

parliamentary government began, that is to say, to demand the redress of grievances before Supply is voted. Here it is in plain words:

'On Thursdays and Fridays when the Order of the Day is called for the House to go into Committee of Supply or Ways and Means, Mr. Speaker shall leave the Chair without putting any question.'

Why should Mr. Speaker on Thursday and Friday leave the Chair without putting a question? To prevent the Opposition from moving motions concerning the conduct of the Government of the day. Parliamentary government in England goes back many ages. England, up to the time of the French revolution, was the only country in the world in which the people were taxed only with their own consent, and in which the people, when giving their consent to be taxed, presented their grievances to the King. In every other country of Europe, even the most civilized, the people were taxed by the Sovereign without reference to their means to pay taxes. They had not the power to declare that they would not be taxed by their own consent. But in England the subject would not pay a penny of taxation except by his own free will; and when he was asked to tax himself, then he had his opportunity to present grievances to the King. That most valuable right of the British subject has been in existence for six hundred years; and it is proposed to-day to deprive us of it. This is applying the gag with a vengeance.

The Consequences of Injustice

Let me repeat to my right hon. friend: As you sow, so shall you reap; as you are fair so shall you meet with fairness; as you are unjust, so shall you meet with injustice. My right hon. friend two years ago took a certain attitude on the Reciprocity Bill; he has no right to complain if the same method that he made use of is applied to him in the present case. My right hon. friend has not forgotten the words of Shakespeare:

"—this even handed justice

Commends the ingredients of our poisoned chalice

To our own lips."

The poison that he offers to us to-day will come to his own lips at some future day. We are in the minority; we can be gagged; we can be prevented from expressing our opinions; they can trample upon our rights. But, Sir, the day of reckoning will come, and it will come as soon as we have a dissolution of the present Parliament.

161

3816 x 8 ✓