

sentative, and to strengthen their views by arguments. It is also the right of every member of this House, knowing that there are in his constituency men who are just as wise and perhaps wiser than himself, to pay the greatest attention to the views and arguments of his constituents, and if they appeal to his judgment, if they convince him that they are right, he has a perfect right to be influenced. But if, after listening to the views of his constituents and to their arguments and giving them proper consideration, he is convinced that it is he who is right, then I say the man who, because of the fear that he will not again be elected to this House, because some persons may withdraw their votes from him, is driven to vote contrary to his judgment and contrary to his conscience, has no right to represent a constituency in this House. I say that such a man cannot have his own self-respect, and he is not likely to receive even the respect of the man who wields the club.

Sir, speaking of the hon. the Prime Minister, it has been said by Conservatives, it has been said by Reformers, it has been said by men who have no great political inclination one way or the other, that the Grits never could get into power while Sir John A. Macdonald was alive; and that while Sir Wilfrid Laurier is alive and the leader of his party, the Conservatives never can get into power. I believe that a great many people in this country accept that statement as expressing the situation. I believe that a great many Conservatives accept that view, and without any regret they desire that Sir Wilfrid Laurier shall continue to be Prime Minister for many years to come. I believe there are many Conservatives as well as Reformers who believe that Sir Wilfrid Laurier stands to-day pre-eminently as the one man best fitted to occupy the position he now occupies as Prime Minister of this Dominion. But, Sir, there are in this country other people who so hunger and thirst for power, who perhaps having once tasted the sweets of office, hope to taste these sweets of office again, and there are others who are so bitterly partisan that they want their party to win whatever may be the result to the country, and who would like to see the political death of Sir Wilfrid Laurier as being the one thing that will give them a chance to come back into power. They are willing to shoot poisoned arrows and poisoned darts from any refuge, they are willing to draw the long bow, and stop at nothing to injure the premier and to cast him from the position which he occupies. I have heard it said that certain charges, that a great number of charges which have been made against the Prime Minister in this paper or in that paper must be true because they have not been denied. I say that every insinuation, every charge of littleness, of smallness, of subserviency,

Mr. MILLER.

of lack of integrity or of courage that has ever been made in any paper against the Prime Minister, has already been denied, has been loudly, emphatically and sufficiently denied, by the pure and spotless private life and public life of the hon. the Prime Minister. I believe that to-day as on the 4th of November last the great majority of the people of this country will trust and hope that Sir Wilfrid Laurier may long be spared to adorn the position he occupies to-day. They remember the lean years that preceded 1896, they remember the comparatively fat years we have had since 1896, they desire that Canada should be further developed, that her industries may be multiplied and her natural resources be made the most of, that Canada may be led to occupy a still prouder position among the nations of the earth, to enjoy a prosperity greater than it has yet enjoyed, and these men believe that she is likely to attain to that position of greatness far more rapidly under the leadership of our present Prime Minister. I am sure that the prayer of the people of this Dominion will be that a kind Providence may long spare the life and the health of Sir Wilfrid Laurier to occupy the position of Prime Minister, a man, Sir, who has known no north, who has known no south or east or west, who has known no creed or race, but who stands to-day and who has always stood for what is in the best interests of a united Canada and a united Canadian people.

Mr. W. D. STAPLES (Macdonald). It is with considerable nervousness that I rise for the first time to discuss the Bill which has been placed before us for our consideration by the right hon. Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). I do it with a full sense of my inability to reason all its features to the full. If I were out in my own constituency among fellow-farmers, I think I could reason out the question a little more to their satisfaction than perhaps I will be able to do in this House. I am surrounded by lawyers, by doctors, by commercial men and may I say ministers? Yes, I think I can well say ministers after listening to the hon. member who has just taken his seat. But, Sir, if the exhibition which the hon. gentleman who has just taken his seat (Mr. Miller) has made of himself is a true expression of the result of his solemn theological meditations, I do not think he would be a very inspiring expounder of the Gospel. Surely he does not kick up such a great racket when he gets behind his sacred desk, because, if he did, I would venture to think that he would not have a very large congregation when he finished his sermon. The gesticulations of the hon. gentleman and the sound of his voice as it echoed and re-echoed throughout the building I must confess almost made my hair stand on my head, and I am a politician from the wild and woolly west.