Government is simply a committee of this House, to which we delegate our powers. Now, the Government have thought it fit to agree to the proposals made to them by Mann & Mackenzie, on grounds to which I shall refer later on. Who can blame them for that? To believe that men of such high standing as the members of the Cabinet would deliberately sanction a corrupt bargain, is the height of absurdity. That the Government, consisting of honest men, should have considered it their duty, and a matter of urgency to agree to the proposals made to them, is no such extraordinary departure. Under such circumstances, when thousands of gold-seekers are preparing to wend their way into the Yukon region, what useful purpose, I ask, would an executive council serve, did they hesitate to assume the responsibility of a similar action, and prepare a measure like the Bill under discussion? But, Sir, at all events, the contract entered into by the Government, must be sanctioned by this House. The charges levelled against the Government, before the opening of the session, are now out of place. The people of this country now know that their representatives are free either to endorse or to reject this measure, according as they deem it favourable or contrary to the best interests of the country.

Previous to entering into the discussion of the contract on its merits, allow me, Sir, to offer a view of the matter which is quite personal. It is an opinion which may be disputed, but, I am sure it will command the respect even of those hon. gentlemen who do not subscribe to it. Upon an occasion like this, I cannot forget that the very men who opened up those immense territories of the North-west to civilization, were fellow-countrymen of mine from the province of Quebec. It was from the province of Quebec that went forth the missionaries, the trappers of the Hudson Bay Company, the chief factors of the North-west Company, and the voyageurs of old who were the first to venture across the prairies and to pitch their tents on the coast of the Pacific Ocean. Later on, among the hardy adventurers and explorers who wended their way into the Yukon region, are to be found again compatriots of mine, and if you look over the map of that country, you will find many French names of places such as Juneau, Labarge, Mercier, Ladue, which bear testimony to this fact. The measure now before the House, although it assumes a purely commercial form, aiming at connecting those northern territories with the rest of the country, is also, in my opinion, an official consecration of the pluck and heroism dis-