

short time they will be able by petition to get his sentence shortened and the man liberated, it is not going to be very long in this country until men will regard murder about the same way as, I believe, they regard it in some states to the south of the line. I believe that in the state of Michigan, where capital punishment has been abolished, men who have committed murder have been sentenced to prison, firmly believing—and being justified in believing from the experience of others—that a few years would see them at liberty through the influence of their friends.

I will not take up more time, but I want to say in conclusion that I think this a very important subject. I think the House is possibly not in possession of all the information and details that it should reasonably be possessed of to pass judgment upon this question. Speaking for myself, I know I would like to have more information on the subject before I cast my vote. For that reason I should be sorry to see this matter carried to a division here to-night. I have an open mind in regard to the matter. I have been very greatly impressed by the speech of the hon. member for South Renfrew (Mr. Graham), in fact I do not think I ever heard him speak when he impressed me so much as he did to-night. I should like more information before being asked to vote, and I trust the question will not be pressed to a division.

Mr. CHARLES A. WILSON (Laval): Mr. Speaker, on the Orders of the Day you will find Motion No. 62 to be as follows:

Mr. Wilson (Laval)—Order of the House—For a return showing all persons, male or female, who have been capitally convicted in Canada, and each province, for each year, from the 1st of July, 1867, to the 2nd of February, 1914, specifying the offences and whether and how the sentences were carried into effect by execution, or otherwise, with the name of convicts; dates of conviction; crime of which committed; sentences passed; judges by whom sentenced; and how dealt with.

2. For a return showing all convicts, male and female, who have been reprieved from the execution of capital sentences passed upon them during the above-mentioned period, with the name of convicts; dates of conviction; crime of which committed; sentences passed; by whom sentenced; sentences commuted, and if so, to what.

3. For a return showing all persons in Canada, and each province, convicted during the above-mentioned period, of murder or manslaughter, whose sentences have been mitigated, or who have received a free pardon, together with a statement of the offences of which they were severally convicted, with the name of convicts; dates of conviction; nature of offence;

sentences; and extent of mitigation of sentences and dates.

4. For a return of instances, during the above-mentioned period, in which appeal has been made on behalf of the persons convicted of capital offences to His Excellency the Governor in Council, for the exercise of the Royal prerogative of pardon, or mitigation of sentences, with the name of convicts; dates of conviction and place; crime of which committed; sentences; dates of appeal; and the result.

Perhaps at first glance hon. members of this House might think that this order called for information designed merely to satisfy curiosity, and morbid curiosity at that. But that is not the idea. This resolution was placed upon the Order Paper because my hon. friend from St. Lawrence division (Mr. Bickerdike) had given notice of this Bill in the House. I thought it in the public interest to find out how many people had been, in the first place accused, in the second place tried, in the third place sentenced, for capital crimes, and also what had become of these people—from Confederation up to the present time. Some hon. members might ask me why I seek to cover by this return the whole period from the time of Confederation. It is because the law under the Union, from 1840—

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the hon. member is rather dealing with a resolution which has not yet been reached.

Mr. WILSON: I am not discussing this resolution. I am simply stating that this notice of motion was given, because of the Bill we are now discussing. I gave notice of this resolution because I desired information that would enable us better to discuss this Bill of my hon. friend in the light of facts concerning our own country. We are not here to legislate for Austria, Germany, France or even the British Empire. Do you not think, Mr. Speaker, that if we had a return of all these cases from 1867—and that is why I agree with my hon. friend from Frontenac (Mr. Edwards)—we should be in a better position to discuss this great and important question?

Mr. SPEAKER: Let me draw the hon. gentleman's attention to the rule. If the House had reached that order and he was prepared to make a motion, I assume it would be followed by just such an argument as he is now making and if that be correct he is anticipating an order on the paper.

Mr. WILSON: I withdraw all I have said, and I shall not refer any more to order No. 62. There is no more obedient