

AGE OF SPECIALISTS

We live, sir, in an age of specialists. Business men realize this, all men in private life realize this, that we live in an age of specialists. In an age, for example, if something went wrong with the heating apparatus in one's house, one would not send for a physician, but for a plumber or a man skilled in that line of work. If a man were ill he would not send for a land surveyor, but for a man skilled in curing diseases. So, here, if we follow the conditions of ordinary business in the country, and do in this House what we naturally would do in the conduct of our own business at home, we would select men who are specialists in that work, select for example High Court Judges, whose whole life is given to the hearing and weighing of evidence, and the finding of facts just as the Leader of this House proposes. (Applause.)

FOUR VIEWPOINTS

I said last evening that I intended to discuss this question from four standpoints. First, along the line of precedent; second, and in this I may be brief, owing to the nature of the bill which has just been read a first time, as to whether a Committee of the House would have more power than a Commission of Judges to take evidence, or rather to force the evidence of an unwilling witness along the line of evidence that might tend to incriminate him. In the third place I wish to trace the history of the amendments to the particular statutes under which we are sending this on to a Commission; and lastly, what is most important, the scope of the Commission itself.

PRECEDENTS

IMPEACHMENT CASES

Now, Mr. Speaker, I was particularly struck with the remark made by the member for W. Lambton, Mr. Hanna, in the very forcible speech which he delivered the other day, and while he may not agree with all I may say to-day, I hope to carry him with me to a certain extent to see whether he will approve of following the precedents of the British House of Commons, the mother of parliaments. The member for W. Lambton stated in effect—to use the very words—that there was “an impeachment against the Provincial Secretary.” That is true in substance and in fact, if not technically. I propose to show how the British House of Commons deals with such cases. We will go back to the time of Edward III. when Latimer was impeached, or to the time later on when Warren Hastings was impeached, or to a still later date, the last impeachment, that of Lord Melville. We may note here that the procedure in the last case is the one always quoted, in fact, the latest case is always cited as the ruling case, although in these three cases it is practically the same in each case. After the impeachment of Latimer, the House of Commons again for a time referred such matters to a