

which was submitted to them for their consideration. I do not desire to enter into any examination of the evidence that is to be found in this rather bulky volume which has been placed on the desks of members of the House. I desire to say only that I read the evidence carefully and I cannot satisfy myself that any evidence has been disclosed to justify the House of Commons in passing this Bill. The most that has been alleged against the respondent is matter of inference which has been explained. No direct evidence is alleged against her of having committed the only offence for which we should be justified in passing this Bill. The suggestions which have been made by the witnesses for the petitioner have been completely set aside by the absolute denial of the respondent herself and of the other witnesses, persons whose names were associated with hers. That being the case, there is nothing for this House of Commons to do but to vote against the Bill.

Mr. J. A. CURRIE (North Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, when this Bill was before the House on a previous occasion I was strongly of the opinion, as I always have been, that it is not proper for the House to interfere with the rulings of the committee; that this House should not discuss these divorce cases or turn itself into a divorce court. After reading the evidence, however, I have reached a conclusion quite in line with that held by the majority of the legal gentlemen who have spoken. I wish the House to note this: there was a judicial separation between these parties before a judge, and this woman was granted alimony amounting, I think, to \$1,000 a year—an amount which was subsequently reduced to \$800 a year. This woman is entitled to that alimony now, and if she has been so wicked that it is necessary to have a divorce the facts in the matter should have been first brought before the judge who granted the alimony. The judge could have deprived her of the alimony, and the husband could then have come with clean hands to this House and to the Senate and said: "the courts have virtually thrown out this woman's case; I want the House now to give me a divorce." If the House passes this Bill it will be interfering with a decision of the courts—and I should be the last person in the House to say that the judge did wrong. If this husband has a case against the woman let him go and get the alimony cancelled. From a reading of the evidence it seems to me that the idea

on the part of the husband is to get the House to grant him a divorce so that he may avoid the payment of \$800 a year to his wife. This House, therefore, should proceed slowly and cautiously. The husband had recourse; he could have gone to the court, asked for a review of his case, and, upon the evidence that is now before us, requested that the alimony be struck off. He has not done that. He has passed by the courts; he comes to this House and wants us to give him something which he knows the judge would not give him. For that reason I intend to vote against the second reading of the Bill in this House. This man ought to have another year during which to pay alimony to this woman—and to see whether he can find greater grounds for divorce than those which he has submitted. I repeat that he should go before the judge who granted the alimony; if the judge decides that the woman is unworthy, he will strike off the alimony and the husband can come here with clean hands and ask for a divorce.

Mr. W. B. NORTHRUP (East Hastings): Mr. Speaker, I quite agree with a previous speaker who called attention to the pitiable state of the law in this country, when a body such as this has shown itself to be is asked to grant or to refuse a divorce. The hon. gentleman who has just spoken (Mr. J. A. Currie) is opposed to this divorce on certain grounds which he has stated. He is going to oppose this divorce and expects others who have listened to the chanting strains of his voice to vote in the same way upon the grounds that he has put forward. The only possible objection to be taken to the grounds that he put forward is that there is not the slightest shadow of foundation in fact, good, bad or indifferent, for practically anything that he said. The hon. gentleman said that the wife brought action for alimony; that the action was heard before a learned judge, and that alimony was granted. I hold in my hand the judgment of the court in the case which was tried, and I may point out that the good lady did not bring action for alimony; therefore the judge did not grant her alimony. My hon. friend wonders why the petitioner did not go to the judge and get his divorce from him. Perhaps no better reason could be given than the fact that the judge in an Ontario court has no more authority to grant a divorce than the door-keeper of the House of Commons has. The hon. gentleman speaking against the sec-