

his Cabinet and there taken care of by him. Have we not, then, a right to believe that the Prime Minister of Canada did this in order to induce other public men in Lower Canada to betray their Province for the reward which he offered? Was it not an inducement to Quebecers to help him in carrying on the work which he (Sir John) began in 1867, and which he only then failed to carry out because there was a Sir George Cartier in his way? But now that Sir George Cartier has gone, Sir John is working every day to bring about a Legislative Union, and what for? He knows very well that Confederation was given to Canada on account of Quebec, because, but for Confederation, Quebec would have adhered to the old order of things, and as she would have nothing else than Confederation, it was given to her. But how has Sir John been working since Sir George Cartier has gone? Why, in such a way as to centralize everything in the Dominion Government. Private bills are brought here every day, and exception is taken to them because they come properly within the sphere of the Local Legislatures. But the Government will have them passed, and it is the same with public measures. Last year we had the "Deceased Wife's Sister Bill," the "McCarthy Bill," and the "License Bill." A motion was made here that this last measure should not pass, and every good reason was given by the hon. leader of the Opposition for its not becoming law. I myself had a few words to say against it—I said, "the Provincial Legislatures have had the licensing power for 16 years. You are not sure that their laws on this subject are *ultra vires*;—why then pass any legislation in this Parliament until you are sure upon this point." I asked the hon. Minister of Justice whether he could say that we had the right to enact this legislation, or that it was within our jurisdiction, and he answered that he could not say so. If, then, that was the case, if we were not sure that we had the right to legislate on this subject, why could we not allow those who had exercised that right for 16 years to continue to do so for one year longer until a definite decision could be arrived at? But no, hon. gentlemen. As to this Bill, Sir John had a second great reason for pressing it: What was that reason? Oh, Sir John had to carry Ontario!

Mr. Mowat had been using this licensing power to maintain his Government in power and Sir John had to take it out of his hands. The Prime Minister of Canada had to use it to carry Ontario whatever might be the consequences. And so the Bill was passed and now there is a decision of the Privy Council not only casting doubt upon the Bill, but making it probable that it was *ultra vires*, and that the Provincial Legislatures in the course they had been pursuing for 16 years were right and that Sir John and Sir George who, at the time of confederation, gave to the Provinces their interpretation of the law, were right then, and that Sir John is now wrong.

Now, is not the Supreme Court of great help in matters of this kind? Happily its decisions are often reversed in England, but it seems as if its judges are ready to go in the direction shown to them by Sir John—that is, to break down the Confederation. If a bill is submitted to them, as has often been done by this House, their action plainly shows that they are ready to help Sir John in his work of centralization. It is not, then, surprising to us to see how fond the present Government are of that tribunal, although, in the opinion of the people at large it ought at once to be dispensed with. I might give many examples showing their readiness to assist in the work of breaking down Confederation in order that legislative union may be accomplished. I hope that the majority of the people may not see the thing in that light. It is not in the interest of any of the Provinces, except perhaps Ontario. But the other and smaller Provinces will be content with no other system than Confederation. If they did accept any other they would soon repent of it. Let them remember well what happened at the Union of Canada; but for the intervention of Providence, and such men as the Baldwins, Lafontaines and Morins, Lower Canada would then have been crushed.

I am happy, I may say, to see the hon. gentleman who so well occupies the Chair of this House holding that position, and I believe that no other gentleman in this Chamber is better fitted to preside over its deliberations, but I say that in the filling of that position a great injustice has been done the French members. It is