

Act of 1883. I am not a jurist, and I cannot discuss a question of that kind from a legal point of view: It is possible that the Privy Council may decide that the Federal Government has the right of granting licenses for the whole Dominion of Canada, but whether it has that right or not, I say that Government cannot grant licenses in all the Provinces without infringing upon their privileges, if they do not infringe upon their actual rights. The same is true about the Franchise Bill. Whether the Government have a right or not to pass this law, I say that if they do not encroach upon provincial rights they encroach upon private rights, and for us French Canadians who are a minority in the Dominion, there is no practical difference between our encroachment upon our privileges or an encroachment upon our rights. The basis of Confederation is the representation by Provinces. Each Province has a right to send a certain number of members here: Ontario 92, Quebec 65; each Province has its fixed number of representatives. Whether the Province of Quebec, Mr. Chairman, elects her members under one franchise or under the other, is perfectly immaterial. Whether the Province of Ontario elect her members by woman suffrage or by universal suffrage, or by any other kind of franchise, it is also quite immaterial to the representation of Canada. The members will be no less efficient, no less patriotic, and they will be no less anxious to promote the interest of the whole Dominion. Well, what we do ask is that each Province should have the right to elect its members of the Dominion Parliament in whatever manner it may deem proper. If in the Province of Ontario, there is nothing in the creed, in the ideas, in the aspirations of the population, which is adverse to universal suffrage or to woman suffrage, we do not want to deprive that Province of her rights and privileges, but we ask that the rights and the creed of the Province of Quebec shall be respected, and that woman suffrage or universal suffrage should not be forced upon us.

Mr. CHAIRMAN ruled that under cover of the motion that the Chairman do rise and report progress, which is equivalent to a motion to adjourn, the amendment proposed to the Bill alone could be discussed, not the whole Bill.

Mr. RINFRET. (Translation.) All I say is for the object of proving that we ought to have an adjournment, in order to take a rest and to be able to discuss the Bill more attentively. Indian suffrage is an encroachment on the privileges of free men, and of white men. It is a principle which is not acceptable; and if this suffrage, which is not based upon property but only on land which, in fact, do not belong to the Indians, is granted, I say it is an encroachment upon the rights and privileges of the civilised electors of the Dominion at large. I would like to know by virtue of what principle the present Bill has been prepared. It contains the most radical principles, such as woman suffrage and universal suffrage. On the other hand it contains the most reactionary ideas. For instance, is there anything more reactionary than Indian suffrage, more autocratic than the principle under which the preparation of the voters' lists is left in the hands of the Government?

Mr. CHAIRMAN. The hon. member must limit himself to the question before the Chair.

Mr. MULOCK. I contend that the same arguments are permissible on a motion that the Committee rise and report progress and ask leave to sit again as are admissible on a motion that the matter be referred to Committee in the first instance. When a discussion takes place on a motion to refer, the whole state of public business is allowed to be discussed. There is a wide difference between the latitude of debate allowed on the motion that the Speaker leave the Chair and on the motion simply that the Committee rise and report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Mr. RINFRET.

Mr. RINFRET. (Translation.) When I mentioned a while ago, the reactionary principles contained in this Bill, I indicated Indian suffrage in the first place. Indeed, it is not to the Indians that the right to vote is given; they are simply instruments in the hands of the Government officials; they are under the guardianship of the Government, and they could not, if left to themselves, exercise the right of suffrage, they have not the necessary intelligence to do so. I will conclude my remarks by saying that such a radical measure, a measure which contains such subversive and such reactionary principles should not be passed in this House, and I believe that the leader of the Government will, some day, have reason to repent for having passed that measure which will not do him as much good as he expects.

Mr. FISHER. I regret that hon. gentlemen opposite should still appear to think that they will wear us out in this debate. The question of physical endurance is one which might be applied as an argument to the stoical Indians, whom it is proposed to enfranchise, but not to intelligent electors. When we began this discussion in the early part of the week, hon. gentlemen opposite made use of an extraordinary species of argument, in order to meet our logical and carefully considered statements, and that was the argument of howling, shouting and roaring, the argument of drowning our voices with unearthly noises that came from the benches opposite. Within the last couple of days, however, that argument has been abandoned, in consequence, I believe, of strict orders given by the leaders. Having found that they could not howl us down, that the more they howled the more rest they gave us, they have resorted to the expedient of trying to weary us out by simple silence. But I do not think that will succeed any more than the first argument did. They accuse us throughout the land of obstructing the business of Parliament. But who are responsible for these prolonged sessions? I say they are responsible, responsible for the injury done to the health of hon. members of this House, who will suffer from these prolonged sessions. The Opposition in this House are merely doing their duty, in trying to direct the attention of the country to this measure; they are merely doing their duty, in trying to explain to the country the provisions of this measure. I contend that in consequence of the fact that in this country we have not, unfortunately, a public opinion sufficiently active to watch the proceedings of the Government as they require to be watched, the introduction of a measure of this kind requires extraordinary action on our part; it requires extraordinary action to weaken that public opinion to a due sense of what is going on. Unfortunately, in this country, the people seem to think that when, at a general election, they have entrusted a certain number of individuals with the control of their political destiny for so many years, they have nothing further to do till the next general election comes around. Now, in reference to conferring the franchise on Indians, I find that this Bill will create a great deal of confusion, when you come to decide what Indians are to have the right to vote. (The hon. gentleman quoted extracts from the Indian Act, and proceeded to show that location tickets did not give Indians any rights over the land, except as occupants; that they did not give the Indians any proprietorship in the land, and consequently they did not own property which might give them the right to vote.) Nevertheless, under this Bill they would be covered by the word "occupant," and would be accorded votes, although they are practically paupers living on the bounty of the Government.

Mr. JACKSON. I have just returned from the country, where I have spent a few days in my native county. While there I was interviewed very extensively in regard to the Franchise Bill. People were very anxious to ascertain what were its provisions. In trying to explain the Bill I told the people that one particular clause provided for the extension