

to a session 'per se': on the contrary, I am very glad indeed that we will have an opportunity, before we meet the electors, of proving from these hon. gentlemen's own mouths, of proving from their own official records, how absolutely and correctly every statement made from this side of the House, every prediction as to the ultimate consequences of the villainous policy of which these hon. gentlemen are the exponents, have come to pass and are verified to-day. But, Sir, while I have no objection at all to a session in itself, I have the very strongest possible objection to the course which the hon. gentlemen have pursued in defiance of custom, in defiance of precedents, in defiance of their own repeated promises in summoning the Parliament of Canada together at about the date when, with ordinarily good business management on their part, the Parliament of Canada ought to be ready to prorogue. Sir, the hon. gentleman told us that it is not a very grave charge at all, not a thing that is much worthy of the consideration of an important body like ourselves, if Parliament is summoned together nearly three months after its proper time. To the hon. gentleman's mind it is of very little consequence whether the 200 other gentlemen forming the great body of this House, are put to grave and serious inconvenience by the incompetence of himself and his colleagues; it is of very little consequence in the hon. gentleman's mind whether the whole mercantile community of Canada, whether every business man in Canada, is put to grave inconvenience by reasons of this extreme delay in meeting Parliament; it is of very little consequence in the hon. gentleman's mind, I suppose, whether the whole public service of Canada is gravely disorganized by reason of the extreme delay in summoning Parliament. Now, as to the idle pretense that there is any real difficulty, as to the idle pretense that these gentlemen if they were really possessed of the business capacity they claim, could not have met Parliament at the proper time, let me call the attention of the House to the way in which the public business was administered at a time when there were genuine business men in charge of the Government of this country. In the year 1875, Parliament met on 4th day of February; in 1876, Parliament met on 10th February; in 1877, Parliament met on the 8th of February; in 1878, Parliament met on the 7th of February. Sir, there are four successive years. We had important questions to deal with, we had deficits to face, we had a world-wide depression, a far greater depression than exists to-day, to contend with; but we never hesitated to meet Parliament, we never hesitated to meet the hon. gentleman's predecessors, we never hesitated to explain clearly what our policy was, we never hesitated to stand or fall by the course which we, in our consci-

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT.

ences believe, and which the history of Canada has since conclusively proved, was the policy which alone Canada could look to for safety and salvation, if Canada is ever to make a worthy and fitting use of the resources which Providence has placed at our disposal. The hon. gentleman is good enough to tell us that the lamented death of Sir John Thompson was a reasonable ground why Parliament should not be summoned together. Well, Sir, was there any change of policy caused by the death of Sir John Thompson? Did not these gentlemen tell us on all occasions that their policy is the same as his? Was there any very great alteration in the personnel of the Cabinet? Was there any great alteration in the offices held by these hon. gentlemen? Not, at any rate, so far as I am aware of. Sir, let their own acts, as usual, be the best answers to their own arguments. Sir John Thompson's death and the disorganization consequent thereon, the Minister of Finance tells us, was a ground for delay in meeting Parliament. If the sorrow which he and his colleagues, I do not doubt, sincerely felt, prevented them from attending to public business, their sorrow and this disorganization did not in the slightest degree prevent them from starting out and carrying on an electioneering tour from one end of Canada to the other during the months of January and February, and so much of March as was not occupied in other negotiations. Now, Sir, if these hon. gentlemen when they traversed Canada from end to end, when the Jamaica car, and the contents of the Jamaica car, was daily and hourly seen perambulating Ontario, when these hon. gentlemen were stirring up the country from one end to the other, these hon. gentlemen, I beg to tell them, were doing an extremely foolish act in their own interest if they really meant to have held a session. In the first place, these hon. gentlemen knew, and the Minister of Finance knew best of all, that by postponing the session to the 19th April, he had practically rendered it impossible that one single vote for the public service could be got through before the 1st of July of this year. He knows, and I know, and you know, and all hon. gentlemen who have any experience in public life, know, that we can hardly hope to see one single vote passed until the termination of this fiscal year. He knows, and I know, and all men of experience know, that the result will be to gravely inconvenience and gravely delay the public service; and the hon. gentleman considered all that a perfectly insignificant thing provided the temporary convenience or the political advantage of the Ministry were not disturbed or interfered with. Sir, I must say for my part—and I make the remark for the benefit of hon. gentlemen opposite—that it does look to me to be a very curious piece of strategy indeed. Why, Sir, what have these