

to go on; but there is nothing before the committee now. I just want to put myself right.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN.¹ And there was nothing before the committee when the Minister of Finance made that rather peculiar speech.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. If the House wishes to allow the discussion to go on, it can do so.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. If necessary, I will move that the committee rise and report progress.

Mr. STOCKTON. And, Sir, in making that speech, as he intended no doubt, he aroused the enthusiasm of the gentlemen behind him. After the manner of an orthodox sermon, he divided his speech into three parts: first, that all could read, and therefore the inference was that all should understand thoroughly the meaning and the purport of this Bill, when only a few moments before that the Minister of Justice had said that he did not wish to give an explanation to this House because he had not his papers with him, and that he wanted an opportunity to get his papers and to collect his thoughts so that he might give us the meaning of the Bill. Now, that remark of the Minister of Finance, it appeared to me, came with a charming grace from that gentleman, when he stated no longer ago than yesterday that upon this question he had given his political conscience into the keeping of the Minister of Justice. His second head was that the hon. member for Toronto (Mr. Foster) had lost his exactness. Let me tell the Minister of Finance that in this legislation he has met with a more serious loss than the hon. member for North Toronto; he has lost his political consistency. Then my hon. friend the Minister of Finance said: look at the election of the member for Edmonton, the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Oliver). Will the Minister of the Interior rise in his place and say that he was elected as a cabinet minister because of the legislation that is proposed by the government with respect to the new provinces? No, Sir; I have yet to learn that the Minister of the Interior has made any such statement as that. But the most extraordinary part of the discussion was a point made by the Minister of Justice that the proposed amendment tabled by the First Minister was not, under the rules of the House, before the committee, and would not be before the committee until it had been moved by the First Minister. What did we vote on? Was it upon clause 16 as originally introduced, or upon clause 16 as proposed to be amended by the First Minister? What made it possible for the Minister of Finance to stand with his leader? Was it clause 16 as originally introduced, or clause 16 as proposed to be amended by the First Minister? Evidently there is a misapprehension with respect to this. Will the

Minister of Finance to-night say that he voted on clause 16 as originally introduced? Will any man behind the Minister of Justice stand in his place and say that he voted for clause 16 as originally introduced? Why, what was the position of the hon. member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton)? He left the government because of clause 16 as originally introduced. He came back because of the pledge and the promise of the First Minister that the amendment should go into the Bill when it came before the Committee of the Whole: and yet we were told by the Minister of Justice yesterday so as to harmonize himself with the Minister of Finance, that he was speaking on clause 16 as originally introduced, and that the Minister of Finance was speaking on clause 16 as proposed to be amended by the First Minister. If the Minister of Justice was speaking on clause 16 as originally introduced, then I say there was a misapprehension, to use no stronger language, towards the members sitting behind the First Minister and the other members of the government. What do the Liberal members from Ontario think on a question of that kind? Did they vote on the original Bill? Did the members from the west vote on the original Bill as introduced by the First Minister, or upon the amendment? And what brought back to the fold the hon. member for Brandon? I do not wish to use harsh language, but to my way of thinking it is imposing on the credulity of the members of this House to say that the Minister of Justice was discussing clause 16 as originally introduced, which we never intended to discuss or vote upon. I rather concur in the view of my hon. friend from North Toronto that we should not be hard on the Minister of Justice, that we should give him time to collect his thoughts and his papers, and to give to this House a full and accurate statement as to the meaning of clause 16 as proposed to be amended by the First Minister—the difference between the Bill as first introduced and the Bill as it is now proposed to amend it. If the Minister of Justice gives his attention to that as a lawyer, and gives his best judgment and opinion to the members of this House, it will at all events do something towards shaking the confidence of the Liberal members from the province of Ontario and the west. If they follow the constitutional opinion of the Minister of Justice—and he is capable of giving it—I think they will feel that there is something more in this legislation than is suggested by the Minister of Finance and the member for Brandon. Consider for a moment the position of the member for Brandon. He said after he came back to the fold, after he had been satisfied by the assurances of the First Minister and the members of the government, including, of course, the Minister of Justice, that he was satisfied that there was com-