

measure consistent with the advance made in public opinion, one that will be free from defects and embodying the wisdom learned by experience. He are quite prepared to take that position when the proper time comes; but as a humble member of this House I protest against proceeding with a Bill not needed now, but one which will simply be the means of delaying the legislation of this Parliament. Surely hon. gentlemen opposite cannot hope by pressing a discussion on a Bill of such importance—one that is contentious in its character, one that involves very serious changes, and one that involves the surrender of a Dominion franchise in favour of the franchise of the provinces—to forward public business. I care not if the franchise were such that they could be adopted in detail, or that we could make them conform in principle and essence to the principles of a Franchise Bill for the whole Dominion, I yet contend that there is no reason why we should adopt them and surrender our Dominion franchise. Vast changes have taken place during recent years in the franchises of the different provinces. In Ontario the franchise has been almost completely changed. In 1885 it was a property qualification; it was not then one man one vote. We have now in Ontario practically manhood suffrage. We have, moreover, in all the cities a system of registration such as is not provided for in this Bill. All these changes have taken place during recent years, and it is idle to say that the franchise as it formerly existed might be adopted without change. I simply point out these matters for the purpose of showing the difficulty of entering upon the discussion of a Bill that must necessarily occupy much time. If it was one that could be dealt with summarily, that would occupy only a day or two, that required little examination, there might be reasonable excuse for saying that the House might proceed with it; but this Bill will require considerable discussion, not for the purpose of raising contentions, but for the purpose of making it such a Bill as is required by the country. This Bill involves a new departure, it constitutes a new franchise, because as regards Ontario it is widening the franchise to manhood suffrage. The Bill refers to qualifications and conditions. This is simply one of the conditions that attaches to the franchise in Ontario, and under it a voter must be a resident within the province and also within the electoral district. I shall not enter into a discussion of the difficulties that will be met in seeking to accomplish the object aimed at, for I shall have another opportunity of doing so; but I wish, in conclusion, to enter my protest against proceeding with this Bill, knowing as I do, that it must be apparent to hon. members that the present discussion is fruitless, instead of proceeding with the tariff revision for which the country is now waiting. Hon. gentlemen

opposite may declare that the business of the country is not disturbed, but they are too close observers of public events not to have noticed that there are several branches of trade which have been severely injured. For instance, take the woollen business of this country, and we know that as a result of the delay in the revision of the tariff, it is almost a daily occurrence that certain of them are going to the wall. For the few reasons that I have given, and for many more that I have not attempted to urge upon the House, I shall vote for the amendment of the ex-Minister of Finance.

Mr. McMULLEN moved the adjournment of the debate.

Motion agreed to, and debate adjourned.

#### REPORT.

Annual Report of the Department of Public Works.—(Mr. Tarte.)

The PRIME MINISTER (Mr. Laurier) moved the adjournment of the House.

Motion agreed to, and House adjourned at 10.10 p.m.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, 12th April, 1897.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

PRAYERS.

#### THE CIVIL SERVICE.

Mr. McMULLEN moved for leave to introduce Bill (No. 29) in further amendment of the Civil Service Act.

Mr. BERGERON. Explain.

Mr. McMULLEN. My object in introducing this Bill is to secure the appointment of a Civil Service Board, clothed with authority to inspect the inside and outside services of the civil service of the Dominion, and to dispense with and remove any incompetent or unnecessary civil servant. From the opinion I have formed regarding our civil service, I do not believe that under the management of any Cabinet we shall get our staff of civil servants reduced to the proper number unless by the adoption of a measure of this kind and the appointment of a board such as that proposed. However willing Ministers may be to discharge their duty in the several departments. I have come to the conclusion that influences of one kind and another will be brought to bear in order to retain civil ser-