

been authorized by parliament at all, and large sums have been expended for purposes as to which parliament had never pronounced an opinion. The present case is different altogether. The money has been spent solely for the purpose of paying the public servants. That is a duty which had to be performed. There was no question but that those servants had to be paid, and the fact that the money was not there to pay them was a totally unforeseen and unprovided for circumstance. There is this circumstance which may be added. I do not profess to be very much of a lawyer, but the hon. Minister of Justice is in front of me and will be able to decide whether or not my law is sound. My impression is this, that in the great majority of cases these public servants were in a position to bring suits for their salaries or wages, as the case may be, if not paid.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON, P. E. I.—Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. POWER—The hon. gentleman says "hear, hear." Does he think that the government should have waited until those public servants brought suit before paying them? The common sense of every hon. member of this House and the common sense of the country most emphatically approve of the conduct of the government in having issued those warrants for the purpose for which they were issued. If hon. gentlemen wish to learn something of warrants issued for other purposes—for purposes which were not justifiable at all, then let them read the debates which took place in the other House in the sessions of 1887 and 1891. They will find that millions of dollars were spent, the expenditure of large portions of which had never been authorized by parliament at all, and those large sums were spent on the eve of elections and spent in such a way as to leave the almost positive inference that they were used for the purpose of influencing the elections. That is the kind of Governor General's warrant which was objected to, and that is the kind of Governor General's warrant which was issued under the late administration. Why, the hon. gentlemen issued several warrants between the time parliament was prorogued in April last and the 23rd of June. The next paragraph of the speech is :

Under these circumstances and in view of the fact that you will be required to re-assemble early

in the ensuing year, it does not appear expedient to invite your attention to any measures beyond the passage of supplies.

I think, again, any hon. gentleman who simply exercised his common sense, and the average wayfaring man outside of parliament, would say that paragraph was a matter of course. The government have hardly got comfortably seated in their places, and it is unreasonable to expect that they should have measures prepared for the consideration of parliament. It is a very remarkable circumstance, that gentlemen who have sat, not only in parliament, but in governments, seem to think that the new government should have come down this session with a long programme of important measures to be submitted to parliament, and above all, that they should have brought in a complete measure of tariff—I should say reform, perhaps hon. gentlemen on the other side will call it something else—but that they should have brought in a completely new tariff, and that they should have produced, almost as if by magic, a complete, final and satisfactory adjustment of the Manitoba school question. One can hardly believe that these gentlemen are serious in the attitude that they assume. Some newspapers, I see, take somewhat the same ground. The late government undertook to reform their tariff, and did they do it in the space of a month? Not at all. The then Minister of Finance announced in the session of 1893, in a semi-official way, that the tariff was to be revised and the mouldering branches lopped off. The matter was placed in the hands of the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Trade and Commerce and the two Controllers. These gentlemen acted in a very proper way, and went about the country collecting information as to the manner in which the tariff was to be reformed. It took at least a year before the late government got to the first step, of introducing a measure. The hon. gentleman, I suppose, could hardly help smiling when he found, after all that preliminary work, after all that painstaking and valuable work in which he took so important a part himself, when the session of 1894 was over, that the tariff was not reformed at all. It was practically the same old tariff, a little worse in some places and a little better in others. The statistics gathered since then show that, as far as it was a burden on the consumers of the country,