

Mr. KIRK. I made no such statement as that it should not pass. What I said was: That I was willing to sit to October, as I am.

Mr. FOSTER. We will give the hon. gentleman all the length of rope that explanation will afford him. Then we had the member for one of the Wellingtons, who stated explicitly—I hope I shall not be contradicted this time—

Some hon. MEMBERS. He is not here.

Mr. FOSTER. I took his words down—that he did not want to take up the time of the House, but he was simply acting under the directions of his leaders. During his repeated speeches he confessed that he was acting simply according to the directions of his leaders. You may put these things together; what the party organs say, what you hear in the streets and corridors, and what is stated in the House, and the actions of the last two weeks, and I say members cannot help feeling that the Opposition is declaring: We will not let you carry measures which you consider to be for the benefit of the country; we will stay here all summer, in order that you shall not do it. And I say that that is not the proper spirit for a minority, or even for a majority, to take in this House. So much for that question.

It is stated that this is an interference with provincial rights. If hon. gentlemen think so they have a perfect right to hold that opinion. There is not one, however, who gets up in his place, and holds the opinion that it is unconstitutional for this measure to pass, and therefore that Parliament is attempting to pass anything outside of its jurisdiction. Put these two points together: The party which holds the confidence of the people, if there be any proof of the confidence of the people being held, is the party sent here for five years to carry out the legislation of this country and conduct the administration of affairs; it, in its matured judgment, comes to the conclusion to pass a measure which is within its own constitutional right, without cavil or doubt, and which measure seems to be somewhat distasteful to certain members of the Opposition, at the time in a minority. Now, on that ground they have thrown out the challenge and the threat that they will keep this Parliament in session all summer through, if necessary, and that legislation which is obnoxious to them shall not pass. Now, I have every respect for each man's individual opinion, and I will have every possible respect for the opinion of men in the aggregate occupying seats on the Opposition benches, but I say that they ought not to believe that their own opinion is so infallible, that they are so much in the right, that they can take the responsibility of blocking what the men who hold the confidence of the country think is necessary and expedient legislation; and that after they have fully discussed it, after they have made their voices heard, after they have made their views and wishes known, then they should allow the responsible party in the House to take the responsibility of passing that measure, and let them and the people reckon with this responsible party when they go to the polls. Now, it seems to me that there is no other proper way in which this can be done, and when we get obstructive tactics by a minority, no matter of what political stripe, when these tactics hold out week after week, in the attempt to defeat the will of the people, as expressed by their chosen representatives, I say that is subversive of all principles of responsible government, and a thing which cannot be tolerated in this Dominion; and in the face of that threat, openly made, repeated day after day in this House, I say, as one member on this side, I am willing to sit here all summer and all winter, too, if it be necessary. Now, the next hon. gentleman rising on that side will say I have threatened—that I have made a threat to the Opposition. I have made just what I have made, and hon. gentlemen can make out of it whatever their fertile imaginations choose to prompt them to make out of it. I have simply stated my reasons

Mr. FOSTER.

for the right of this Bill, and its passage through the House—my reasons, in a constitutional point of view, and in those other points of view to which I have alluded, and I say, with those views to back me, that these constitutional principles shall not be violated by a minority which proposes, by sheer force, to prevent legislation which those having the confidence of the people think it expedient to pass.

Now, the whole brunt of the discussion so far has been upon two questions—the question of woman suffrage and the question of the enfranchisement of Indians. It is with reference to the woman suffrage that I shall take up just a moment, and by a single sentence express my opinion with reference to it.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order, order.

Mr. FOSTER. You say the Indians ought not to be enfranchised, and you make a comparison between the Indians whom you say this Bill will enfranchise and the gentle and sweet women of our country; you say it is an outrage that the Indians should be enfranchised and that the women should not. Now, I hold as strongly as hon. gentlemen opposite can, and just as honestly as hon. gentlemen opposite do—not more honestly; I do not say that—just as honestly as my hon. friend from Bothwell (Mr. Mills), and his honest countenance tells me that he holds it honestly—I say I hold as honestly as he does in favor of the complete enfranchisement of women, married, single or widows, who have an equal property qualification with men, when once you fix the condition of a franchise by a property qualification. But I say, too, that I believe in enfranchising the Indian. I believe that the Indian who earns a living for himself, the Indian who has real property, who occupies a home, who has a salary or income, who is looking forward to that greatest boon which men in a civilized country can claim, and which men in a savage country can aspire to—the boon of full and perfect citizenship—I say I could not, in justice to history and my own convictions, deny the right of the franchise to that man. Hon. gentlemen opposite get up and they thunder away for hours and hours, in a futile attempt to mislead the country into the thought that every savage Indian in the Great North-West is, forsooth, to be enfranchised, and made a voter under this Bill; that Pie-a-pot, and Pat-him-on-the-back, and those other Indians, with whose names hon. gentlemen are suspiciously familiar, shall have votes. One hon. gentleman even let his fancy—no, not his fancy, but some peculiar and hitherto abstruse faculty, which has lain dormant in his mind since 1882—he suddenly let it loose this afternoon and, in most chaste, eloquent and courteous words, he devoted about an hour of his talk to the leader of the Government, as to how fitting he would be to become the representative of those wild hordes of Indians in the North-West. Now, that may have been very clever, from the hon. gentleman's standpoint; very a *propos* from the peculiar cast of ability which he possesses; very much in the line of the hon. gentleman's antecedents, and of his constitutional qualities of mind; but, at the same time, it was not just in the best of taste, in a parliamentary debate, to indulge in any such remarks or make any such comparison. That hon. gentleman knew, and if he did not, I pity the lack of intelligence which could not know—he knew as well as that he is sitting there that it is not the intention nor is it in the power of this Bill to enfranchise the wild hordes of savage Indians all over the Dominion, whom they have been talking about. But when there is an Indian who holds real estate, as he must in his own right—

Some hon. MEMBERS. No, no.

Mr. FOSTER. Who holds real estate, as he must, or who is a tenant—