

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES.** The Manitoba Act is all right, it appears.

Sir **CHARLES TUPPER.** No, it is all wrong, except the principle of manhood suffrage.

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES.** It embodies the very principle that the hon. gentleman, in his closing words, contended for, the principle of manhood suffrage.

Sir **CHARLES TUPPER.** It does.

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES.** And because we ask that this principle should be adopted, so far as Manitoba is concerned, for elections to this House, he denounces this Bill as an infamous Bill. The hon. gentleman said that he did not give his own evidence but quoted the opinion of the leader of the Opposition in the legislature of Manitoba. And I do not wonder the hon. gentleman quoted that language; when I heard it read, I thought it suited him exactly. I will not accuse the hon. gentleman of exaggeration, but I will call the attention of the hon. gentleman to the quotation which he read with so much gusto. What was that quotation which he seriously asked this House to adopt as correct? The criticism which he read as coming from Mr. Roblin, the leader of the Opposition, was that under this "infamous" Act, 100,000 electors had been disfranchised during the last election in Manitoba. What will this House say when I tell them that the whole population of Manitoba is about 200,000 or about 40,000 families. Yet it seems 100,000 electors have been disfranchised in the province.

Sir **CHARLES TUPPER.** Allow me to say that I presume that is a clerical error in the report which I read, and that 10,000 was the number intended.

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES.** I will take the hon. gentleman's explanation. He admits that it was a clerical error. But when he was quoting it, when he was rolling it with such intense gusto under his tongue, did he suggest that there was a clerical error? The thing contains its own refutation; its absurdity stands out upon its face. But, as the hon. gentleman has withdrawn it, I will say nothing more to the House, except that I hope that those who quote his speech, including the statement he now corrects, will also quote his correction. His argument based upon this 100,000 falls to the ground in the proportion that 100,000 bears to 10,000; and, so far as the 10,000 is concerned, I think the House will not ask me to trouble it by continuing the argument. Further, the hon. gentleman quoted an ex-parte declaration of a gentleman named McFadden as showing

that the Franchise Act was, as he termed it, an infamous Act. What did Mr. McFadden say? And I would ask the hon. gentleman in this connection, if he thinks it becomes a distinguished statesman of his standing, a man of far more than ordinary calibre, as he is, when addressing his followers and this House upon a Bill that goes to the foundation of representative institutions in this country, to content himself with reading ex-parte declarations of some member of the provincial legislature as to the existing state of facts. The thing is beneath him. He should relegate it to some of those gentlemen behind him who seem to think that they fulfil their duties here when they occupy an hour or two of the time of the House.

Some hon. **MEMBERS.** Oh, oh.

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES.** I am not saying anything against many of the hon. gentlemen behind the leader of the Opposition, among whom are many personal friends of my own. But those who have sat here for the past few weeks cannot shut their eyes to the fact that there has been a kind of contest among some hon. gentlemen opposite to see which could occupy the longest time of the House, irrespective of the force of the arguments they presented. Now, what was the gist of the statement made by Mr. McFadden, after all said and done? It was that the election Act was all right, but the only trouble was with the administration of the Act. Well, Sir, we are not adopting the present administration of the Act; that may change from day to day. I will not concede there were any improprieties in the administration of the Act in Manitoba. We know very well the extent to which members of the Opposition will go, when they are beaten in a general election, in order to account for their defeat. They will give all manner of reasons as accounting for their defeat except the fact that the people did not vote for them, which generally is the real reason. But they avoid that and talk about the way the law is administered. But I wish to address myself seriously to some serious arguments of the hon. gentleman which seemed to have some weight. I do not think anybody pretends that the Bill presented by the Solicitor General (Mr. Fitzpatrick) is a perfect Bill. I think my hon. friend (Mr. Fitzpatrick) is quite willing to accept any suggestions as to details which come from gentlemen opposite to improve the Bill. All we do say is that the principle of adopting the provincial franchises as the basis of the Dominion franchise is a principle for which the Liberal party has fought for the last ten or twelve years, and a principle to which, after five years of ceaseless agitation, our opponents, the Conservative party gave in their adhesion, and to which they publicly declared their conversion. Why, Sir, what are we arguing about? I