

height, be it low or high, will appear very like a proposal to entrust to the tigers the privilege of making the game-laws.

If it is affirmed that this power can only be properly exercised by a commission, then it is fair to retort that every member of the present parliament was elected as a tariff commissioner, for the last election turned entirely upon a question of trade. To hand over the taxing power of parliament to a commission would be to abdicate all the virtue which there is in free institutions, and the people will not voluntarily assent to that. They would at least expect to be informed who the commissioners were to be, who was to appoint them, and what was the extent of their power. Even then they might not be quite satisfied, for they could not fail to remember that in 1896 they had elected a parliament which was pledged to one course and deliberately adopted another. A commission clothed with any authority whatever would be hard to distinguish from those men who in the Greek colonies were called tyrants, and were tyrants just in proportion to their power.

It is quite impossible to say in advance of the event whether the proposal is good or bad, until we are informed what the full terms of it are. Even if the commission is not to have full power to fix tariffs, it will have the support of many reasonable men who look upon protection as an act of God or an immutable law of nature, and consider that the true measure of it is the difference between the cost of production at home and abroad. The men appointed would then occupy themselves in determining what that difference is, and so, they say, we should have a scientific tariff. From this it will follow that the more incompetent a manufacturer is the higher will be the protection which is accorded him, since his incompetence increases his costs. The commission would then have to enquire not alone how much it does cost to produce an article, but how much it should cost. They would be compelled to determine how much time a manufacturer should spend at his luncheon, what he should eat and drink, how many holidays he is entitled to, how he should comport him-