

was directed to the question of the Indian franchise. They spoke as if the hon. gentleman's motion that the committee rise was out of place, out of time, ill-considered, and that we should still go on to discuss the question; and for thirty-six hours, until the last two hours, hon. gentlemen opposite prevented the Chairman from putting the motion, which he tried again and again to do, and prevented the committee from coming to a conclusion upon it. If that motion had been lost, then the discussion would have gone on to the motion of the hon. member for Bothwell. But there was wilful obstruction, you see; and that it was obstruction was admitted, because—I did not happen to be here, but it has been reported to me, and I have no doubt it is the case—not one, but several gentlemen, threw across the floor that they were willing to carry the paragraph and the whole clause on certain conditions. They had no right to make such a proposition, unless the whole question was fully discussed. They were bound to fully discuss it. They were not doing their duty to make such a proposition, unless they felt that it was fully discussed, because the other proposition, the compromise thrown across the floor was not accepted. If it had been accepted I have no doubt the vote would have been taken on the paragraph. And yet, for a whole night and a whole day, these gentlemen have been discussing this simple Indian question, although they themselves were willing to vote on the clause twenty-four hours ago. After all, Sir, what is the question? The question is simply whether an Indian is a person. Now, the hon. member for South Brant rested very strongly upon the Indian Act. Well, as I said when the discussion on this clause first came up, I do not believe there was any necessity for putting in the word Indian at all. The definition of Indian in the Indian Act is simply this: That for the purposes of that Act, and for the purpose of construing the Act, an Indian meant so-and-so; but it is only for the purposes of that Act. An Indian is an Indian, a red man, whether enfranchised or unenfranchised, whether savage or civilised, whether educated or uneducated; and the definition in the Indian Act has no reference at all to this clause; and without the word Indian there, when it says that a person shall mean any male person, it would include the Indian as well as it would the African, the Chinaman, the American, or any individual who is a man at all. The only reason why I put in those words was that it might otherwise create a confusion in uninformed minds; it might bring up the question in uninformed minds, as uninformed as the hon. member for Brant (Mr. Paterson), who might make a mistake, and might suppose the interpretation of the word "Indian," in the Indian Act, would apply to a subsequent Act passed for a different purpose, with a different object, having no connection with the Indian Act or the provision thereof. But for the purpose of avoiding the possibility of misconstruction, the words "an Indian" were inserted as an amendment, as an afterthought; because I was afraid that it might be held, as the hon. gentleman was inclined to hold, and I think still holds, that this subsequent Act would be governed by a previous Act, with which it had no connection. Now, Sir, as has been said by my hon. friend who spoke last, this long discussion is in the wrong place. It is *a propos de rien*. It was simply on this interpretation clause; it was simply declaring that an Indian was a person. If a contrary argument were used, if the hon. gentleman contended that by the Indian Act an Indian was not a person, see what would follow. We have an Act in the Consolidated Statutes declaring that any person who, by malice aforethought, kills another, is guilty of murder. But if an Indian was tried on a charge of murder he would have to be acquitted, according to the idea of the hon. gentleman, because an Indian is not a person. The Indian Act declares that a person means everybody but an Indian, and therefore if an Indian mur-

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dered a man he cannot be found guilty. Because the law says, that any person who commit murder must be tried and convicted for murder, and be hanged; but the Indian Act says that an Indian is not a person; therefore he must go scot free. That is the argument of the hon. gentleman. Therefore, Sir, the whole of this discussion is waste of time, a criminal waste of time, a useless waste of time; and a waste of time deliberately planned, deliberately followed, for the purpose of wearying out, aye, wearying out the majority, as has been stated, and stated truly; and it can be proved, with the deliberate purpose of practising upon my supposed infirmities and my advanced years.

Some hon. MEMBERS. No, no.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. It can be proved, and if it be seriously denied, the proof can be produced out of the mouths of hon. gentlemen who sit on that side, that the plan was deliberately made to weary me out. It is a great compliment to my powers, to my position; it is a great compliment to me in every way, and I feel the compliment. But I do not think that it will redound to the credit of hon. gentlemen opposite, or any of those who entered into such an unworthy plan, such an unworthy strategy, such base tactics, in the minds of the people of this country. I state it again, that it can be proved by indisputable evidence, on the statements of hon. gentlemen opposite, that was a part of their tactics. But it will go to the country, and they will find, perhaps, that from poll to poll, from hustings to hustings, from platform to platform, they will find this ignoble system of political strategy thrown in their teeth by the manly electorate of the Dominion of Canada. However, Sir, it will soon be twelve o'clock. I fancy the practice must be this: As you, Sir, in the absence of the Speaker, hold the double position of Chairman of Ways and Means and of Deputy Speaker, you will have in some *pro forma* way to call some other hon. member to take your place as Chairman of the committee, and the committee will rise and report progress, and he will report to you in the chair. We will carry now, at twelve o'clock, the resolution of the hon. gentleman and those behind him, who would not allow it to be put twenty-four hours ago.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Ha, ha.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. They laugh, but is it not so, Mr. Chairman? If you could speak, Sir, if you could say yes or no, I would ask you whether you did not, again and again, try to put the motion of the hon. gentleman, and your attempt to put that motion was defeated by one hon. member after another getting up and repeating the same speeches over and over again. We must raise the committee, and I hope, Sir, that we will rise for the purpose of resuming this interesting discussion at three o'clock on Monday.

Mr. BLAKE. The hon. gentleman has stated that we have been for a great many hours discussing a motion to adjourn, and then preventing the putting of that motion. But the hon. gentleman has, as has often happened before, in the course of his argument, himself disproved his argument a little later on; because he stated that propositions, suggestions, had been made; and I myself heard an hon. gentleman ask, many hours after that motion was put, whether he would consent to an adjournment, and he said "decidedly not." We found it impossible to procure assent to that view from hon. gentlemen opposite; and if this discussion continued it was for that reason alone that it continued; and the House nor the country can be convinced that we have been preventing, I do not say the putting of the motion, but the carrying of the motion. The hon. gentleman says that there was a wilful attempt at obstruction, because there was a statement made from this side of the House that the discussion might cease upon the Indian question at this stage, on conditions, which conditions simply were that