

a vote. As I have stated before, if the proposition had been to give votes to Indians who, by their own intelligence and industry, have acquired sufficient to give them the necessary property qualification, I am satisfied that no person on this side of the House would object. We believe in educating the Indian and training him up in the way of civilisation and peace; but what we do protest against strongly is, that the Government have not limited the franchise to that class, but have extended it to all, whether Christianised or pagan, civilised or uncivilised. I will read what the hon. gentleman said last Session with reference to the condition of the Indians of British Columbia. (Quotation.) The hon. gentleman depicted the barbarous custom of the potlach; and yet it is the class of people who engage in these orgies that he proposes to clothe with the franchise. Is it surprising that night after night we should protest against enfranchising men of that class? It is clear, from the reports of these agents to the hon. gentleman, that these Indians are not fit to have the franchise; and why, then, force this Bill upon Parliament? Would it not be a proper and honest thing for the hon. gentleman to say at once, when his attention is called to these facts, that he never intended to enfranchise the Indian tribes of Manitoba, the North-West and British Columbia, who are still on the reserves, and are in an uncivilised and pagan condition? I believe that course would be one which, with a few exceptions, would have gratified his own followers, because I do not believe that there is an hon. gentleman in this House desirous to have these Indians enfranchised, except the few who have Indians in their constituencies. I will now quote from the report of the hon. gentleman, submitted to Parliament this Session. He says, speaking about the Indians in the neighborhood of Regina: (The hon. gentleman here read quotation.) Here is a band of Indians who are in rebellion against the sovereignty of this Dominion, who are well armed with Winchester rifles, and against whom he found it necessary to send the mounted police, and still he proposes to enfranchise them. Further on he says: (Quotation.) It was stated during this discussion that these Indians were not the paupers of the Dominion. In 1884 we voted a large sum in Supply to maintain the Indians—the amount they were entitled to get as the interest on their rights, surrendered to the Government through their lands—but the hon. gentleman found it necessary to supply them with additional quantities of flour and other articles, so that they were practically the paupers of the country, living on the bounty and charity of the Dominion. Now, by the law of England, persons who receive the bounty of the Government, or are dependent upon the Government, have not the franchise, even if they have the sufficient property qualification. The hon. gentleman speaks of the Wyandottes in these words: (Quotation.) Now, I do not think anyone has any objection to giving the franchise to such Indians as these, who have proved themselves worthy to enjoy it, and the moment the hon. gentleman can satisfy Parliament that the Indians of Manitoba, the North-West and British Columbia, have settled on their own separate holdings, and become citizens of this country, like the Wyandottes, I believe Parliament would be willing to sanction their having the franchise. Perhaps the secret of the hon. gentleman's desire to enfranchise the Indians, wholesale, is contained in this clause of his report. (Quotation.) What connection these Indians have with Prince William of Orange, one does not quite clearly understand, or why they should be mounted on white horses and wear scarlet cloaks. It seems, however, that they are made Orangemen and Young Britons, that they have lodges on their reserves, and perhaps it would not be uncharitable to suggest that one reason why the hon. gentleman seeks to enfranchise them is, that they are Orangemen who generally vote in one way. Speaking of

Indians who are not far from us, on the limits of the western boundary of Ontario, the hon. gentleman describes them as indulging in heathenish rights and ceremonies, which tend to keep them degraded, and yet these are the men he proposes to enfranchise. The hon. member for Algoma tells us these—some of whom are in his county—are intelligent men, quite capable of exercising the franchise. The First Minister says they are degraded and indulge in heathenish practices. No doubt the hon. member for Algoma feels confident that their vote will be secure in his favor, and takes that as an indication of their intelligence. The First Minister goes on to report that the Indians are entirely dependent on the Government for support. Can it be imagined that they will therefore give a vote freely, that they will not feel compelled to support the men who feed them. The report then proceeds to deal with other bands, and in each case the same tale, the same description, is repeated. They are entirely dependent on the Government. They are degraded, and barely susceptible of improvement. With respect to the schools in the North-West, the reports are exceedingly unsatisfactory. In many cases the parents refuse to send their children to the schools, and, so far, the expenditure of large sums of money, with the view of educating the Indians, has failed to accomplish that object. It is only when we find some devoted missionaries spending their lives in the band that we have the slightest evidence of education in moulding the Indian mind. All this goes to show, in the strongest possible light, the want of judgment on the part of the Government in undertaking to give the right to vote to these people. It is quite clear in Ontario. The result, in a political aspect, will be to the advantage of the hon. gentlemen opposite. Is it possible they have really come down to this: that the Government, with their majority of seventy-three in this Parliament for the last three years, and with their success in the bye elections, have to resort, for the first time in the history of Canada, to this scheme, for the purpose of strengthening their political influence in the country. According to the Indian Report, there are a dozen constituencies in Ontario alone in which the vote of the Indian population would change the political aspect of those constituencies. In Haldimand the Indians, if enfranchised, will have a voting strength of 120; in Brant they will have 600 votes; in Middlesex their voting power will be considerable, and so on throughout various counties. I do not know how they are going to vote, but it is evident that they will be guided altogether by the influence brought to bear on them by the agents of the Dominion. I do not know what the political ideas of those agents may be, but whatever they may be it is almost an absolute certainty that just as the agents think politically so will the Indians. I would ask hon. gentlemen opposite to pause before giving this power indiscriminately to the Indians; I would ask them to limit it to those to whom it is limited in the Ontario Act, and not place in the hands of people who continue to live in the tribal community, as their progenitors did a hundred years ago, who have independent sovereigns of their own and their own councils, whose allegiance to this country is a subordinate allegiance, who are uneducated, and ignorant of any of the political questions of the country, this great privilege of exercising the franchise, which should only be granted to those who are in the full exercise of all the duties and responsibilities of citizens.

Mr. DAVIES. I rise to renew the suggestion that I made previously, with reference to the continuance of the debate. I wish to put myself fairly on record in this matter, so that hereafter if the Opposition are charged with obstructing business, it will be seen the charge is baseless. After a continuous sitting of thirty-six hours, the interpretation clause might be passed, and if the Opposition continue to speak it is because the Government refuse to give the assu-