

for this delay? It is that there are certain things about that tariff that it is feared when they are made public, will have an adverse effect upon the party interest in Nova Scotia, and there is a desire to get these elections over before the tariff is brought down. Is that the reason hon. gentlemen opposite are unwilling to bring it down? It looks so upon the face of it. Here we have an important industry, at the head of this syndicate, of which Mr. Hardy, the Premier of Ontario, at Brantford, spoke as a syndicate of outsiders, of New Yorkers and said, that for the sake of these, the farmers of Ontario and the railways of the country have to pay the higher duty on their coal. These men, this syndicate, wherever they may reside or however many they may be, are told a thing which puts their business on a solid basis, if the tariff does not come down for fifteen months or more. Do you mean to say that all these things can be put together and you can keep this country from believing that this unwillingness to bring down the tariff is due to the political necessity felt by hon. gentlemen opposite to carry their party in the province of Nova Scotia safely through the elections before any disturbing questions with reference to the tariff are raised? And that when the way it may affect certain interests in Nova Scotia is known the effect might be to alter very much the political sentiment in the province? Are they delaying, not for business reasons, not because of the condition of the United States tariff, but because of the party and political necessity which they feel is laid upon them to have those elections out of the way before they bring down the tariff? And for this the business interests of the country are asked to wait, day after day, week after week, and month after month. By-elections are on in the province of Manitoba. When this tariff comes down, it may be found that certain promises which were made to the western people have not been carried out. It is of great moment to the Liberal party that they shall have the by-elections there over, as far as possible, before the tariff comes down. If that tariff is in any degree disappointing to the west, and if my hon. friend the Finance Minister is going to give the coal interests of Nova Scotia high protective duties, how can he avoid giving the implement men their duties, how can he avoid giving other industries their duties? And if he gives these how can he avoid the difficulty that the men of the west to whom they have promised free trade will feel that these promises have not been fulfilled, and that they have been deceived in this matter and consequent discontent and dissatisfaction will arise. This aspect of the case is one which ought not to be ignored. If these hon. gentlemen are unready, they are at fault. I cannot think that, when they have had nine months to spend upon this question, after long years of constant iteration

of their policy, they are not ready. And, if they are unwilling, and there is no reason for delay except party and political reasons, I can only say that is not sufficient reason why we as Her Majesty's loyal Opposition, should sit on this side and not raise our protest against any further deferring of the tariff measure which the business of the country needs, and especially deferring it in favour of a Bill for which there is no present necessity, however much necessity there may be hereafter. Now, these are the points of my arguments and remarks: That we are in a short session, called late, and ought to get through at an early period; that it is the business of a Government that wishes to get through with its business well and speedily to present and press forward first those Bills which are of the greatest importance and to leave to later in the session any business which is not of present practical importance. The most important of all measures promised is the tariff measure, and it is that which the country is looking for and asking for; and I say that the Opposition would not be doing its duty to the business interests of the country if it did not protest against the intervention of a measure which is of no practical importance at the present time. But pressing this measure would not be so bad, even though it was of no practical importance, were it not for the fact that it is the most contentious measure that could be brought before this House. Hon. gentlemen opposite know that. We know the history of this legislation in this House. My hon. friend (Mr. Laurier) knows that the Bill he is introducing by the Solicitor General (Mr. Fitzpatrick) is retrograde in its principles, looked at from the Dominion point of view. He knows it is a Bill which, if carried out—

Mr. WOOD (Hamilton). The most obnoxious Bill ever placed on the Statute-book.

Mr. FOSTER. This one will certainly be so, I agree with my hon. friend. I am glad that for once, at least, I can agree with him, that this Bill, when it goes upon the Statute-book, will be the most obnoxious Bill that has ever been placed there.

Mr. WOOD (Hamilton). The old Bill, I mean.

Mr. FOSTER. My hon. friends opposite know that this is designed to strike the Conservative party; they know that it is designed for that purpose. The principle that is involved in it is as to whether gentlemen sitting in this Parliament shall have control of their own constituencies, or whether they shall give that control over to a possibly adverse power, a power over which they can exercise no control at all. The principles of that Bill, if I understand it rightly, propose to take our constituencies, and the power of forming these constituencies, from the gentlemen who sit here as