

gentleman very much that the Local Legislature of Ontario have devoted themselves to the management of their provincial affairs and the maintenance of their provincial rights. I would ask him if it was not their bounden duty to take charge of provincial affairs and to resist the encroachments of the Federal Government, or of any other Government which attempted to encroach upon their rights. I think the history of the last few years shows that their resistance has been just and equitable, and that there has been an unfair attempt on the part of the Federal Government to encroach on the rights of the Province of Ontario; and I say the leader of the Provincial Government would have been false to the interests of his Province if he had not taken every justifiable means to prevent the Dominion from overriding provincial rights. I fear that the result which was demonstrated so often, that the Province was right and that the leader of this House was wrong, is one reason why that hon. gentleman has displayed such a dislike to the Province of Ontario and its Government, and is determined that on no opportunity shall that Province have anything to say or do in vindication of its rights, where it is possible to avoid it. I say distinctly and advisedly that the action of the right hon. gentleman and his associates has done more to place the Province of Ontario in antagonism to the rest of the Dominion, than his unjust and illegal demand have done more to cultivate a feeling of dislike towards Confederation, and towards the Government now administering the affairs of the Dominion in the Province of Ontario, than anything else. I say this is only natural, and I should despise the man who was a citizen of that Province who would not stand up for the rights of his own Province against the federal authority, because I say that just in proportion as they preserve those provincial rights shall we strengthen this Dominion; and it is the best guarantee of the perpetuity of this Dominion that while we are Provinces of the Confederation each Province shall have absolute and distinct control of its own affairs. With regard to the propositions before this House, so far as my own Province is concerned, I say that no unbiased man can come to any other conclusion than that the Ontario franchise is the more liberal one. Any unbiased individual looking at the two can only come to this conclusion, that for taking in the largest number of citizens and spreading abroad, as far as possible, the right to vote, the Ontario Act is far ahead of the Bill now proposed. All we ask is that we be allowed to administer our local affairs according to our own peculiarities. While I do not dispute, and no hon. gentleman on this side has disputed, the right of the Government to fix a uniform franchise for this Dominion, I say their action will plunge the various Provinces into many inconveniences, aside from the question of expense. The hon. member for Lincoln says we have caused more expense by this debate than the Bill will cost in one year; but the result will show differently. I never knew the class from whom the revising barristers will be taken to work for small fees if they can get better, and I do not understand that the right hon. leader of the House is going to ask his friends, to whom those positions will be given, to work for a paltry pittance. Those gentlemen are going to have extraordinary powers conferred upon them, which will make it utterly impossible for anybody who is not in their favor to have his name placed on the voters' list. They are to have autocratic power; they are to say who shall and who shall not be on the lists, and there is no provision for an appeal; they are the final court of resort. Yet that is the mode in which hon. gentlemen opposite propose to work out free institutions. The hon. member for Lincoln knows very well how that provision will operate in many counties I could name; and, I fear, if the truth were known about this Bill, that that is one of its recommendations to the supporters of the

Government. That arbitrary provision in this Bill makes it such an intolerable measure that I feel that I would be false to the best interest—not of the Opposition of the day, because that is a small matter, in view of the changes in political parties—but to the interests of the people of this whole Dominion, did I not protest against any such scheme as this being carried out. It is deliberately designed to take from the people a right that belongs to them, in which the Government step beyond the ordinary ground that the majority of a deliberative body are entitled to occupy. The provisions of this Bill are of a nature that make it a gross infringement on the liberties and rights of the people of this country; and are we to be told that we are to sit quietly here and submit, without raising a voice against it? I do not so understand my legislative duties, and I am satisfied that my people at home will not so regard them. The principles involved in this Bill, while they may bring a temporary success to the Government of the day, are grossly unjust to the people, and have in them the elements that will one day work destruction and ruin to our representative institutions.

Mr. FAIRBANK. In the remarks of the hon. First Minister, this afternoon—remarks that we have not often been favored with in this discussion—doubt was expressed as to whether we were in earnest. Had I the ability or the power, I should not leave that question in any doubt, so far as I am concerned. I think, Sir, our earnestness has been to a considerable extent tested already. During the week before last it was put to the test of work day and night; there was no let-up; applications for adjournments were refused; on one occasion, some ten days ago, we saw those who evidently believed they had nothing to do, provide themselves with pillows, saying to us very distinctly: Go on, we will test your bottom. That test has been made, to some extent, and I trust that gentlemen opposite are satisfied with it. We have been charged, during this discussion, with designedly intending to destroy the health of the First Minister. That has been emphatically repudiated; for my part, I most emphatically deny it. I believe there are a number of undertakings on hand which it is very desirable the Prime Minister should carry out. This charge is reiterated in the *Mail*, under the head "Be Ready, Steady:" "The attempt to ruin Sir John A. Macdonald's health in Parliament has been accompanied with the same systematic attempt to ruin his public reputation in the Grit press." Those charges may have some weight with those who were not in this Chamber at any time during this debate, but they will have little weight with those on the floor or in the gallery, who witnessed the proceedings. They must have noticed that at an early hour the Prime Minister wound up the legislative clock, put his seal on his supporters lips, and went to, I hope, comfortable rest. Certainly, he did not experience the fatigues others did. We have been reminded of our responsibility. But it is quite possible we have a pretty distinct idea of our own responsibility. The question involved is not a question of money alone, although considerable money is involved in it. Speaking for myself, it would be a very important question indeed that would place me on my feet after one o'clock in the morning to address any committee on business questions. But we consider it to be of much more value, touching principles which our people value higher than even questions of considerable amounts of money, and I believe the question before us is one which "can only escape condemnation by avoiding observation." I believe it is our intention to do our duty in this respect, neither more nor less, let the charges come in any shape they may. Whether of obstruction, whether it unnecessarily prolongs the debate or otherwise, we intend to discharge our duty. We were glad that one member on the other side, the hon. member for Lincoln (Mr. Rykert), obtained permission