

the part of our legislators, who, without being aware of it, vote year after year amounts which burden the Budget to a considerable extent. Now the Supreme Court of Canada absorbs annually about \$50,000 of the Budget of the Dominion, and I do not, Mr. Speaker, think that we require it at present. What is the need of this Supreme Court, which costs so considerable an amount, and which does not give satisfaction to the Canadian people? Why has there been such a hurry to establish this tribunal, when a short time before a Ministry thought it unnecessary to introduce a Bill instituting the Supreme Court? I am of opinion that the creation of this Court took public opinion by surprise, that it was a surprise for the body of electors, that the Supreme Court was established to meet party views, and rather as a method of patronage than to meet the wants of the people. At the time that Court was established, we could have dispensed with it. Up to that time, the affairs of the country had been well administered; the Acts of the Local Legislatures were controlled by the Federal Executive, and the few questions in dispute, now submitted to the Supreme Court, could be decided by the ordinary tribunals of the country. I wonder also why expenditure should be incurred to keep the Supreme Court, when we can appeal to a tribunal which does not cost Canada anything. I refer to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in England. We have there at our disposal a Supreme Court of Appeal, which does not cost us anything, whose decisions have ever been accepted and have been ever entitled to respectful consideration. Nothing prevents us from taking thither the cases decided by our tribunals, if their decisions do not give us satisfaction. The contending parties alone have to pay for this, not the people. Well, as that Court exists, and as I think it will always be in existence, I do not see what objection there is in abolishing the Supreme Court, and allowing things to be as they were before. Let contending parties, who are dissatisfied with the judgment of our Courts, and who wish for a new decision, go to England. It is said that the Supreme Court does not prevent an appeal to the Privy Council. But appeals from the Supreme Court can only be taken in exceptional cases; moreover, if there is an appeal from the Supreme Court to the Privy Council, what need is there of a Supreme Court? There is no longer any reason for its existence, as the intention of Parliament was to establish a tribunal, final in its judgments. I think, Mr. Speaker, I am justified in voting for the abolition of the Supreme Court for three reasons: first, on account of the danger with which that Court threatens us; secondly, on a question of economy; and lastly, because we can dispense with it by carrying our cases to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. There remains, perhaps, a reason of secondary importance, which I have found in the remarks which fell from one of last year's members. It was said that were the Supreme Court abolished, we should not attain the economy we were looking after; we should have to keep the Judges, continue paying them their salaries, or at least pay them a large sum by way of compensation. It seems to me that such an objection has not any weight, and that it is easily answered. Other situations can be found for those Judges of the Supreme Court; Judges will have to be appointed in every Province; vacancies will occur from time to time, and as they occur, justice can be done to the Judges of the Supreme Court by appointing them to the other tribunals of the country; thus no injustice will be done them, and we shall realize a considerable saving. For those reasons, I will vote for the Bill introduced by the hon. member for Montmagny.

Mr. MILLS. Nothing could be more monstrous than to say that the laws of Canada should be construed one way in one Province and another way in another Province. It is just as necessary that we should have a Court whose decisions should give a universal construction of the laws

over the Dominion, as that Parliament should have power to pass laws which should operate throughout the whole Dominion. That being my opinion, and I believe the opinion of the House, I beg to move:

That the Bill be not now read the second time, but that it be read the second time this day six months.

Mr. McDONALD (Pictou). Before the amendment is put I desire to say that I entirely concur in its terms and will vote for it. I exceedingly regret that the hon. member for Montmagny (Mr. Landry) did not see it to be in his line of duty to accept the suggestion made by me during the discussion in the early part of the evening, viz., to allow the question to stand in connection with the proposition made by the hon. member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Girouard). It has been admitted by every hon. member who has spoken on the question that it is the desire of the Government, while accepting the proposition that a Supreme Court of Canada—in the words of the hon. member for Laval (Mr. Ouimet)—is a necessity to our Constitution to make the Court, so far as it is possible, acceptable to every Province of the Dominion, and more particularly the Province of Quebec. I need not remind my hon. friends from Quebec that the leader of the Government last Session, when this subject was discussed in this House, made it his opinion, and, of course, the opinion of the Government, that the measures suggested by hon. members from that Province should be met as far as it was possible to do so. Under the circumstances, I regret that the hon. member for Montmagny (Mr. Landry) did not see that all he could possibly hope to accomplish, could have been accomplished by accepting the suggestion thrown out. Now that a vote is to be taken on this question, I trust the amendment of the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills) will be carried; but, at the same time, the House will remember that it will have to consider the extent to which the constitution of the Court can be amended, if amendment be required, by the Bill before the House of the hon. member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Girouard), or by any other Bill affecting the constitution of the Court in that direction, without striking directly at the life of the Court, which may be introduced by any hon. member during this or future Sessions. I, therefore, trust the House will adopt the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Bothwell.

Mr. COURSOL. I feel it to be my duty to say a few words before the vote is taken and mine is recorded. I was not prepared, and I believe very few hon. members were prepared, to have a discussion on this question this day. No one was aware, so far as I know, that the hon. member for Montmagny (Mr. Landry) was to take up the Bill which had no proposer on the notice paper in consequence of the death of Mr. Keeler. Therefore, but few hon. members were prepared to discuss it. I thought that the subject should have been discussed on its merits at the proper time, although I am not prepared to say that I would not ultimately have voted for a measure to abolish the Supreme Court entirely, if changes were not made that would be satisfactory to the Province of Quebec and the Dominion at large. I must express my regret that, notwithstanding the promise made by the Government last Session, that the matter would be considered and made the subject of well-digested legislation this Session, the House is now in the same position as last year. If the matter had been thus dealt with, hon. members would not have been in this unfortunate position—I call it unfortunate to a certain extent—that when it is the means of bringing before the press and the public charges made against the Supreme Court of Canada which ought to have the confidence of the country, and have proper respect shown it. But, in this instance, I cannot avoid saying that there are loud complaints, in Quebec especially, regarding the administration of justice by that Court; whether the fact