

on the Table. The report of the battle of Fish Creek is almost textually what I have read in the House, and what has appeared in the papers.

Mr. CHARLTON. The returns asked for with reference to timber licenses granted within the disputed territory of the North-West and in British Columbia have not yet come down, though I have asked for them repeatedly.

Mr. MITCHELL. I have been induced to rise, from the spirit of enquiry that seems to pervade this House, simply to ask the right hon. the leader of the Government whether the Grand Trunk Railway Company have yet given him the returns ordered by this House, or whether they still treat the Order of the House with contempt, and if the latter be the case, whether the Government intend to let the Session close without insisting on the company paying that respect to the Order of the House to which the House is entitled.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I cannot give the hon. gentleman any more information than I gave him when he last made the enquiry.

Mr. MITCHELL. That was not much.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I can only assure the hon. gentleman the step the Government will take is under the gravest consideration.

Mr. WELDON. Can the hon. gentleman inform us when the fisheries correspondence will be brought down?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I cannot bring it down until His Excellency returns. He will be here in a few days.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.

Mr. ORTON. I desire to make a few remarks on a question of privilege. The *News Record*, an Opposition organ printed in my county, thus refers to me:

"DR. ORTON SHIRKS THE VOTE.

"It will be seen by the yeas and nays, published elsewhere in this paper, that the name of the member for Centre Wellington does not appear as voting either for or against the proposition to permit wine and beer to be sold in counties that may hereafter adopt the Scott Act. In this instance the doctor evidently thought discretion the better part of valor. Hence, after taking part in the debate, when the critical moment arrived, he ignominiously shirked the vote. And in doing so we believe that Dr. Orton made a grave mistake. Because the issue is one of practical importance to his constituents, and therefore he ought to have had the courage and manliness to come squarely out and show what side he is on. But whatever view Dr. Orton may take of the question, he ought to have had the moral courage to stand his ground and vote as his judgment dictated. It was unmanly to dodge out of the House and shirk the vote. School boys are punished for playing truant; and members of Parliament being older and in positions of greater responsibility are still less excusable when at a critical juncture they desert their post and step aside from the path of duty. The doctor's best friends and warmest political supporters feel that he did wrong in dodging the vote on the beer and wine clause."

Now, it is a well known fact that I have very pronounced opinions upon this question. And not only have I expressed them in this House but also in my county previous to my election. My views are entirely known to my constituents. So far from shirking the vote, I wish to state here that though I was called away by telegraph to attend the Assize Court in Toronto, where I had a case, had I thought my vote would be counted or would not be paired, I would have run the risk of losing a considerable sum of money rather than have shirked expressing, by my vote, my opinion on an Act which I have always considered unjust in its operation, and therefore dishonest and utterly worthless as a temperance measure. I desire to state that on that occasion I requested the hon. member for Lunenburg (Mr. Kaulbach) to pair with me. He agreed to pair with me, and I spoke to the whip on our side, the hon. member for East Toronto (Mr. Small), and I think the fact of my being

Mr. CARON.

paired can also be testified to by the hon. the Deputy Speaker. The reason why the hon. member for Lunenburg voted on that occasion, I do not know. He has never explained to me the reason, and as a matter of privilege, I have the right to demand that his vote be struck off or mine added to the opposite side.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN THE NORTH-WEST TERRITORY.

Mr. CARON moved the third reading of Bill (No. 141) respecting the administration of justice and other matters in the North-West Territory.

Mr. MILLS. I move that the Bill be not now read the third time, but that it be referred back to the committee with instructions to amend the same so as to relax the restrictions imposed on white settlers as to the possession of fire arms. I think this provision of the Bill is a very objectionable one. The constitutional rule is that it is one of the rights of a British subject to have fire arms in his possession; it is in fact one of the provisions of the declaration of rights. We see in the constitution of the United States when they were copying the fundamental privileges of British liberty, a provision that Congress shall not have power to deprive any citizen of the United States of his right to bear arms. This provision originated in a country that had its border settlements, that had its difficulties with the Indians, and so far were they from being disposed to adopt the rule which the Government propose to introduce here, a rule similar to that which has prevailed in the disturbed districts of Ireland, that they have found it all the more necessary to extend the provisions of the law in that particular, and to secure absolutely against even legislative interference the right of the citizen to have arms for the purpose of protecting himself. Sir, we appreciate in this country the principle of self-government. We admit that the great mass of our population are disposed to obey—and to uphold the law, and to maintain peace and order in so far as they have the power. It would be an extraordinary commentary upon our ability to maintain free institutions if it were held that the condition of the settlers in the more distant parts of the country was such that, instead of being a class who could be relied upon to uphold peace and good government, it was necessary to disarm them in the interests of peace and order. Now, I think if there is anyone class of the community who, more than another, require to retain this inestimable privilege of British freemen, it is that class of men who, denying themselves the ordinary advantages of living in an old settled community, go out into the distant territories of this Dominion to make new homes for themselves. No doubt we have in the North-West Territory a certain class of men who do not appreciate the principles of self-government, the Indians of the North-West, and they require, to a certain extent, at all events, to be under restraint and supervision. In ordinary civil matters they do not enjoy the full rights of citizens; you exercise a certain surveillance over them, and, in a large degree, you undertake to discharge for them the duties which white men discharge for themselves. Because they do not fully appreciate the privileges which belong to free men, you withhold from them the use of firearms of a particular class. I think that is a wise provision. You deal with them in that particular just as you regulated in times past the sale of intoxicants. But, Sir, the white population are in a wholly different position, and you say to these men who are living scattered over the prairies, that they shall not be entitled, as a matter of right, to retain fire arms in their possession, that they shall not have a right to defend their homes, and to protect themselves against the attacks, against the threats of the Indians. In fact, if we were to carry out the provisions of this Bill, we would, in a great measure invite attack on the white