

brought to the attention of the House. There are rules governing the order of business, and these rules must be observed. Many members of this House are delayed in reaching matters in which they are interested. On the Order Paper, there are dozens of notices of motion and Bills which, under the rules of the House, cannot be reached at all this session. That is unfortunate; but our business must be taken in its proper order. The question of reciprocity having been referred to the Committee of Ways and Means, it must be taken up by that committee. There may be delays, but it is part of the system, and my hon. friend must possess his soul in patience until the business is reached in regular course.

Mr. FOSTER. Let me quote the rule which throws some light on this subject. Rule 25 provides:

The ordinary daily routine of business in the House shall be as follows: Presenting petitions,—

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Hear, hear.

Mr. FOSTER. That gives every man the right to present a petition from his constituency and that right cannot be denied him. What we got into the other day was not the mere presenting of petitions out of their places but the discussion which was carried on by means of resolutions and petitions and reading from the newspapers. That is what I objected to. But the matter of a constituent coming before this House through his member is a matter of right that cannot be taken from him and is affirmed by the rule that every one who has a petition to present gets an opportunity once every day to present that petition. But the presenting of the petition and the discussion of the question are different things.

Mr. LENNOX. He has the right to read it, has he not?

Mr. FOSTER. Yes.

COMBINES INVESTIGATION ACT, ATTEMPT TO RESTRAIN BOARD.

Mr. M. Y. McLEAN (South Huron). I observe a despatch in the 'Ottawa Citizen' this morning from Montreal to the effect that certain solicitors in that city have taken proceedings against the Board of Investigation under the Combines Investigation Act. It is claimed by the company that the appointment of the board is without jurisdiction, illegal, and that their appointment should be declared ultra vires and null and void. This is a matter of very great importance and I would ask if it has been brought to the attention of the government and what action the government propose to take in the matter.

Mr. KING. I received this morning from Mr. Justice Laurendeau, of Montreal, a communication in which he states that as chairman of the board of investigation appointed to inquire into the United Shoe Machinery Company and others alleged to be in a combine, he has been served with a petition for a writ of prohibition and asks what the board should do in the premises. The government have instructed counsel to appear to oppose the granting of this writ of prohibition in order that the proceedings contemplated by the Combines Investigation Act may be continued under that measure.

INQUIRIES FOR RETURNS, &c.

Mr. CAMPBELL. I beg to ask why the return of correspondence with regard to the Markey lease has not been brought down. All that correspondence is on file and it would not take a clerk three minutes to gather it up and put it on the table of the House.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The Minister of Marine is not in his seat, but I shall call his attention to it.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Will the First Minister use his influence to have it brought down?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I shall always be happy to accommodate my hon. friend when he is so reasonable as he is at present.

Mr. CAMPBELL. I would also ask why the hydrographic survey of Fort Churchill and the Nelson river which were completed last summer have not been laid on the table of the House. There is no reason why at least the Fort Churchill survey should not be brought down.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I agree that there is no reason why all the surveys should not be brought down. If the reports are completed they will be brought down.

Motion agreed to, and House went into Committee of Supply.

SUPPLY.

Department of Agriculture contingencies, further amount required, \$6,000.

Hon. SYDNEY FISHER (Minister of Agriculture). Most of this is required because we have had a large number of clerks on the sick list during this year and have had to employ temporary assistants to get through the work. When clerks who are paid out of the civil government are on the sick list and their pay is stopped, while the money is saved to the government, we are not able to use that money