

that that is not his motive. It would be most improper for me to answer his question. If a tariff Bill was before the House, then he could put his question. Why chase all these unreal shadows? If my hon. friend will put before me any speech that I made, I shall try to justify it. But when he asks me to take up his time, my own time, and the time of the House in order to say what I think about certain airy statements that might have been made or might not have been made, he must see that he is asking me and the House to do something that is very wasteful of their time, besides being unbusinesslike.

Mr. PUGSLEY: My hon. friend the Minister of Trade and Commerce is making use of his great abilities to throw dust in our eyes. For a great many years I have followed at a long distance my hon. friend along intellectual lines. I have been trying to learn from him, and I have learned enough to know when he is really speaking right out from the heart, and when he is making use of his great ability in handling words to convey a meaning perhaps different from that which in other circumstances he would convey. Does my hon. friend think it is wrong for us to ask him as the Nestor of his Government, as one who ought to be and who, I think, is, one of the most influential, if not the most influential member of his Government in trade matters, and who stands head and shoulders above any other man of this Government in ability, political knowledge and experience—and I say that without any disparagement to other members of the Government—

Mr. HENDERSON: I think that will surely bring an answer.

Mr. PUGSLEY: I have great respect for my hon. friend from Halton.

Mr. MACDONALD: He is not saying much about preference now, although he used to say a lot about it.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Yes, and I have also in my eye the hon. member for Peel (Mr. Blain). I am surprised at the way in which his thirst for knowledge has been completely extinguished since this Government came into office. His terrible horror at newspapers friendly to the Government getting advertisements, his horror that patronage committees should recommend appointments and all that sort of thing—these have all passed away, and my hon. friend appears as a different character altogether. But he is not singular in that respect, for we find the change in many other hon. gentlemen opposite.

Mr. BLAIN: My hon. friend could take a little of that to himself.

Mr. FOSTER (N. Toronto).

Mr. PUGSLEY: Would my hon. friend elaborate that a little bit?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Carried.

Mr. PUGSLEY: I apologise to my hon. friend the Minister of Trade and Commerce for allowing myself to be diverted from the subject.

Mr. FOSTER: It is very amusing; go on.

Mr. PUGSLEY: As I have said before, this Bill provides in paragraph 3 that the preference to be given to the West Indies is to be thirty-three and one-third per cent, so long as the British preference lasts, but that then it is to be immediately changed to twenty per cent. Surely, Mr. Chairman, in the discussion of an important matter like this, this House has the right to know whether the Government is in favour of doing away with the British preference unless the British Government give Canada a preference in return. My hon. friend says that I am trying to get information about tariffs and that this House has no right to any information upon the tariff until His Royal Highness the Governor General submits some recommendation upon the subject. Let me say to my hon. friend that that rule does not seem to have prevailed in the Department of Public Works recently; because we find that, on the occasion of a by-election in the province of Nova Scotia, not very long ago, there went out from the Department of Public Works, in anticipation of the Estimates to be laid before the House, a statement of the amount which had been placed in the Estimates for this year, and not only what had been placed in the main estimates, but what had been placed in the Supplementary Estimates for next year. I am prepared to admit, Mr. Chairman, that this is something which has been unheard of in connection with the Government of this country in the past. This Government seems to have adopted a different rule. I think this Government have come to the conclusion that they ought to give information to the public in advance of what His Royal Highness the Governor General might recommend to the House. I will give my hon. friend another example. In the past it has always been deemed proper that any communication between the home Government and His Royal Highness the Governor General should be submitted to Parliament before that information was submitted to the people of the country, yet we know that only two or three weeks ago there came a dispatch from the Colonial Secretary to His Royal Highness and that, before that dispatch was submitted to Parliament, it was published broadcast in the Conservative newspapers. I take it that this Government have adopted, and