

have been enjoying for the past week the painful spectacle of members of this House deliberately endeavoring to obstruct the work of this House. We have been sitting here listening attentively to the arguments of hon. gentlemen who profess to have a burning anxiety to have their views placed on record with regard to this Bill. Sir, these men have been writing a page in the history of Canada which will be a lasting disgrace to them, until the last man of them has left this present stage of action, and when they are gone it will redound to their discredit as long as Canada has a Parliament. They say that they wish to lay their views before the people of this country, and yet, I take the case of the *Globe* newspaper, and I find that it devotes a little less than two columns to twenty-one of the speeches which we have been compelled to listen to. Does that show that they are anxious that all this trash which we have had thrown upon us as argument should go before the people of this country. I think the fact that the *Globe* has devoted so short a space to their labored efforts will be a very strong argument in the country against the conduct of these hon. gentlemen, and I say there is not an important paper in the reading room which is reporting the trash to which we have been subjected during the last fifty hours. It is said that they are not allowed an opportunity of debating this question, of putting their views on record, and yet, when we sit still and allow them to say what they like, they are not contented, and they hurl across the floor at us every epithet which malignity can invent. Because we sit quietly and listen to their arguments we are twitted with being dumb supporters of the Government, with being an outrageous majority, a malignant majority, a brute majority, and; in view of such expressions, I would like to know if there is any meaning in that passage of the rules which states that no hon. gentleman is allowed to use offensive words, if it does not cover the epithets which have been applied to us from that side of the House. Is there any hon. gentleman who has listened to these epithets hurled across the floor, hour after hour, who can say that his feelings have not been wounded, if he has any feeling? These base and malignant insinuations have been hurled across the floor at members and supporters of the Government, and I feel that great injustice has been done to those who have been so treated, and that the rules of Parliament have been constantly violated. For my part, I cannot understand the interpretation of the rule, unless it applies to check a great deal of what we have been subjected to in this Parliament during this last week. They speak of an ignorant majority—that taunt is thrown across the floor at the Government, as if those men had been taken from the slums of society, and yet these taunts come from a class of men whose education, if we may judge by what we see, was obtained in schools which would be a disgrace to any place outside of a fish market. The hon. member for Peel (Mr. Fleming) treated us to their stock in trade of what they call arguments, though they do not deserve the name, for if they were arguments they would be reasonable, they would be acceptable, they would be logical and courteous, and there would be some parliamentary decency in them. But their arguments are the very reverse of all that. The hon. gentleman says they are obliged to speak so many times to try to give the country information, to try to convince members on this side of the House. Is not that an acknowledgment that they do not possess the ability they claim, when they are obliged to speak so often, in their efforts to enlighten the country; and while that is the case, it is a fact that the reporters are asked to abridge those arguments, because, if not, they would look disgraceful to the *Hansard*; and I say that there is being reported such trash that the press of the country would not deign to place it before their readers because, they know what the result would be. I say that if there was a fair and full report given of the speeches which

Mr. SPROULE.

have been made by these hon. gentlemen on this one measure, there is not an intelligent constituency to-day in the wide Dominion of Canada which would send them back to this House. I would like to ask hon. gentlemen what this Parliament is for? Is it a place where members come to play, and to obstruct the legitimate work of the Session? Or are we here to legislate for the country's good? Is it for a small minority to say that they are going to rule the large majority which the Government have at their backs in this House? What are deliberative assemblies for, if they are not to be ruled by the majority? What is the object of a Government, who are held responsible to the country for the measures they pass through, and are expected and supposed to pass, when they have a majority at their back? If there is a disposition on the part of the Government to prevent a free expression of their views, I could see some reason for their hurling across the House the epithets they have hurled; but when we allow them full opportunity of expressing their views they apply all kinds of offensive expressions to us, and say that we have not the intelligence to defend our position. They speak about hon. members carrying beds and pillows into this House, but I would like to ask if there is one hon. gentleman who will get up and say that he ever saw a bed carried into this House. I know I have been here for seven years and I have never seen it. It is said that we are sleeping around these rooms and acting in a most disgraceful manner, and when we sit still the same thing is said to us. When we listen to everything they say, no matter how unfair or how irregular, we are taunted with being stupid, with being guilty of unseemly conduct. The press of these hon. gentlemen have also taken the matter up, and they say that members supporting the Government come in, night after night, drunk and disorderly; that they cannot conduct themselves as men. Well, I have been here for some time, and I do not think that I ever saw a body of 211 men gather together who conducted themselves with so little rowdiness, so little drinking, as the members of this present Parliament. I say it is disgraceful to hon. members to use such language as these hon. gentlemen use; it is a disgrace to the paper which makes these statements, or to the reporters in the gallery who make them, who are here by the courtesy of the House, and to report fairly what passes, without endeavoring to throw base insinuations against the members of this House. If these hon. gentlemen had the courage to back up their insinuations, to name the party they mean, then that man could come forward and defend himself; but they do not do so, for that would not answer their purpose; that would not make the charge as malignant as they can make it by way of insinuation. For fifty hours—the longest session of either this Parliament or the English Parliament—we have been discussing one clause of a Bill. We spent hour after hour on the question of women franchise, which was said to be fraught with such great constitutional principles, and yet hon. gentlemen had their minds made up before three of them spoke as to which way each man would vote upon it. Yet they went on and occupied this time, not with arguments to convince the people of this country, not to be reported in the pages of *Hansard*, because such a report would disgrace the worst member who was ever in this House, but, Sir, simply to obstruct the business of the House. Now, what is a Canadian Parliament for? Has it not the inherent power to control its own legislation, so that the business of the country may be proceeded with? Or is it to be converted into a play house, a toy house, at great expense to the people of this country? We have been sitting here for fifty hours, at an expense of at least \$200 an hour, on one clause, and though they have each given us five or six speeches on the subject, they have not been able to enlighten the country or this House. They say that they will continue to keep this up, and it is not for the