

on that side of the House, we must believe by this time that upon the single clause which has been under consideration for a week, almost everything that could be said on it, from their point of view, has been brought to the attention of the committee. I have purposely declined to take any part in this discussion, so far, for two reasons. I like honest, fair discussion, and whenever a question is before the committee or before the House, which is being fairly debated, with the object of arriving at a sound conclusion, there is no one who likes better to take part in or listen to such a discussion than myself; but at a very early period of the debate I became convinced that the discussion was proceeding, on the part of hon. gentlemen opposite, not so much for the purpose of bringing out all there was in the issues involved, so as to come to a conclusion, as for the sake of taking up the time of the House, in order not to come to a conclusion. I, therefore, determined to refrain from taking any part in the debate, until these gentlemen had all the time to make themselves heard, all the latitude for discussion that the most exacting among them could demand. Having treated them, in common with gentlemen on this side of the House, with courtesy and consideration, having paid attention to them for hour after hour of these long and arduous sittings, I think we deserve a little better at their hands than to be taunted across the floor with being whipped-in supporters, ordered to silence by the Government, with having no sense to see what was in this Bill, and no powers of argument to meet the alleged arguments advanced by that side of the House, but, like dumb-driven cattle, having nothing to say on the subject at all. Sir, I will never say to any body of gentlemen sitting on the opposite side of the House to me that they do not possess, on the average, equal intelligence with the hon. gentlemen with whom I happen to be associated for the time being. I say that these epithets and insinuations are not arguments that have any weight in this House or that count for much in the country; for, although we may think that we, being legislators, occupy a high and mighty position here—and we do occupy a most honorable position—we may as well come to the conclusion now, as later, that the people of the country are, man for man, just about as intelligent as we are, and that if clap-trap does not go down in this House it is not likely to go down any better in the country. There has been talk about meeting the electors. I go through my county every year and hold fifteen or twenty meetings in the most public places; and I will welcome any one of these gentlemen to come down and stand with me before the electors of my county—and they are intelligent electors—and discuss the principles involved in this Bill, where it is not simply a partisan press which conveys the impression to the people's minds, but where intelligent people, looking into the faces of the two gentlemen who address them, and hearing statement and answer, can judge for themselves where the right lies, and what the principles of the Bill really are. The hon. gentleman who last spoke taunted my hon. friend from Kent, N. B. (Mr. Landry), with not having discussed the Bill. Now, Sir, of all periods in the parliamentary history of this country, and of all times in the history of this Parliament, it came with very bad grace, at this time, from the hon. member for South Brant (Mr. Paterson) to taunt any hon. gentleman with not discussing the question closely or logically. Sir, after a week of talk, during which, if one half hour was given to the close and logical discussion of the question, twenty half hours were given to keeping as far away as possible from the question, it was not a very pertinent or very honest thing for the hon. gentleman to taunt us on this side with not closely discussing the question. However, there was one good result of the two speeches given—one by my hon. friend from Grey (Mr. Sproule) and the other by my hon. friend from Kent (Mr. Landry). The hon. member for South Brant has not, since the beginning of

this debate, confined himself so closely to the question under discussion as he has done since he heard the speeches of my hon. friends. There has not been so mild and courteous a speech made in this House, with reference to that question, as the one made by that hon. gentleman, until just at the close, when he evidently thought that a little of the thunder and lightning that has been flying all the week was necessary. If he had cut off the last two and a-half minutes of his speech it would have been a model of parliamentary courtesy and of intelligence in the discussion of the measure before the House. Now, Sir, I wish to refer to two or three statements that were made by the hon. member for West Ontario (Mr. Edgar), who treated us, however, to no discussion of the Bill, for during the half or three-quarters of an hour that he spoke he hardly touched the question at issue. When my hon. friend from Grey was saying something about their arguments failing to convince the House, I noticed that the hon. gentleman sitting in his seat said, "no; we do not propose to convince the House;" and his remark was greeted with a cheer by those who sat nearest to him. Then, whom do they hope to convince? My hon. friend pointed out very clearly that they cannot hope to convince the country, for their own papers—and I give them credit for it—give very short and meagre reports of these so-called discussions which have been going on all week. How do they expect the people to be convinced? It cannot be by hearing their voices; it cannot be through their papers; it cannot be through the *Hansard*, which get out into the country some ten or twelve days after the debates take place, and are very sparsely distributed. Then why do they speak? Not to convince the House or the country. That is not their object. The hon. member for Bothwell let the cat out of the bag the other night, when he said: Withdraw your Bill, and then the business of the country can go on.

The hon. member for West Ontario commenced in that courteous way which is so peculiar to him, and for which I suppose he has found a seat in this House. He talked about lecturing hon. gentlemen on this side of the House on manners. What was the first lesson on manners that he gave when he arose? In attempting to reply to my hon. friend from Grey, he said he had been "put up" to say a few words. I say it is quite possible for my hon. friend from Grey, or for any one supporting this or any other Government, to get up and say what he wants to say like a man, without that imputation being put upon him, as it is for any member supporting the leader of the Opposition to get up and say something that is not dictated to him, but is the utterance of his own thought. The hon. member for Bothwell cheered very lustily at that. Whenever a statement is made about whipped-in supporters of the Government he always has his cheer at the tip end of his tongue. I wonder what is the difference between getting up and speaking as a whipped-in supporter of the Government, or as a whipped-in supporter of the Opposition. Has the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills) ever got up to vote against the dictates of his leader? I can tell him of one occasion on which his coat tails streamed out of that door, when he could not vote for his leader, but had not the independence to vote against him. It may be permitted, as a species of clap-trap, for the hon. gentleman to talk about the whipped-in and driven supporters of this or that party; but he knows as well as I do that these great measures of policy on either side are supposed to be about the average sentiment of those who support either party, and are arrived at from a canvass of the opinions of hon. gentlemen supporting each party. I noticed, when the hon. member for Grey was saying that such proceedings of obstruction, as these seemed to be, would make of Parliament a farce; I noticed that the hon. member for West Ontario (Mr. Edgar) looked joyful and clapped his hands, and a chorus of "hear, hears," went up from him