

House who spoke admitted that they had come to parliament on the understanding that there was no indemnity to members, and therefore if there should be any change in the law that change should come into effect only when the present parliament had expired. The very same principle was enunciated in a remarkable way by Mr. Balfour, the late Prime Minister. We all know that until very recently the Prime Minister of England had a place away down in the order of precedence. It has now come out that the King in his wisdom thought the time had come when the Prime Minister should take his proper rank in all state functions, and he suggested to Mr. Balfour that the Prime Minister of England should rank next to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. And while Mr. Balfour agreed with the King and believed that the Prime Minister should rank as His Majesty desired, yet he begged His Majesty that the rule should only apply to his successor. That is the principle which should actuate the members of this House in any matter connected with the increase of their indemnity. That is the principle we should have carried out if we wanted to increase the salaries of members of parliament. If we thought it was well it should be done, we should have enacted that the law should not come into force until after this parliament, and until the people had an opportunity of expressing their judgment upon the matter.

Now, there is not a man in this House who can go before the people and justify that increase in view of what has taken place in England. We should have referred the matter to the people; we should not, immediately after a general election, where not one man raised his voice in favour of such an increase, have increased the indemnity in the very first session. Hon. gentlemen on this side of the House will find that it will cause them more trouble than it will cause hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House, and I will try and give them a reason for that. Since we met here last session there have been eight vacancies on the other side of the House, and, with the exception of two deaths, six of these vacancies were caused by hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House taking office. When the five years of this parliament have expired, nearly every man on that side of the House will have taken office and gone into retirement, and the members of the opposition will be left to face the people as the men who passed the Indemnity Bill and will have to take the responsibility for it. It will never pay an opposition to sit down with the government party when such things as I have referred to can take place. In that election a lot of fresh Liberals will come before the people of Canada as candidates, and they will actually stand before the people and condemn that indemnity grab

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN.

which the wicked Conservatives passed in 1905. I want to tell gentlemen on this side of the House another and a worse feature of that indemnity grab. It bears this construction, that that vote was designed by some clever manipulator in the interest of the government and the government party to silence criticism and discussion of these Indemnity Bills of last session. When I recall the conduct of the Minister of Justice in connection with them and how he smoothed all the ways to get the Bills through, I believe that he had gone to some expert in casuistry who told him that if he wanted to tie up the opposition for good, the way to do it was to get them into some scrape of this kind, in connection with something that concerned their honour before the people of this country—to get them into some position where they would not be able to go before the people for a year. Whether that was really done or not, all we know is this, that in the recess, by reason of the public indignation over this salary grab, hardly a member of parliament has dared to face his constituents and discuss either the Autonomy Bills or the salary question. There has been a silence in the country throughout the recess. Hardly any member has gone back to his constituents; hardly any member has discussed public questions, and in nearly every case where a member has attempted to discuss public questions, instead of discussing such questions as the Autonomy Bills, the discussion turned to asking the member what about the salary grab. So that we have had a recess with very little public discussion; and now we are to have a session without a discussion of any public question whatever. We have asked the people to increase our indemnity from \$1,500 to \$2,500 and we are to do no business; we are not to consider the public questions in which the people are interested. The Minister of Finance is ill and cannot take his place in the House, and we are to have a short session. Why did we increase our indemnity if we are not prepared to discharge the public business? All the people will ask is that. What can we say? So I trust that the Bill which the Minister of Justice introduced this afternoon has a clause in it repealing all these votes. If it has not, I intend to move an amendment in this House to that effect, and I intend to show the courage of my convictions in regard to it which were called in question in this House this afternoon. So that hon. gentlemen will have an opportunity in connection with that measure of placing themselves on record on this question. I claim no credit whatever for myself in this matter. I am just as much besmirched, if you use that word in connection with it, as any other member; but I do now see the iniquity of the proposition, and I am willing to abide by the verdict of the people in regard to it, and have it repealed because it was wrong and because it was not a fair