

of Justice has overlooked. By the course that the government propose to follow, instead of the matter being left in the hands of the commission, it is left in the hands of the government. The Corrupt Practices Act contains provisions that the Supply Bill will not have. The provisions of the Supply Bill must be carried out by officers of this government; they must be put in force in accordance with the form and ceremonies of the Auditor General's office as in connection with all government expenditure. But, in the case of the Corrupt Practices Act, as pointed out by Mr. Blake, the court has statutory authority over all the procedure, including the payment of witnesses and paying for assistants in the way of witnesses. The Minister of Railways and Canals suggested that parliament would vote an amount that could be resorted to. No one suggested—certainly the leader of the opposition did not—that parliament would prorogue without making full provision for all expenses. The point is that in England and Canada this ample power for obtaining evidence was handed over to the commission. The First Minister says: We want to leave so much for the commission; we do not want to interfere. Why not, then, give them such power as such commissions usually have in the case of inquiries into corrupt practices, and not put the commissioners in the position of making requisitions to the government for the amount voted in supply, the government taking the responsibility, as would be necessary under the Supply Bill, as to how this money was to be expended. Then the Minister of Railways and Canals was driven to some extraordinary statements respecting the observations of the leader of the opposition as to counsel. Now the Prime Minister will, I am sure, do the leader of the opposition the justice to say that he never in the slightest manner questioned the propriety of naming Queen's counsel on the commission. The leader of the opposition, in his reference to Queen's counsel, had simply in view as he expressed it, another argument on another point, and that was that the government was not consistently following the idea suggested by the Prime Minister of not controlling this commission in any way; that because it named Queen's counsel it had undertaken to limit the authority of the judges, it would not give them in that regard unlimited discretion; and if they had limited their discretion, why did the government refuse his suggestion that a counsel named by the leader of the government on one side, and another named by the leader of the opposition on the other side should be employed by the commission? The Minister of Railways and Canals was so desperately driven that he misrepresents entirely the views of the opposition by saying that we had objected to Queen's counsel being employed. No one ever made such an absurd suggestion, and no one but the Minister of

Railways and Canals ever thought that any one could make it.

Then in regard to the use of evidence. Again the extraordinary confession is made that though the government had a parliamentary majority on the Privileges and Elections Committee when the Huron and Brockville elections cases were before them, and though they all entertained the strongest views in regard to the character of the evidence that should be produced there, they were afraid to advocate or carry out those views, and they bowed to public opinion; because the opposition press had lashed on public opinion and shown the cowardice of the government, therefore, the government did what was entirely wrong. But now, defying public opinion altogether, they propose to resort to this commission, and relying on the law as laid down in the Haldimand case, if it be applicable, that the judges, as buffers between them and the public, will prevent this evidence being given, the leader of the opposition contended that whatever the law might be in the courts this thorough probing, this full investigation, could not be made unless that evidence be given. Parliament undoubtedly has control and discretion to receive any evidence it pleases. But there is to be a nice question, if you please. This is shoved from the Election Committee of this House and given to a Royal Commission because of one reason only that is given here—it partakes of a partisan character. But we find in this debate that there are other reasons for referring it to that commission, and that commission is to be cribbed, cabined and confined, that commission is to be restricted, it is to be shorn of its powers in other respects, and instead of a wide tribunal, there is to be the narrowest possible tribunal, subject to all the technical rules of evidence. Is that what the public wish? Has any part of the public for a moment suggested or inferred that when this matter was relegated from a partisan tribunal to a non-partisan tribunal, there would not be given to that non-partisan tribunal the fullest powers that our own committee had for the ascertainment of the truth in regard to these charges? I think the public will be shocked when they find that not only is there to be a narrowing down of the scope of the inquiry, a limitation of the powers of that investigating tribunal as compared with our own, a deprivation of those advantages, and aids, and assistance which are usually given to tribunals appointed for the investigation of corrupt practices, but there is a suggestion from the Treasury benches that they are not to probe into this matter at all by means of the advantages of examining persons as to how they voted in connection with charges of switching ballots, and so forth.

Then the other objection mentioned by the Minister of Railways and Canals was