

Finance in amendment to the motion of the hon. Minister of Finance. Sir, the people of the country, I am satisfied, will give these hon. gentlemen no credit for the factious opposition which they are offering to the new Administration, which has thus far acted in the best interests of Canada. I appeal to my hon. friends, I appeal to every honourable man in this House, to look at this matter fairly and squarely, and to say that in this motion the hon. ex-Minister of Finance has not exercised that shrewdness and sagacity which usually characterizes him, but that the whole thing is a weak piece of business, not deserving of the support of any intelligent member of this House.

Mr. CRAIG. I shall not detain the House very long, but desire to say a few words on this question. I was rather surprised to note the difference of tone between the speech made by the hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright) and that of the hon. gentleman who has just taken his seat (Mr. Lister). The Minister of Trade and Commerce admitted that this was an important question, worthy the serious consideration of the House, and of the fullest discussion that can be given it. The hon. member for West Lambton (Mr. Lister), however, thinks it is a question of no importance at all. He charges the Opposition with wasting the time of the country and with not knowing what we are doing. He charges us with talking nonsense, but I must say that, listening to the speech of the hon. gentleman, I concluded that he must have imagined he was addressing an audience from the stump. Why, he even found fault with the admirable speech of the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Borden)—a speech which commanded the attention of every other member of this House, a speech which may be rightly characterized as an argument, and that is a description which I am sure could not be applied to the speech of the hon. member for West Lambton. Sir, the hon. member for Halifax did just what the hon. member for West Lambton said should be done in treating this question. He treated it, not as a party, but as a legal question. He discussed the statute, its meaning and its limitation. Did the hon. member for West Lambton so discuss it? Why, he commenced by ridiculing the hon. member for Halifax. He talked about him as a pervers, and he said that pervers were always noted for their zeal. Well, I do not intend to allude to any converts on that side of the House, because I hold that any hon. member has the perfect right to change his opinions on political questions, and it is no reproach to any man in this House that some years ago he held different political opinions from those he holds to-day. So that I think that the remarks with reference to the hon. member for Halifax which the hon. member for West Lambton made were uncalled for. They showed simply that the

hon. member for West Lambton felt himself unable to refute the argument, and therefore resorted to ridicule instead of serious discussion. But, I am happy to say, such an attempt at ridicule fell extremely flat, and had not the slightest effect on the House or on the hon. member for Halifax, who is too well known as a lawyer, and who enjoys too high a reputation in his profession, to be at all affected by anything which the hon. gentleman could say against him. I was rather amused with the remark made by the hon. member for West Lambton, that this Government had the advantage of the favourable opinion of the highest authority in this country, when I found out that this authority was a member of the Government which had done this very thing. Well, Mr. Speaker, there is no man in this House respects more highly than I do the hon. Minister of Justice (Sir Oliver Mowat). I had the pleasure of being with him in the Ontario legislature. I learned to respect him there and I respect him still, but I do not hold that his opinion on this question is equal to that of a disinterested outside lawyer, because he is one of the parties interested. While I am satisfied that he thinks he is right, that does not prove he is right, and I do not know that it will justify to the country the issuance of these warrants. I was very sorry to notice that while the hon. member for West Lambton said that this question should be treated apart from all reference to party, as I think it should be, and as I intend to treat it, he discussed it himself solely from that point of view, and went on to talk of the course of the late Government during last session and the course of the party supporting it, and said that the country was both sick and tired of that Government and party. I do not think that such remarks could be described as treating this question without reference to party, but that, on the contrary, the hon. gentleman introduced a party spirit entirely into this debate. Instead of treating this question from a legal point of view, as one would expect a gentleman of his legal attainments to do, he confined his remarks to making appeals to party feeling. The country, he said, was sick and tired of the late Government and its supporters. I would ask the hon. gentleman how he came to that conclusion. I do not think the province of Ontario acted as if it were sick and tired of the Conservative Government and party. While I am not going to discuss all the reasons why we find ourselves on this side of the House, there are reasons which might be given, apart from the actions of the Government generally during last session, and many past sessions. I believe that if it had not been for one unfortunate question which came before the country, and agitated the people, the Conservative party would still be in office. If the country was sick and tired, it was not of the Conservative party, but of a question which had been thrust on the late Government, and which that