

they have done in their Local Legislature. How many were relieved there? How many were relieved by those hon. gentlemen in this House, when a dozen contractors, from the Speaker of the House down to hon. members, who were sitting here; when half a dozen, or seven or eight, of the hon. gentleman's friends were afraid to take their seats. Some resigned and were re-elected and others were rejected, and that hon. gentleman was always ready to pass an Act of Indemnity. It would sound very well, coming from the hon. gentleman, to talk in this way, if he could clear himself, and if his party had never done anything requiring an Indemnity Act. If such were the case, we could well understand their assumed purity and virtue in connection with these matters.

Mr. BLAKE. I beg to say that according to my knowledge and belief, and it has always been such, the hon. gentleman's seat was voided. I believe that was decided by the Privileges and Elections Committee, which decided the case of Mr. Anglin, and I believe if it had not been for the Indemnity Act, the hon. gentleman (Mr. Howell) would have been liable for the penalties. So with the case of the hon. member for Northumberland (Mr. Mitchell), who resigned in consequence; so was it with the late member for Restigouche (Mr. Moffat); so was it with the hon. member for Ottawa (Mr. Currier). So to say that that Indemnity Bill was designed to meet cases on one side and not on the other is—I will not repeat the hon. gentleman's offensive words. He will remember the words he used to me the other day; he can apply them to himself.

Mr. CHAPLEAU. I move that the clause be changed so as to read, "the penalty not to exceed a fine of \$1,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months." The idea of imprisoning a man for twelve months for giving a subscription of perhaps \$1 for election purposes, is preposterous.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I desire to direct the attention of the House to the nature of some of those offences, in cases covered by the Indemnity Bill, to show how contractors, such for instance as Mr. Currier, might be made liable to the clause in the present Bill. An officer of the Government went to his saw-mill and bought some boards which he wanted. Mr. Currier's man sold the boards and the bill was sent in in the ordinary way, in the name of Mr. Currier, who received the money but lost the receipt. Everybody in the House felt that the case was—

Mr. MACKENZIE. The hon. gentleman is mistaken.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I think not.

Mr. MACKENZIE. It was known and proved that Mr. Currier had been for years doing a large business for the Government—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. No, no.

Mr. MACKENZIE. I am quite sure.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. At all events, this individual sale was one such as any hon. gentleman might make in the ordinary course of business; it was a small account of \$2—that I am sure about. It struck me as being a very hard case. Suppose a case of this kind. Take the case of a trunk maker, or a man who makes boxes, and a contract is made with him to furnish ten, or twenty or thirty packing boxes for any of the Departments. He is to be paid for them; he is as much a contractor as if it were to build a railway or a canal, though the whole account may only be £10. Yet if he should accidentally, after becoming a contractor, give 25 cents to a boy on his first communion, for improper purposes, for political purposes, or without any purpose—if he subscribes \$1 to make up the \$200 for a candidate, or to

bring out a workingman's candidate who cannot raise the \$200—this man who has a contract for £10, which contract is not yet finished, is liable to be tried for a misdemeanour, and pay a fine of not less than \$1,000. The mere statement of such a case, shows with how little consideration the Act has been framed.

Mr. CASGRAIN. The Committee to whom the Bill was referred reported it in its present form, and I do not think it deserves the strictures which the hon. gentleman has thought proper to pass upon it. It is true, the Bill may not be as properly drawn as it might be, and that is the reason why last year I asked the House to give me the benefit of their assistance in making the measure as perfect as possible. Moreover, last year I asked the Government to take this measure off my hands, and make it a Ministerial measure. I did my best with the Committee, however, to frame the Bill as well as possible, and it is in the hands of the House. It is a public question; it is not my own private measure, though I have striven very hard to have it carried in the way in which I think it would be most beneficial to the public. At the same time, I repeat, it is more in the hands of the House than in my hands.

Mr. BERGIN. I do not feel disposed to vote for this amendment of the Secretary of State any more than I feel disposed to vote for this Bill, which appears to me to be most effectually framed as a means of executing private vengeance on a contractor who may dare to exercise his political opinions on any occasion. I do not know that this House has had before it any such tyrannical or arbitrary measure as this appears to be. No discretion is left to the Judge. No matter how trivial may be the offence, how small may be the sum, or how innocently it may be expended, the Judge must fine the man \$1,000, and he may also add a year's imprisonment. And the offence against public morality—the offence against public justice, does not end there. In addition to all that, if his contract happens to be a good one and he is obnoxious to the person who prosecutes him, or the Government who directs the prosecution, all his profits in that contract are to be taken away from him. I ask you whether it is just and proper, in a free country like this, that such a law should come in force. To test the opinion of the House, I move the Committee do now rise.

Mr. DAVIES. The hon. gentleman has taken certain objections to the Bill as it stands, but he has carefully avoided making any objections to the amendment proposed by the Secretary of State, which meets his objection. The Bill does not leave the matter in the hands of the Judge, but the amendment of the Secretary of State leaves him a discretion. It says that the man shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000—the fine may be \$1; or by imprisonment—not "and," it is disjunctive—of not more than six months; it may be an imprisonment of one hour.

Mr. BERGIN. Does not the hon. gentleman consider it of any consequence that the man should forfeit all his rights in addition. I object to the whole Bill, and I move, in amendment to the amendment, that the Committee do now arise.

Amendment to the amendment agreed to, and the Committee rose.

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT.

Mr. CAMERON (Huron) moved that the House resolve itself into Committee on Bill (No. 2) to amend the Criminal Law, and to extend the provisions of the Act respecting offences against the person.

Motion negatived on the following division:—