

elevate the Indian; we want to confer the electoral franchise upon the Indian in order that we may elevate him. Sir, the hon. gentleman will not elevate the Indian, but he will degrade Parliament. To the ordinary Indian the value of the vote is just the sum it will bring—its mercantile value determines its value to him. The hon. gentleman stands in the position of the patriot who addressed the needy knife-grinder. The hon. gentleman says: He knows the Indian may have a hole in his coat, but he is ready to listen to his pitiful story; he is ready to confer on him the electoral franchise; he is ready to make him a citizen of this Dominion and enable him to cast a vote at elections while he is still a ward of the Government, and under the control of the agents and superintendents of the Indian Department throughout the country. The public will understand this measure. They will understand the motives of the hon. gentleman. They know why this measure is brought forward at this time. They know that if the political outlook was as bright as it was some time ago the hon. gentleman would not have proposed this measure. It is true it has been before Parliament occasionally during the last 18 years; but there has been no such necessity for passing it as there is at the present time. The public, therefore, will certainly understand why that is being done. The hon. member for North Norfolk (Mr. Charlton) proposed a motion to adopt the electoral franchises of the various Provinces instead of adopting the electoral franchise suggested by section 3 and subsequent sections. The hon. member for King's, Prince Edward Island, moved an amendment that Prince Edward Island be exempted from the operation of this section. He proposed, in effect, that the Island should retain its provincial franchise. If the hon. gentleman had supported the motion of the member for North Norfolk (Mr. Charlton), and if that motion were successful, the electoral franchise in Prince Edward Island would be retained. But the hon. gentleman is not satisfied to do that. He is anxious that the Island should retain its own electoral franchise, but he is unwilling that any other Provinces should do so. The hon. gentleman is determined to force on the other Provinces a franchise that he is unwilling Parliament should force on his own Province. The hon. gentleman reminds me of some of those religious sects during the 16th century who complained loudly of persecution, and demanded toleration for themselves, while not willing to grant toleration to any other denomination. So the hon. gentleman says, we want the franchise selected by the people of Prince Edward Island, but we are opposed to other Provinces enjoying the same right. I am so much in favor of the principle of provincial rights in this matter that I will vote for whatever proposition comes first. I will vote for every proposition of this sort. If I cannot procure provincial rights for all the Provinces, I am ready to secure them for as many as I can. I regret the hon. member for King's, Prince Edward Island, has not seen proper to deal with other hon. gentlemen as we would have them deal with him. The hon. member for King's, New Brunswick (Mr. Foster), accused us the other night of obstruction. He declared that we on this side had a right briefly to express our views on public questions; we had a right briefly to state our opposition to this measure; but beyond that we had no right to go. The hon. gentleman laid down a number of mutually destructive propositions, and I will read them to the committee. The hon. gentleman said:

"In one sense, Parliament is here to register the opinions of the Government."

In what sense? Is it here to register the opinions of the Government on questions on which public opinion has not been pronounced? Is it here to register the opinions of the Government, and to change the constitution and institutions of this country? Is it here to register the opinions of the

Government in favor of Indian suffrage and against woman suffrage? The hon. gentleman goes on to say:

"In another sense it is not. If the proposition is that Parliament is simply to shut its eyes and stop its ears and, when the 13 members of the cabinet bring down their measures, to swallow them, without the opportunity of accepting or rejecting them, then Parliament is not here for any such purpose."

If I understand this part of the hon. gentleman's statement, Parliament is free to accept or reject any measure of the Government. It is free to criticise any measure of the Government, and free to oppose it. But he withdraws from this position and again asserts the doctrine of implicit obedience, I suppose, seeing that the Government have opposed the amendments to the Scott Act, which they thought they could do safely in the other Chamber, the hon. gentleman will be disposed to follow the Government when that measure comes back to this House. I suppose, seeing that the Government secretly sought to defeat the proposal for woman suffrage, the hon. gentleman will feel himself called on to agree with the Government and oppose woman suffrage. I suppose, as the Government are now pressing so earnestly and obstinately the question of the Indian franchise, the hon. gentleman will be prepared to support the Indian franchise, and oppose those who think the Indians who are enfranchised are not qualified to exercise the highest privilege and trust of freemen. The hon. gentleman went on to say:

"But if the question is whether Parliament is here to register the opinions of the Government, who are put in power by the majority of the people, and who have the confidence of the people, I say that Parliament is here for that and no other purpose."

This is an extraordinary doctrine. I should like to know what constitutional authorities the hon. gentleman relies upon for such a doctrine. The hon. gentleman gravely asserts that any other theory would be destructive of responsible parliamentary government. I should like to know how the hon. gentleman is free to criticise, to reject a measure, if he is here simply to register the wishes of the Government, because it is supported by a majority. I can subscribe to no such doctrine. I hold that so far from it being a doctrine consistent with parliamentary government, it would be entirely destructive of any such system. What is a political party? It is a number of men, Burke says, that are united together, agreeing in their views on questions of public policy, for the promotion of a common end. That is Burke's definition of party. These hon. gentlemen went to the country upon certain questions. They were supported by the country, and their party is bound to support in this House the principles enunciated on platform and hustings. But with respect to new questions, questions that were not before the elections, the rule is wholly different. The hon. gentleman is bound to support the National Policy, as are all those who were elected by the people for that purpose, but he is not more bound than is his leader. He is not bound because his leader supports it, but because the country has sustained himself and his leader on that question, and his leader is as much bound as he is himself. It is not a question of the servility of a number of gentlemen to a leader, but it is a question of the devotion of a number of gentlemen, leader and all, to certain principles to which they have committed themselves and which have been sanctioned by the country. But we are here to oppose their views on this question, and we are here to oppose them as much as they are here to support them. We are here to oppose them by the same authority—the authority of our constituents. We stated our views; they were in accord with the views of the electorate, and so we have seats in this House. We are here to enunciate, explain, and defend them, and make them known here and to the country, as much as are the Government and those who support them are bound to support the views they enunciated on platform and hustings. It is because of this public disqua-