

Mr. CHARLTON. They were not made from this side of the House; and if they were not made by the hon. gentleman's followers, I do not know by whom they could have been made. The reason for such a suggestion does not exist. The application of the cloture in England was after vexatious opposition by a mere faction, blocking the wheels of legislation. No mere faction in this House opposes this measure; but a great party, representing the vast majority of the people of Canada to-day, oppose a measure which the people do not want; and for that reason there is no justification for the cloture or for that gag-law, the so-called application for the previous question, which obtains in the United States House of Representatives. I rise to refer more particularly to the charge made by the hon. gentleman, that members on this side of the House had been guilty of organised obstruction. In my opinion this Bill has been discussed properly and temperately, except on one or two occasions when the House insisted on sitting past two o'clock. As to the speeches on this side of the House, we have a very fair specimen in the excellent speech delivered by the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills) this afternoon. Of course, some may have been somewhat diffuse. Some hon. gentlemen may not have spoken with that terseness, with that degree of parliamentary skill which old parliamentarians may possess; but all of those hon. gentlemen have addressed themselves to the discussion with a sincere desire to present their views to this House and the country. The hon. gentleman asserted that but for this obstruction the discussion would not have been kept up the week before last, and the painful scene enacted, by which members were deprived of their rest. During the week before last, the first attempt made at the Monday Session, and continued until 10 o'clock Tuesday night was against the protest of the Opposition. The Opposition demanded an adjournment at 2 o'clock on Tuesday morning. That adjournment was refused by the Government majority. We were not obstructing the proceedings at that time. The discussion was conducted in a proper manner till two o'clock, when we were entitled to an adjournment. When the House met on Thursday, an adjournment was asked at 4 o'clock on Friday morning, the hon. member for Queen's (Mr. Davies), speaking for the Opposition, said, we would take a vote on the Indian clause and adjourn. That suggestion was declined, and we continued to sit through the entire day of Friday. We continued to discuss the question until Saturday morning at 1 o'clock. At that time the hon. member for Queen's (Mr. Davies) suggested that the House should take a vote on the Indian clause, pass all the sub-sections of the interpretation clauses, and adjourn. The hon. Minister of Public Works rose, and in some heat and with some warmth, refused to accede to that proposition, and the House continued to sit till Saturday at midnight, against our protest. The obstruction was against our protest. On Thursday evening the supporters of the Government came into this House supplied with pillows and bedding, and gave us notice that they intended to encamp on the field of battle. They came here with a declaration that they would wear the Opposition out, and we knew it was their intention to sit here until Saturday midnight, and so far as obstruction being practised by the Opposition, such was not the case. When two o'clock arrived we refused to proceed further with the discussion of the question, and we gave notice of our desire to adjourn, as it was perfectly proper for us to do. The hon. First Minister informed us that the minority should yield to the majority. When should they yield? Should they yield upon demand, or has the minority a right to insist on a free and full discussion by members of this House? An hon. gentleman says, yield "ere long." We will probably yield ere long. We will probably delay "ere long," as the First Minister sometimes does. But we have a right as a minority to debate every measure laid before this House and to give it full discussion; and it is a fault which has

characterised this House that many important measures have been permitted to pass without receiving proper discussion. Many important measures have gone on our Statute Books without that consideration which they should have received from this House. Now a measure of the importance of the one which is before the House at this time, is one deserving of full discussion. It was introduced, Sir, at a time when full discussion was hardly possible. The second reading of this Bill was taken just twelve days short of three months of the time the House assembled. That Bill was introduced at a late period of the Session as we all know, and when the consideration of that Bill was taken up we had many important measures to take into consideration. We had, for instance the terms of the re-adjustment with Manitoba; we had the Pacific Railway resolutions to consider; we had a number of Government measures with regard to the Inland Revenue Department; we had the Supply, and we all know that the Estimates cannot possibly be put through this House in less than two or three weeks, with anything like proper discussion; we had the Bill to modify the application of the Consolidated Insurance Act of 1877; we had another Bill to provide for the distribution of the assets of insolvent debtors; we had a Bill providing for the establishment of a court of claims; we had a Bill respecting real property in the North-West Territories; a Bill regarding the salaries of the Judges and other officers to be appointed under the Court of Claims Bill; we had a measure with regard to restricting and regulating the immigration of the Chinese; we had a Bill to provide for the fitting representation of Canada at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition to be held in London; we had an Act respecting the Revised Statutes; we had a Bill to provide for the better preservation of the peace in the vicinity of public works; we had an Act with regard to liquor licenses, and we had an Act with regard to the North-West Mounted Police. These are a few of the important measures which were before this House when this Bill received its second reading. This Bill was not introduced at the proper time. There is no use arguing before the House that the Bill now under consideration was introduced at as early a stage of the Session as it ought to have been introduced; and it is a measure, if the evident expectation of the hon. gentleman in introducing this measure has been met, which would not have received full consideration. It would have gone through the House, as the Gerrymander Act of 1882 did—against the protest of the minority, but without that full consideration of its details which it deserved. Now, all measures deserve full consideration, and especially a measure of the great importance of the measure now before the House. I take the liberty of reading one clause from Lieber on Civil Liberty and Self Government, with regard to the degree of discussion which public measures should receive. He says:

"An election which takes place to pass judgment on a series of acts of a person, or to decide on the adoption or rejection of a fundamental law can have no value whatever, if the following conditions are not fulfilled:

"The question must have been fairly before the people for a period sufficiently long to discuss the matter fairly, and under circumstances to allow a free discussion. Neither the police restrictions of Government nor the riotous procedures of mobs, nor the tyranny of associations ought to prevent the formation of a well sifted and duly modified public opinion. The liberty of the press, therefore, is a *conditio sine qua non*. If this be not the case, a mere general opinion of the moment, a panic on the one hand or a maddened gratitude, for real or imaginary benefits, of a multitude excited for the day or a period, may hastily and unrighteously settle the fate of generations to come, and passion, fear or vain-glory may decide that which ought to be settled by the largest and freest interchange of opinions and the broadest reciprocal modification of interests. It requires time for a great subject to present itself in all the aspects in which it ought to be viewed and examined, and for a great public opinion to form itself,—the more time the vaster the subject. All the laws regulating the formation of opinion in the individual apply with greater force to the formation of public opinion.

"All elections must be superintended by election judges and officers independent of the executive or any other organized or unorganized power of Government."