

hon. friend is not aware that on the petitions presented for the release of the man who was convicted in St. James' division for irregularities were to be found the names of some of the most prominent of his followers who are sitting not very far from him at the present time.

My hon. friend also alluded to the fact that we are this year meeting at a very late date. I am sorry to say that this is the case; indeed, spring is already upon us. But I think we can manage to have the blessing of prorogation before the summer will be upon us. This is perhaps all the more reason why the session should be short; and if we are diligent, if our measures are ready, as I believe they are, and if the gates of eloquence are not too widely opened, there is no reason why we should not prorogue at a time when we can go to the country and see the apple blossoms in bloom. If I read correctly a speech made by my hon. friend a little while ago, we may be kept here till the snow flies, because he said he rather expected the session to last six months. Well, Sir, I hope that on a reconsideration of the subject my hon. friend will come to a decision more in accord with the ordinary dictates of humanity.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I did not say six months. I said to the first of September; but in saying that I placed reliance on the promise of the government to introduce tariff legislation. It was my misplaced confidence in the government's promise that lead me to make the statement.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. If my hon. friend, when he spoke thus, had in his mind the promised tariff legislation, now that he is certain that this legislation will not take place, but will be referred to another session, perhaps he will allow us to dispose of the business of this session in due time, so that we may have the other session about the time the snow flies.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I will not only allow you, but help you.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. If my hon. friend keeps his word, the session will close in good time, because I am happy to say that all the legislation we have to submit to the House is ready for submission.

My hon. friend has also referred to the absence of Mr. Fielding. The accident to the Minister of Finance has unfortunately turned out to be more serious than was at first supposed, and it is not expected that he can appear in this House before many weeks are over. In the meantime we shall have to proceed without him; and barring the question of the revision of the tariff, I think we can make reasonable progress. Were it not for the absence of my hon. colleague, I would say that we are meeting under the most auspicious circumstances. Kind

Sir WILFRID LAURIER.

Providence has been as usual very generous. We have had an abundant crop, fine weather to harvest it, a beautiful season in which to ship it, and above all we have had good prices. I did not observe that my hon. friend was very enthusiastic on this subject. He passed over it very quickly and gingerly. Perhaps the cause of this reserve on his part was that under the present regime good times have become a matter of course. Or perhaps the old feeling still prevails. There was a time indeed when it was an accepted doctrine of the Conservative party that Divine Providence could not by any possibility be with the Grits and that the Conservative party alone had the instinct of government. In one of the recent elections which took place in the province of Nova Scotia, there was an argument on this point between a Grit and a Tory. The Grit was modest. He did not claim anything for the present government. All he claimed was that for most of the time Providence was kind to the Grits. The Tory would not admit that, but said that all things considered, Providence had been acting very strangely. Next to agriculture which has been very flourishing, trade and commerce has been making great progress. Our imports have continued to increase, and our exports, which last year were rather depressed, have since developed great energy. It is almost certain that during the present year the trade of Canada will pass the 500 million mark. In this connection it is very satisfactory to know that not only is our trade increasing in the old channels but is also finding new channels; and I am glad to be in a position to say that the treaty with Japan, which has been referred to by His Excellency, was signed on the 31st of January. That treaty is of immense importance to us, in view of the recent discovery made in the province of Alberta. There a discovery has been made far more important than that of gold and diamonds. That semi arid country which was supposed to be only fit for grazing, has been found well adapted for the growth of fall wheat, and no doubt in the Orient we shall have a ready market for the new product, thus saving the long haulage by the Atlantic coast.

Mr. FOSTER. Will the right hon. gentleman give a little explanation as to the treaty with Japan? I know there was a treaty framed by Great Britain in 1894. Is this an entry for Canada under that same treaty or is it an absolutely new treaty?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. It gives us all the advantages which accrue to Great Britain under the present treaty. In this matter as well as in others Canada is forging ahead. It is obvious that Canada is to-day becoming the great attraction to all civilized races. So marked is our superiority in this respect that we are exciting the