

legitimate purpose of convincing the country, because the reporters are ashamed to report what these hon. gentlemen are saying; and if they did, these hon. gentlemen would never be sent back to this House. I have taken down a few of the beautiful names which have been applied to us during the last few hours. We are called a "whipped-in-majority;" we "dare not open our mouths;" we are "an outrageous majority;" we are "dumb;" we belong to a class of animals that ought to be able to speak, but are not able to speak. We are said to be sitting here "stupid," almost as if we were inebriated with something. We are "ignorant;" we are a "partisan majority," supporting the Government; a "brute majority," who use brute force. Is that courteous language to be applied to an hon. member? are those the amenities of debate allowable in a Parliament? What has become of the rule which says that hon. members are not entitled to use offensive language towards one another? They have read the Indian Act four or five times, beginning with the leader of the Opposition, and followed by the hon. member for Norfolk, the hon. member for South Grey, the hon. member for Brant; and the report of the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs has been treated in the same way. We have had the history of the Indians, almost from the time of Christopher Columbus, down to the present day. We have not only had their history, but their physiological construction, and the peculiarities of their nature—in fact, anything and everything, whether relevant or irrelevant to this question, has been made to do duty in place of argument. One of their organs says to-night that if the Government are going to force through this Bill—what any Government would do, with a majority at its back, as they are responsible for the legislation they carry out—they are prepared to sit here all summer and debate it. We are discussing one clause of a measure such as has been passed time after time, with one-hundredth part of this debate. I say the Bill in the Toronto Legislature passed through with one-hundredth part of the discussion which has been taken up on this one paragraph. It took only part of two days, and still it embodied—

An hon. MEMBER. Read it.

Mr. SPROULE. An hon. gentleman says read it, but I am not so fond of reading as they are, and I would sooner use the time by stating what is relevant to the subject, and not waste the time of the House in discussion which is merely intended for obstruction. They have legislated on the Indian question, and the franchise question, and have gone over the whole ground, without any of that factitious opposition which we are experiencing from their hands this last week. I say that the Government are only doing what any Government is entitled and expected to do, that is, to legislate in the interests of the country. The British North American Act gives them the right to pass this law; it was held by the fathers of Confederation that it was right for this Parliament to pass such a law, and why then should they not do it? No exception is taken to our constitutional power to pass such a law, but because it is offensive in some respects to the feelings of hon. gentlemen, because it does not fall in with their views of what is right and wrong, they have adopted these obstructive tactics. Now, if the obstruction was confined to this Bill alone I could hold them excusable in some degree, but we had it before. We had it in the Civil Service Act; we had it in the Bill of the hon. the Minister of Agriculture, with reference to the infectious diseases of animals, and upon every important Bill during the last three or four weeks of this Session. The hon. member for Grey (Mr. Landerkin) said to-day that the Government passed through three months of the Session, and what was left as a record of their work? He says the Government only passed through eleven Bills in those three months. Well, I have looked at the *Canada*

*Gazette*, and I find that thirty-nine Bills were passed, so that he was not giving a fair exposition of what work the House has done. Another hon. member said that we wasted four weeks of the Session, but I can tell him that there are 450 pages of *Hansard* largely taken up by speeches of Opposition members, representing those first four weeks of the Session. The Finance Minister, in his Budget Speech, spoke about four pages every hour, and if you take that average, it shows that there were at least 112 hours of solid debate in this House, and yet he says that we did nothing; that we came here and had prayers read, and then adjourned. Now, if this sort of thing is to continue longer I can only say that, in my opinion, the Canadian Parliament will become a farce, and that we will be doing—not what our constituents sent us here to do, but we will be deliberately squandering the public money. I hope that hon. gentlemen will see that the child's play, the disgraceful scenes, and the senseless obstruction, which have been going on, will come to a close at an early hour, and that we will go to work and do the business which the people sent us here to perform.

Mr. EDGAR. At last the long and sullen silence of the Government ranks has been broken. For some inscrutable reason the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) has been put up to answer the arguments that have been advanced against this Bill. We have heard no better arguments from the other side in favor of this Bill than we have heard from the hon. member; and we have heard no stronger argument in their press than he has given us. Let any hon. gentleman examine the Conservative press in this country, and do they find one line in defence of this proposition to enfranchise the Indians of this country? Neither the Government supporters in the House nor their organs in the country have attempted to defend it. We have the hon. gentleman getting up here now and, with the air of a turkey-cock, lecturing the members on this side of the House on their manners, if you please; on their want of education—educated in schools fit for fish-wives, he said.

Mr. SPROULE. I did not say that; I said their conduct would be a disgrace outside the fish market.

Mr. EDGAR. I noticed, during his speech, that he spoke of the base and malignant insinuations of the Opposition; he used the word "malignant" six times in lecturing us. It is clear that since the beginning of this debate somebody has been lecturing the Government supporters on their manners; because two days ago we could hardly be heard on account of the din, the noise, the roaring, the shouting, the singing, the slamming of desks, the hooting and howling of the other side of the House. The hon. gentleman asks, what is Parliament for? That is what we want to know. I tell him that Parliament is not merely to register the decrees of the Government without discussion. Parliament is not called together to keep the present majority always the majority, to keep the present Executive always the Executive, as is proposed by this Bill. If there ever was a revolutionary measure introduced into any Parliament it is this one. The idea that by legislation the Government of the day should undertake to retain the power for all time to come! Sir, I object to a revolutionary measure of this kind, during a great crisis, when this country is struggling to crush out a formidable rebellion. We are fond of looking to England for precedents, and I would like to know what precedent there is, when the English Government had brought in an important Reform Bill, when the country was in the midst of a foreign war, or in the midst of disturbance of any kind. And yet there never was in the English Parliament a measure introduced of so sweeping a character as this one. We have had four general elections since 1867, and there seems to have been no necessity for this Bill before. It has been put off until the end of the Session, and until the country is in the midst of a rebellion. Have we nothing to do in