

opposite, as well as of hon. gentlemen on this side, in making reasonable provision to see that Canada is fairly and properly represented, as Canada ought to be, on an occasion of this importance. I quite agree with what has been said on both sides of the House as to the importance of the occasion, and as to the importance of Canada making it plain to every section of the British Empire that the people of Canada are thoroughly determined to preserve law and order in this part of the continent that has been committed to their charge, and that they are well able to do so. I trust, if not to-morrow, at any rate immediately on the reassembling of the House, to be able to communicate full details to the House; but the House will understand that while these negotiations are pending, it is not desirable to go into minute details as to the number of the contingent, and other matters of that sort.

Motion to adjourn negatived.

#### INDIAN AGENT CROWE.

Mr. McNEILL. Before the Orders of the Day are called, I would like to ask the hon. the Minister of Interior whether his reply is correctly reported in the "Hansard" of yesterday, where he said, in reply to my question as to the dismissal of Mr. Crowe, Indian agent at Saugeen :

Inspector Macrae's instructions required him to investigate the matter in regard to which Mr. Crowe has been adjudged guilty of irregularity.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR (Mr. Sifton). That is correctly reported.

Mr. McNEILL. Will the hon. gentleman lay the instructions and report upon the Table ?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I have no objections to doing so.

#### THE FRANCHISE ACT.

House resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. Fitzpatrick for second reading of Bill (No. 7) to consolidate and amend the law relating to the election of members to the House of Commons; and the motion of Mr. Foster in amendment thereto.

Mr. McMULLEN. In rising to reply to the address delivered by the hon. the ex-Finance Minister on Friday last, upon the franchise question, and in which he wandered over the entire record, I desire to recur to a few points that he attempted to make upon that occasion. First of all, he complained that Parliament had been summoned too late this year. Well, we know that it is desirable, all things being equal, that Parliament should meet as early in the year as possible, but we know that the present Government have met with great difficulties in the way of summoning Parlia-

ment at an earlier period of the year. Hon. gentlemen opposite are well aware that the Government intended to summon Parliament at an earlier period, but, unfortunately, a fire in the departmental buildings necessitated a postponement; and then, again, another accident occurred whereby the hon. the Minister of Militia was very seriously injured, and that was the cause of a further postponement of the meeting of Parliament. The ex-Finance Minister has been calling loud and long and pointedly for the delivery of the Budget speech, but I think he has no reason to complain when we look over the history of the past and see at what dates, under the Conservative Government, their Budget speeches were delivered. I have looked at the dates on which those budget speeches were delivered by the hon. Finance Minister, including tariff changes, and found that the first was on May 12, 1887, the next on March 27, 1890, and the other on March 27, 1894. The first budget speech delivered by the hon. gentleman was delivered about one month after the date on which it is now announced that the budget speech would be delivered during the present session, and the others were only some twenty-five days earlier. On those occasions the hon. gentleman had not to contend with a fire, which destroyed two or three important departments, and other difficulties with which the present Government have had to contend. So I do not think there is room for the complaint made by the ex-Finance Minister. The hon. gentleman claims a great deal of credit for delivering his speech in 1894 so short a time after Parliament assembled. We know on that occasion he delivered the speech a few days earlier than was the ordinary rule, but that was the one exception in his political lifetime. We should also remember that prior to the delivery of that speech, considerable reductions in the tariff were promised, and that when it was delivered it was in such a crude and unsatisfactory form that when the hon. gentleman came to explain the alterations, clerical errors almost innumerable were found to exist. Rather than have a repetition of the experience of 1894 by a Finance Minister before this House and the country, it is very much better that a fair portion of time should be given to the Finance Minister to properly and carefully prepare the changes he desires to make in the tariff, so that when they come before the people there will not be unpleasant explanations to offer, such as were necessary on that occasion owing to the mixed and muddled details of the budget speech, which was full of clerical errors, as the then Finance Minister admitted. Then, again, the hon. gentleman has intimated that the country was fairly aware of the line the Government would pursue, that the people were not taken by surprise, that there was always a well understood principle at the bottom of their tariff and