

only that, Sir, but the constituencies of Glengarry and Stormont, North Ontario and Assiniboia were without representation for three entire sessions. I have here the dates at which several vacancies occurred and the by-elections took place. Glengarry and Stormont was vacated on April 13, 1918, and the by-election announced on October 27, 1919. In other words, five hundred and sixty-two days elapsed before the writ was issued, and then a further period elapsed before the return of the member. I think my hon. friend who is in the House to-day (Mr. John W. Kennedy) had the privilege of sitting for two or three days—that was the whole length of time that the people of his constituency were represented in this Parliament from the time the Government assumed office.

Then take the constituency of North Ontario, which became vacant on May 25, 1918. It was December 9, 1919, before the by-election was held, making a period of five hundred and sixty-three days during which the people of that constituency had no representation in this Parliament. In other words, they were without any representation during the last three sessions.

Similarly Assiniboia, one of the largest of the western constituencies, was vacant almost from the moment at which the Government took office, and yet until the day of the opening of this session, three days ago, not a soul was here to speak on behalf of the people of Assiniboia. Three hundred and ninety-nine days elapsed before any writ was issued for that particular vacancy.

Then take the constituency of Quebec East, which was vacated through the death of the Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Through that entire session and the next until my hon. friend, formerly the member for Kamouraska (Mr. Lapointe) was elected to represent the constituency held by his leader for the previous period of forty-three years, it was without representation.

Similarly the constituency of Victoria-Carleton was represented in this House for only one or two days last session, when it should have been represented for the entire session.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, Glengarry and Stormont, North Ontario and Assiniboia were not represented at all for three sessions; Quebec East was not represented for two sessions; Prince County, Prince Edward Island, Kingston, Victoria City and Victoria-Carleton were not represented for the greater part of one session.

Then coming down to the present time, since our last meeting of Parliament four vacancies have occurred, those in Timiskaming, Kamouraska, St. James (Montreal) and East Elgin. The constituencies of Timiskaming and Kamouraska were vacated respectively on September 22, 1919, and October 14, 1919. Why are not these constituencies represented in this Parliament at this time? There is only one reason—that the Government by deliberate intent put off the possibility of representation of these ridings as long as it possibly could. It waited until almost the very day before this Parliament was called for the present session to issue writs for the filling of those vacancies. In the case of Timiskaming the electors were a long time without representation through the protracted illness of the former Minister of Railways and Canals, the late Hon. Mr. Cochrane. One would have thought that had the Government cared at all for the representation of the electors they would have been eager and anxious to give them their right to be represented here at the earliest possible date.

During the last two weeks we have had the two vacancies that were referred to this afternoon by the right hon. the Acting Prime Minister (Sir George Foster)—St. James and East Elgin. Why is it that a writ has been issued in the case of one and not in the case of the other vacancy? I asked my right hon. friend at the opening of the session to-day if he would tell this House and, through this House, the people of the latter constituency, when they would have the right to be represented, and he gave me a reply as evasive as it could possibly be, saying nothing and making no promises one way or the other. I would ask my right hon. friend when he does reply to my speech, as no doubt he will, to tell the people of East Elgin when they may expect to have the right of representation in this Parliament which it is their privilege to demand.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, that having regard for Parliamentary Government in the matter of representation, if you look at the laws under which this Parliament has been returned, or if you look at the way in which those laws have been administered, you will find that there has been a complete demoralization of the whole business of parliamentary representation as contrasted with what it should have been were we anxious to preserve intact our political institutions.

There is this to be remembered at all times, Sir, in regard to by-elections: They are a means of keeping the Administration