

eral counties of New Brunswick had been appointed, we would have had no transactions like this, where a partisan officer, appointed by the Dominion Government, deliberately returned the man having a minority of votes on a technicality which has no foundation in justice or in facts. Sir, I have looked with some little care over this Act. I find that the law requires that \$200 shall be paid—for what?—paid as an assurance of the good faith of the candidate, in order to prevent persons from coming forward merely for the purpose of blocking legitimate and proper candidates who might come forward for these constituencies. That was the sole purpose of the deposit, to show that the man coming forward and being nominated was put in nomination in good faith to receive the votes of the people, and to prevent the blackmailing of *bona fide* candidates. In this case the money was paid. They claim it was not paid by the legal agent, or by the candidate himself. But he was recognised as the candidate, and the money was accepted by the returning officer, a receipt was given for that money, and Mr. King was sent forth to the country as one of the persons who was soliciting the suffrages of the people, and that fact alone forecloses, in my opinion, the right of any man to come in and say that Mr. King should be kept out of his seat on the alleged technicality. The fact is, that the returning officer recognised Mr. King as a candidate in the county, and the constituents recognised him by giving him a majority of the votes. I hope, by their votes, that the members of this House will see that justice is done to the people of that constituency, and I am encouraged to expect that from the fact that the hon. member for Essex (Mr. Patterson), though a strong supporter of the Administration has yet the courage and honesty to come out and declare, no matter what his party proclivities, no matter how strong his fealty to his chief, no matter how strong his partisanship might be, he declined to be party to a fraud, as I declare this to be, on the people of Queen's county. I will not, at this time of the debate, enter into any of the details about this subject, because the House is tired of them, but I rose for the purpose of giving expression to my opinion as to the transaction itself. There are countries, and not very far removed from us, possessing free representative institutions, where, if such a transaction had taken place, the men that perpetrated it and the party—who might be the creature of the Government that retained him in office in defiance of justice, honesty and right, in place of receiving commendation and support—would be treated to a coat of tar and feathers. That is about the fitting remedy for some of those men. I am surprised that the Government of the day should countenance this transaction. I have been disappointed in the Minister of Justice, because he did not come out at once and say that this is a transaction that cannot be justified either by the principles of right and honor—and I doubt if it can be justified by law—and it would have been much more honorable if hon. gentlemen who occupy the Treasury benches, instead of attempting to defend the corrupt act of a corrupt partisan officer, appointed by themselves, had at once come down and said that Mr. King has received the majority of votes of the electors of the Electoral District of Queen's, N.B., and is entitled to the seat, and the gentleman who occupies it has no right to it, and the House shall at once deal with the case. What is the object of sending it to a committee? Is there a particle of evidence wanting in the papers laid before us? Does not the return show that Mr. King obtained a majority of votes, that he deposited the necessary money, that his name was placed upon the candidates' list, that he was voted for in opposition to the sitting member? Then what else is wanted to enable the House to decide, and why is it sought to send the case to a committee? I will state the reason: The Government want to place a buffer between themselves and public opinion. They want some one on whom to cast the blame, and with a strong

majority in this House, and with a majority on the Committee of Privileges and Elections they will be able, if they are able to get a majority on the committee who possess partisanship above their ideas of what is pure, honest and just, to obtain a report that will confirm Mr. Baird in his seat, and the Government will at the same time be relieved of the responsibility. I hope the House will not shoulder the responsibility for the Government. I trust the House will say that here is a case completely proved, that we have a right to deal with it; that there are no matters to enquire into, and that it comes before the House to be dealt with; and, such being the case, there is no reason to send it to a committee. The House should take the responsibility of saying whether Mr. King or Mr. Baird has the majority of votes and is entitled to the seat. That is the simple question. I will not enter into the legal quibbles and technicalities by which hon. gentlemen opposite endeavor to accomplish their purposes and seat a gentleman whom they support, instead of the man whom the people want. It is the duty of the House to deal with the question directly. Let hon. members ask themselves: Has Mr. King a majority of votes? If so, seat him; if not, let Mr. Baird be confirmed in his seat. With these few remarks I have much pleasure in supporting the motion of the hon. member for St. John (Mr. Skinner).

Mr. SUTHERLAND. When I first noticed the question under discussion on the paper it appeared to me that an officer of the Crown had been guilty of gross misconduct. I have learned with a great deal of interest, from the long speeches which some eminent lawyers on both sides of the House have delivered, that the points of law are so fine they have been unable to find them themselves. There are, in truth, no points of law involved in this case, and we have the facts before us contained in the papers laid on the Table. I agree with the hon. gentleman who last spoke, that the returning officer has been guilty of the most outrageous act of misconduct, whether through error or wilfully I am not prepared to say; but that we are in possession of all the facts, all will admit. I am able to say, as a layman, that although I have sat here for a number of years and heard many questions discussed I do not think I have ever heard a subject brought before the attention of members on which there was not at least an opportunity for able lawyers, by using special pleadings, such as we have had examples of to-night, to throw some mist over the question and enable members to have difference of opinion. But the facts are so few and simple in this particular case that any member of the House, any true Canadian, wishing to preserve the dignity, honor and position of this House, or even of the members of Parliament themselves, could entertain but one opinion. With respect to the propriety of sending the case to the Committee on Elections, it is said that the House has no right to deal with it; but I hold that if this House has the right to send it to a committee, it has a right itself to deal with it. Not being a lawyer, I cannot understand the matter in any other way. The opinion will spread among the people on both sides of politics, and extend to the world at large, that members of this Parliament are not able to express an honest and candid opinion when a simple matter arises that the most ordinary mind can understand. It places the members of this House in a most unfortunate position when it is found that partisanship runs so high that a member cannot give an honest expression of opinion on the most simple matter coming before the House. I regret that such is the case, although I was glad to know, after hearing the long speeches of many able lawyers, that there was one legal gentleman who agreed with me in the opinion that long speeches were made for the purpose, not of obtaining a fair and just decision, but of causing confusion, and with all the facts before him he declared that the returning officer had been guilty of the most outrageous conduct, and the first opportunity should be taken by the House to place the matter in a right position.