

you will see that he was embarrassed by the decision of the House.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—I do not want to read between the lines when I read the lines themselves. What do they say? They say 'how could I give an opinion when as one of the House of Commons I voted myself for that.'

Hon. Mr. DAVID—Exactly.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—That man who enlightens the Governor-General, the premier and everybody on earth, enlightens himself and voted for the Bill. Evidently his action was before his eyes when he was asked to give an opinion, and he says, 'the best opinion I can give is the way I voted.'

Hon. Mr. ROSS (Middlesex)—Is not this an expression of repentance on his part? He voted for the Bill, but he does not say it is constitutional?

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—I think it is the greatest tribute that could be paid to the genius of the Minister of Justice that he has written an opinion that nobody understands.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—The Minister of Justice concludes—

I beg, therefore, to say by way of reply to your communication, merely that in my opinion the subject with which the Bill in question deals is within the legislative authority of any provincial legislature, unless it may be in so far as the Bill would authorize (if it does authorize) the incorporation of savings banks.

That is, this Bill is within the jurisdiction of the legislatures unless it is within our jurisdiction. He says the door is open unless it is shut. That is no opinion at all. To have an opinion, we must see how he acted himself, and he is one of those who voted for the Bill in the House of Commons.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—I would ask the hon. gentleman from Stadacona, for whose opinion as to the rules of the House I have very great confidence, whether the committee which had this Bill under consideration, would have the power, as each clause was put to them, by the chairman to say no, and by a majority to reject every clause submitted to them.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—No, they would not have the power to do that. They cannot reject all the clauses. They must accept at least one.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—There is no such practice.

Hon. Mr. WILSON—A public Bill, when the principle of it is adopted, must be referred to a committee, and as this is a public Bill, it should have gone to the Committee of the Whole. Then why was it sent to the Committee on Banking and Commerce? The rule must have been violated; but my hon. friend who has spoken so forcibly on observing rules did not ask that the rule be suspended in order that it might be sent to the Committee on Banking and Commerce. Why was it sent there? We were led to understand by the leader of the House that if this Bill went to the Committee on Banking and Commerce that committee should have absolute liberty to treat it as it would any Bill introduced in the House. What is the use of my hon. friend saying that the committee had no rights. If they had none, what was the good of sending the Bill to them. It would have been a perfect farce to send it to the committee if we had no opportunity of hearing the discussion and evidence and forming an opinion. After being reported from the committee, any member of the House could insist upon having the Bill submitted to a Committee of the Whole House. If a public Bill can be taken away from the right committee, it would have to come back here, and what was the use of its coming back if we had committed ourselves to the principle of the Bill on its second reading? It looks to me very absurd reasoning and treatment. I remember the statement made to the House by the hon. Secretary of State when the Bill was sent to the committee. It was that we should be at perfect liberty to approve or disapprove of the Bill when it came back to the House. Now we are told that having consented to the second reading we have committed ourselves to the principle of the Bill, and have virtually put ourselves out of court, so that we can form no opinion and must accept the Bill. I think I am at liberty to vote for or against the Bill as I choose.