

it was more than one hundred years later than that before the trial system against which hon. gentlemen are now inveighing was broken down in one of the most civilised countries of the earth, the north of Scotland—not until 1745, when Cumberland's troops marched through the north of Scotland and broke down the clan system—that not until then did my noble countrymen, having succumbed to the fortunes of war, acquire all the advantages of civilisation, with regard to such matters as are now under discussion. Lord Chatham, with that great foresight that always characterised him, saw in those men susceptibilities for great mental as well as physical development, and at once sought to enlist them in the British army, and to afford them opportunities of empire; and I think time and experience have demonstrated that those men, in many instances, proved themselves to be the strongest members of the British army in more than one country on the face of the earth, and qualified for the most honorable positions. Why, Mr. Chairman, it is not one hundred years since women were burned as witches in Scotland and elsewhere. It is not one hundred years since a Roman Catholic did not dare to own a horse in Ireland. It is not much over fifty years since a Roman Catholic, even in civilised England, was not entitled to the ordinary rights, the ordinary civil rights, that are now so freely bestowed throughout the whole United Kingdom. My hon. friend, in citing from the condition of Indian affairs in 1642, should see at once that the historical allusion has no bearing on this case. Those poor people may have been savages in that year, but he should not forget the development that has since taken place. He should not have forgotten that on many a hard-fought battlefield they were the allies of the British on this continent, they were the supporters of that very power we are now maintaining, and whenever the question of allegiance to the British sovereign was at stake, the Indian was found to be the faithful ally of Great Britain, whenever he was treated fairly. I think it is one of the greatest tributes to the wisdom of our treatment of the Indians that, while our Indians in the North-West, in their day of trouble, have acted with so much leniency and consideration towards their prisoners, we see, in the neighboring country, that where prisoners are taken by the savage tribes, their lives are not safe for a moment. I would say to my hon. friend from North Norfolk (Mr. Charlton), with regard to the progressive development of the Indian, what the poet said with regard to human progress, and I hope my hon. friend will take note of it:

"This fine old world of ours is but a child,
Yet in the go-cart;
Patience! give it time to learn its limbs;
There is a hand that guides."

And so there is a hand to guide the affairs of the Indian—but, Mr. Chairman, it is not the hands of hon. gentlemen opposite. If hon. gentlemen opposite could keep the Indian in primeval degradation and savagery, in the condition of 1642, they would do it. If hon. gentlemen could possibly extend the franchise to the other Indians in the North-West opposed to the Government, it might possibly suit their purposes better. The object of hon. gentlemen on this side of the House, and of the hand that guides, and I trust will long guide, is that when the Indians have shown, by progress, by development, by thrift, by culture, that they have acquired—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. MACMASTER. Hon. gentlemen sneer at the Indians; of course they do.

Some hon. MEMBERS. We do not.

Mr. MACMASTER. Hon. gentlemen sneer at the Indians, I repeat. They are not ready to recognise that

there has been any building up of the Indians from the place which they occupied in 1642 to the place which they occupy in the constituencies of North Norfolk and Bothwell, and some other constituencies. That is a delicate tribute paid by hon. gentlemen opposite to the condition of the Indians in their own particular constituencies. They have a right to their judgment, and the Indians will have a right to their judgment also. But I was proceeding to say that the hand that guides on this side of the House, the hand that guides in this House and in this country, and the hand that has guided in this country for thirty years, with the exception of some five years, during which period the affairs of this country were misguided, provides: That when the Indians have shown, by progressive development, by the acquisition of habits of industry and thrift, that they have become peaceful citizens and have respectively acquired property in a separate location to the extent of \$150, that Indian shall have a vote. You cannot change, in some respects, the conditions of his origin. He is an Indian, though an improved Indian. My own ancestors in the Highlands of Scotland had not escaped from the bonds of savagery 150 years ago.

Mr. BLAKE. They stole cattle.*

Mr. MACMASTER. I have no doubt my noble ancestors stole cattle and proved their powers in war by going down to the southern country; and no doubt they crossed the channel to where my hon. friend's ancestors were. They proved their prowess by the peculiar methods adopted at the time. But what are we proposing to do here? We say this: The Indians, as a tribe, possess certain property. It is theirs; it is not the property of the Government; it is the property of the Indians themselves.

Mr. PATERSON (Brant). Why, then, do you not let them sell it and handle it?

Mr. MACMASTER. We have had experience in past years on this subject. This is not a new question, and it has been determined that the Indians' property shall be taken care of in a peculiar, particular way, for their special benefit. Do hon. gentlemen say those methods are wrong? No. Those hon. gentlemen cannot make that statement. But what is proposed on this side of the House is this: That when an Indian has shown that he has, within the tribal property, a fixed location, not a vicarious occupation, and when he has placed on that piece of property improvements to the value of \$150, and thereby given proof of his thrift and industry, he shall have a vote. For my own part, I am not afraid to go to my county and defend that proposition before my Highland constituents; and no hon. gentleman on this side will have the slightest fear in going before his constituents and defending what is but simple justice to the Indian. The whole question is, whether an Indian, who has given such proof of thrift and industry, in putting improvements on his property to the extent of \$150, shall not be entitled to the franchise? I do not wish to make comparisons; but do we not give to the fishermen of the Lower Provinces the right to vote upon possession of property in nets and certain other property, amounting altogether to \$150?

Some hon. MEMBERS. No.

Mr. MACMASTER. It may be there is some real estate with it; but the whole is put together, and if the nets, boats and other property are, together, worth \$150, the fisherman is entitled to vote.

Mr. KIRK. He must own real estate in fee simple.

Mr. MACMASTER. If an Indian has \$150 worth of improvements on a fixed location he should be entitled to vote. Hon. gentlemen opposite want the Indian submitted to indignity, by asking that he shall be compelled to come

* See Mr. BLAKE's explanations, p. 2451; also Mr. MACMASTER's, p. 2619.