

to bear. Under these circumstances, I do not believe we can condemn the legislation too strongly; we cannot condemn it as strongly as the people of Canada have done. When the legislation was passed last session there were very few members in the Chamber; no doubt many of them expected that the House would close on Saturday and that all the business was finished, but yet this measure was shoved through under conditions which should not have existed. We should wipe this bill out of existence, and then if it be found necessary to make any change in the law it should be done after due consideration and after the people of the country have been consulted. It is our experience in this House that it generally takes weeks and months to get important legislation through, and that is as it should be. The newspapers have an opportunity to discuss it, our constituents have a right to protest if they see fit, but in this case no opportunity was given our constituents to express their opinions and the Bill was rushed through the House. My constituents believe that this legislation should be repealed and I am bound to be guided by them.

Mr. A. B. INGRAM (East Elgin). I have just a few words to say in respect to the question that has been discussed by my hon. friend (Mr. Barr). Let me say to start with, that I believe the debate on the address should not be prolonged for the reason that questions embodied in the address will be discussed from time to time during the session. It is therefore in my opinion not necessary to take up the time of the House in debating matters which must afterwards be discussed fully. When I hear old parliamentarians, men who have occupied seats in this House and in the local legislature finding fault with legislation because it was introduced during the dying days of the session, I have nothing but the most utter contempt for men who attempt to place such an excuse before this House. Every honourable gentleman who occupied a seat in this House last session was fully aware that this legislation was to be introduced, and there is no excuse for any honourable gentleman who has had any parliamentary experience rising at this late date and trying to excuse himself for the course he then took. Here is one abuse that has grown up in this House. I take the Auditor General's report, and what do I find year after year, particularly in the last session? I have been present on many occasions when the right hon. leader of the government and the hon. leader of the opposition had to remain silent in their places by reason of there being no quorum to transact the business of the House, and when I look over the Auditor General's report and find the number of days that certain members are marked as having been absent and then at the amounts these same gentlemen have drawn, I am prepared to say and to prove my statement that the

Mr. BARR.

declaration which these gentlemen made before they received their full indemnity was a false declaration. We who regularly attend to our duties in this House have to suffer by reason of these gentlemen drawing more than they are entitled to, while those who serve receive less than they are entitled to. So it is all very well for these gentlemen to talk as they have been talking. They have accepted the money and have disposed of it in one way or another, and they have not the courage to stand up and defend their action. My majority is not very large, it is true; it is only 21; but I am always prepared, either before my constituents or in this House to have the courage of my convictions, and to say what I have to say, and I am glad to know that they have always given me credit for honesty in that regard, and I have yet to suffer my first defeat for pursuing that course. But I have noticed in my parliamentary experience that the men who are eternally wobbling, who have no opinion on any question, who are like the weather-cock on the barn which turns with every wind, are the first to vacate their seats in this House. Let us be manly enough to take the responsibility of our own actions instead of trying to cloak ourselves behind somebody else. I insist that an amendment to the Indemnity Act, shall be introduced this session along the line that every hon. member of this House shall record his name when he is present in order that we may have some record of the hon. gentlemen who are absent from their duties. If we do that, I am sure that instead of occupying six or seven months, we shall be able to transact the business of this House in much less time. Hon. gentlemen sometimes come into the House after having been absent for some time, and rise in their place and discuss something that has already been discussed over and over again, whereas if they had attended to their duties regularly, they would have taken part in the discussion at the proper time. If this question is brought up again, I intend to show certain things in connection with the indemnity, in connection with our judges, and in connection with other matters. I intend to have the manliness of pursuing the course I intend to pursue honestly and openly, and not cloak myself behind the misdoings of anybody else.

Motion (Mr. Knowles) agreed to.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER moved:

That the said Address be engrossed and be presented to His Excellency the Governor General by such members of this House as are of the hon. the Privy Council.

Motion agreed to.

#### REPORTS PRESENTED.

Report of the Auditor-General for the year ending 30th June, 1905, (Volume 1)—Sir Wilfrid Laurier.