

There are suspicious circumstances, things were done by Mrs. Clapp that should not have occurred, but anyone who heard her evidence must admit that it was given in a plain, straightforward manner. I am sure that every lawyer in this House who heard her will confirm what I say. From the evidence, I shall give my vote against the Bill.

HON. MR. DICKEY—I can well imagine that those who have not heard the evidence will be placed at a great disadvantage in considering the case, so much depends upon the manner in which the evidence was given and the collateral circumstances connected with the testimony which must be unknown to all who were not in the committee room when the case was under consideration. In this connection, I may be permitted to offer a suggestion which I have made before, under similar circumstances. This is a case of very great difficulty, involving the most conflicting circumstances, and I think I could not do better than repeat the suggestion—that is that the Government should establish a court for the consideration of these cases, thus relieving gentlemen who have had the opportunity of hearing the evidence but who are called upon to consider such cases, from the duty of deciding upon them. This is a case involving contradictions such as, in my somewhat limited experience, I have never encountered in any similar case of divorce. It is well known that in the Maritime Provinces there are divorce courts, and so far as my recollection carries me, we have never had a single divorce case from those Provinces. Such matters are settled quietly without the display which necessarily accompanies them in this House. I assume that every member who represents the Province of Quebec in the Senate is perfectly satisfied with the law as it stands now, which gives a limited jurisdiction to the courts of that Province to try these cases under certain circumstances. Practically, therefore, all the cases come from the single Province of Ontario. I really do not see, without creating a divorce court for the Dominion, why a court for the trial of such cases is not established in the Province of Ontario. Such a court might be established by the legislature of that Province, but it is my duty to remind the House that this Parliament has the power of creating a court for

the trial of cases arising on any subject which is within its view. By section 101 of the British North America Act, there is an express provision that this Parliament has the power to create a court for the purpose of trying any cases which properly come within the purview of the powers of this Parliament, and this is one of them. I do not wish to enlarge on the subject, but I throw out the suggestion for the consideration of the leader of the Government. This case, unfortunately, is a most embarrassing one—it is full of difficulties. Having had the misfortune to be obliged to be present and hear the whole of these nauseous details, and hear as well the arguments of counsel on both sides, I come to the consideration of the case with a full sense of the difficulties that present themselves to one on the very threshold. That this is the case, is certainly not my fault, or the fault of members of this House, or of the hon. gentleman who asks them to pass on it, and who tells us, in a manner that is creditable to his head and his heart, that he has not yet made up his mind on it. I hope we will all come to the consideration of the case with a grave sense of the responsibility which rests upon us under the circumstances. If we find any difficulty in coming to a judgment in this case, it certainly is not our fault. Having adverted to my hon. friend, the promoter of the Bill, I am bound to say one word as to an opinion that he has read, which he carefully guards himself against adopting by stating to the House that it is not his opinion that he is reading, but the opinion of the solicitor for one of these parties. I am not aware whether my hon. friend, who opposes this motion, has provided himself with equal ammunition in the shape of a legal opinion from the other side, but perhaps we can dispose of this matter without reference to those opinions. It is unfortunate, in that opinion which my hon. friend has read, that it is stated as one strong fact in the case that the voice of a man was heard in the room where the parties were together in the village hotel at Palmerston. So far as my memory goes, there is nothing in the evidence to warrant any such assertion. So far as I can see there is nothing in the printed evidence to shew it, because there were three persons who spoke of what took place in that room, one, at page 13, in the evidence young McKenzie, who