

that construction of it I shall vote. Now, what are the actual unadorned facts of this case? I would like to be permitted to state them as I understand them, in order that if I am wrong I may be corrected; and if I am right, that they may produce the effect which they are entitled to. The first proposition of those who oppose this bill is, that this woman deserted her husband without sufficient cause. Now, what were the causes of her desertion? The cause of her desertion, shortly stated, was this: that she became slowly convinced by what she heard from her husband, principally, and from his conduct from time to time, that he was unfaithful to her. That is what she swears to, and she tells how she became convinced of this. In the first place from what he said himself, and by his constant absence at night, sometimes all night; and in the second place by the construction which he himself put on these absences. What did he say about that? I have just read one of the statements which the respondent made to his wife as she has proved, and she also swears to numerous other statements of similar purport; and I take what she has sworn to as proof, because it was easily to be contradicted if it was not true. It was not necessary that he should blacken his wife's character in order to state the truth. And I do not think he showed the nobleness of character attributed to him by one hon. gentleman, by abstaining from telling the truth. He told her from time to time that he was thoroughly bad; he told her that he was a thorough blackguard, and that he did not want to be anything else—that his way of life suited him.

Hon. Mr. Power—That was after she deserted him.

Hon. Mr. Abbott—He told her on that occasion also that she was quite right in leaving him. When she observed his debauched appearance, he said to her it was caused by wine and women. I judge from the evidence that she was of a retiring disposition. She expresses herself in that way. She is evidently unwilling to come out and state in the broad language of the streets what she found her husband did. She says it is too horrible for a woman to be made to talk about such things. A

gently nurtured woman, being asked in a room full of men what she had discovered, will not answer with the same candour that a woman of a different character will; such a woman as we had the other day before the committee, who had not the slightest difficulty in answering with perfect coolness, or in calling a spade a spade. The lady had a repugnance to going into details of her husband's conduct, but she told enough. Hon. gentlemen will see from the evidence, in too many cases for me to repeat, the number of times that it is perfectly plain he communicated to her, and she so understood him, that he was a thoroughly immoral man. And the justification which he admitted to her she had for leaving him, what could it have arisen from? She left because she knew, and he knew, that he was unfaithful to her, and he tells her she was perfectly justified in doing so. Now, is there any evidence to prove, apart from what he told her, that she was justified in that belief? Let us see what are the facts with regard to the brothel that he was met coming out of. Some hon. gentlemen who oppose this bill seem to think that no importance should be attached to that; that a man be met coming out of a brothel at 11 o'clock at night, with two or three other persons, and that it counts for nothing. I contend that that of itself, in the absence of any explanation, is sufficient for this House to decide upon, or for any court or jury to decide upon, that he was guilty of adultery. Hon. gentlemen talk of law books and citations. I can cite half-a-dozen cases in a moment, to prove that that is a fact upon which a court is entitled to infer adultery, if not satisfactorily explained. Now, how is this incident satisfactorily explained? A woman of the house is brought up as a witness.

Hon. Mr. Power—Brought by the prosecution.

Hon. Mr. Abbott—Not therefore necessarily a perjurer—I give him the benefit of all the evidence the woman gave. I do not assume that the witnesses were brought on the one side or the other to perjure themselves. It would have been easy for the respondent to have explained this circumstance of being in that house of ill-fame, if he had chosen to do so, but he did not. My hon.