

what the hon. member for Brant wanted him to do, namely, to have made the Indians free men, not under the control of the right hon. gentleman and his agents, they would have had votes in that constituency. But the right hon. gentleman refused to do what the hon. member for Brant asked. Here is what the hon. member for Brant said, in 1830, on the debate on the Indian Act:

"Then the Bill does not provide for the enfranchisement of the Indians. According to them the rights, responsibilities and privileges of citizens is, I think, the only solution of the Indian question, more especially the only solution which affects the more advanced tribes, on whose behalf and with respect to whose circumstances I am more particularly acquainted. Any change that has been made in the law is only in the direction of still more firmly fastening the shackles of tutelage upon them, a change tending to keep the Indians in their present condition. I speak on behalf of three thousand Indians, among whom six missionaries have been laboring for the past thirty years, and who have twelve public schools and an industrial institute. The solution of the Indian problem can only be found in wiping out the distinction which exists between the races, in giving the red man all the liberties and rights enjoyed by the white man, and entailing upon him all the responsibilities which attach to those rights and privileges."

The views expressed by the hon. member for Brant in 1830 are his views in 1885. The hon. gentleman who introduced into this House the Gerrymander Act of 1882, in order to defeat a number of members of this House, will not be slow to exercise the influence he possesses over those Indians in order to carry out the purposes of this Bill. Sir, in no language that would be parliamentary could I fitly express my indignation at this attempt to decapitate a number of the prominent gentlemen on this side of the House. My hon. friend from Bothwell (Mr. Mills), though elected by a majority of the people in his constituency, was deprived of his seat in this House during the first Session of this Parliament and a large portion of the second Session, owing to an alteration the Government made in the law so as to give them the appointment of the returning officer, and another hon. gentleman was sitting and voting here during that time in support of hon. gentlemen opposite. My hon. friend is now to have his head cut off through the operation of this Bill. The free-born British electors of the county of Bothwell may elect him, and no doubt they will; but the Indians of his constituency, many of whom can neither read or write, are to receive votes, and such of them as are under the control of the Superintendent-General are to be enabled to exclude my hon. friend from his seat in this House. I am amazed that any men could be found to stand up and support an attempt so gross to violate the rights and privileges of the free people of this country, and to hand those rights and privileges over to those who control the votes of persons who are not free. But the measure itself is only worse than the way in which it is attempted to be pushed through this House. Last Monday the hon. Prime Minister came into the House and declared that this Bill should be put through at the expense of all other public business. That was a declaration worthy of the patriotism which the hon. gentleman boasts of! Is this a measure demanded by the public interest? Have we not for 18 years existed peacefully in this Confederation without this measure? Has there been a demand from any section of the people for it? Is any public interest to be served by the passage of this measure? If public interest means the party interest of hon. gentlemen opposite, I can understand that there is. But there is no public interest at stake in connection with it; it is a party measure and a party measure only. It is a measure introduced for the purpose of preparing for the next general election. It is a measure intended to stifle if possible the public opinion which is now running strongly against hon. gentlemen opposite. And yet the hon. gentleman came down and said that all public business must be put aside until this measure is carried through! The interests of the country might suffer, the credit of the country might suffer, the Government might not have the money necessary to carry on the public affairs of the country; but all these considerations were

Mr. FLEMING.

to be set aside in order to have this measure pushed through in the interest of the party the hon. gentleman leads. On Thursday this House met, and is still in Session. The definition of the word "occupant" was under consideration until about six o'clock on that evening, when the definition of the word "person" came under consideration, and the hon. member for Bothwell moved the amendment that is still under discussion, proposing to limit the word "Indian" to the enfranchised Indian. After eight o'clock the hon. leader of the Opposition made an address to the House at considerable length in opposition to the Government's proposal; the hon. Prime Minister himself followed at some length; and at the hour of 10 o'clock what did we see? We saw hon. gentlemen opposite come into this Chamber with pillows, which they ostentatiously shook in our faces in order to show us that they had come here determined to sit us out, and to push this Bill through at unseasonable hours. Did we not see couches carried into various rooms of this House early on Thursday? Did we not see every indication that the Government intended that this prolonged session should take place before it did take place? And yet we are told that we are responsible for this long session—we who are not provided with all these luxuries, and who are so weak in numbers. It is too thin, and the country will tell them that it is too thin! Hon. gentlemen opposite provided themselves with all the comforts that they could command. They retired for refreshments from time to time; they brought bands of music into the building for two nights; they had their dances going on to keep up the amusement. We have no such enjoyments; we had no couches in the rooms of the building to which we could retire; we had no band of music at our command to enliven the small hours of the morning; and yet this small Opposition are occupying the same position that they did at six o'clock on Thursday, and not one step of progress has been made by hon. gentlemen opposite in their attempt to carry this Bill through the House. Sir, it ill becomes the hon. gentlemen on that side of the House to talk about obstruction—hon. gentlemen who came in here with their beds at 10 o'clock on Thursday night, for the purpose of trying to push the Bill through at such unreasonable hours. Sir, it was an attempt on their part to bully the Opposition, but an attempt which the free men on this side of the House resented with the indignation with which free men always resent an attempt upon their liberties.

Mr. WHITE (Hastings). Encore.

Mr. FLEMING. I am glad to see that hon. gentlemen are giving us some attention; perhaps we will yet be able to convince some of them of the iniquity of this measure. I do not suppose the hon. member for Hastings (Mr. White) will be subject to conversion, because he has an Indian reservation in his county.

Mr. WHITE. I was here before you, without it.

Mr. FLEMING. Yes, and by a mighty close squeeze.

Mr. WHITE. I will squeeze here when you will not be able.

Mr. FLEMING. The hon. gentleman has a band of Indians in his county—

Mr. WHITE. Yes, and a good one, too.—

Mr. FLEMING—subject to the control of the Prime Minister.

Mr. WHITE. They are as independent as you are, and as intelligent.

Mr. FLEMING. They are the wards of the Government. They are not free men in the sense that we are free men, nor have they the rights or the liabilities that white people have. They are subject to the control of the First Minis-