

their policy. In connection with that matter we have a very vivid recollection of some incidents that happened which led us to suppose that the public had too much knowledge with respect to what was likely to happen. I would not charge the ex-Finance Minister with having given hints or winks to any particular section or individual, but we know that in 1894, when he added half a cent per pound to the tariff on raw sugar, some of the refineries in Halifax imported more sugar within the three months prior to the delivery of the budget speech than they had ever imported during a previous year. We do not know who gave the hint, or how the refiners got into possession of the fact that an increased duty on sugar was going to be levied. Whether they got it directly or indirectly we have no knowledge, but the fact remains that in some way they obtained an inkling of what was likely to occur, because two hon. members who then sat in this House, Mr. Kenny and Mr. Stairs, who were largely interested in those refineries, reaped a very fine harvest out of profits from the enormous quantity of raw sugar imported by those refineries before the duties were levied. Of course no Government is justified in giving a hint in respect to proposed tariff changes.

The ex-Finance Minister also spoke with respect to the necessity of avoiding a long spring and summer session, and he urged that we should get through the work rapidly; that many of the members had very important interests to attend to at home, and it was desirable that they should be relieved from their duties as soon as possible in order that they might attend to important private business. I have gone over the record and ascertained to what extent the hon. gentleman who now makes this plea on the Government and the House, sought to allow members to engage in their regular work during spring and summer, and I ascertained that out of eighteen years, the House was in session during sixteen springs and summers. That is the record of hon. gentlemen opposite, that is his record as a Minister, while now he is seeking to find fault with the present Government on the ground that they did not call Parliament earlier in order that members could get away to attend to their spring and summer business.

The hon. gentleman has also declared that it is not the intention of the Reform party to fulfil their pledges, and he has outlined a number of pledges given by the party which so far have not been carried out. The hon. gentleman evidently expects that a Government that has only been in power a few months should be prepared during practically its first session to implement every promise made. I do not think it was reasonable to expect the Government to do so. The Speech from the Throne foreshadowed certain measures to carry out promises that the Government have made when in Opposi-

tion. One of the leading features in the Speech is the tariff. It is fully the intention of the Government to carry out that promise as one of their principal measures. After the tariff is dealt with, the proposed Franchise Act, which unquestionably will meet the wishes of the people, will be taken up; and if the Government get through the measures outlined in the Speech from the Throne, they will accomplish a great deal in the direction of carrying out the promises made to the people of the country.

The ex-Finance Minister also drew attention to the Bill before the House with respect to superannuation, and he said it did not abolish superannuation. I should like to know from the hon. gentleman if he would justify the introduction of a Bill containing more drastic clauses than the one now before the House, and which he has declared himself quite willing to assist in carrying through Parliament. I believe that the Postmaster General, who introduced the Bill on the question of abolishing the superannuation system, no doubt was prepared to go as far as the abolition of the Act as was fair to the civil servants. The civil servants have certain vested rights. They were engaged and entered the service on certain stipulated conditions. Those conditions were that after they had occupied positions in the service for ten years and had contributed to the superannuation fund by reductions made from their salaries, every permanent civil servant had a claim on the Crown for superannuation, and the result is that if the Crown expects loyalty from their public servants, she must deal honestly and honourably with them. I would like to ask the ex-Finance Minister (Mr. Foster), what kind of a Bill he would introduce? Would he deprive those who are now on the superannuation list of the amount they are enabled to draw under the operations of the Act? I do not think he would be so dishonest. Would he deprive those who are now in the service, and who are entitled to superannuation if they become sick and disabled and have served over ten years? That was the bargain and contract with them when they entered the service, and would the hon. gentleman take advantage of a power of Parliament to break that contract? I do not think he would.

Sir, I want to draw attention to the handle that is attempted to be made by the Conservative press of a recent statement of the Finance Minister (Mr. Fielding) in this House. In reply to the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) the name of every one of those superannuated since the present Government came into power was given to the House, and the Conservative party is trying to prove that the Reform party have superannuated, as well as the Conservative party, when they were in power. Sir, there is no member of this House who has more frequently criticised