

were called upon to vote as to whether or not Mr. Hazen should be allowed to speak instead of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and this, as already mentioned, notwithstanding the fact that the Speaker under the rule of the House that "when two or more members rise to speak, Mr. Speaker calls upon the member who first rose in his place" had already accorded the right to Sir Wilfrid. Mr. Borden was the first to vote, and his vote was in favour of giving the floor to Mr. Hazen and of denying the right of speaking to Sir Wilfrid. Mr. Borden's example was followed by every Conservative member present and every Nationalist with the exception of a few.

How Amendments to the Government's Drastic Proposals were Arbitrarily prevented.

Having by the brute force of their majority made it impossible for Sir Wilfrid Laurier to speak, Mr. Hazen, then, on behalf of Borden and his followers in the House presented a motion which has only been made on three occasions since Confederation. This motion was intended to make it impossible for any one, Sir Wilfrid or even Mr. Borden himself, to amend in any particular, the drastic changes proposed and of limiting all discussion upon them. This purpose was carried out by Mr. Hazen moving, seconded by Mr. Cochrane, the Minister of Railways and Canals what is technically called "the previous question", namely that "this question be now put", the effect of which is to make all amendments impossible.

As the rules of the House can be amended simply by the adoption of a resolution, without any second or third reading, or discussion in Committee as is the case in the passage of a Bill through the House, and further, as the Senate has no rights or powers in the matter, one way or the other, it will be seen that no more arbitrary or brutal course could have been taken by a government to prevent discussion on a measure which involves the whole question of the liberties of Parliament as respects freedom in debate and the right of free speech. Yet all this, as is now quite plain, was carefully worked out by Mr. Borden and his colleagues in advance. Mr. Borden was to talk "fair play", Mr. Hazen was to rise when Sir Wilfrid rose, so that the Speaker would have to choose between them, Mr. Northrup was to have a written motion in his pocket, and his authorities lying open on his desk before him, Mr. Borden was to give the lead in favor of gagging Sir Wilfrid by being the first to rise and cast his vote against Sir Wilfrid being heard, the other Ministers of the Cabinet were to do likewise, and every member of the party, under pressure of what would happen if he dared to do other than follow the leaders, was to do the same, and the Nationalist allies were to be duly brought into line. By the sheer circumstance of brute majority secured in this way, Sir Wilfrid was to be prevented from speaking, until the motion was carried, precluding the possibility of any amendment. Mr. Hazen, with the privilege to speak secured, was to move that 'the question be now put' so that all right of moving amendments shut off, the party by its force of numbers might jam the closure through, denying thereby to the people of Canada the dearest of their liberties as British subjects, the right of free discussion through their representatives in Parliament on matters pertaining to the public weal.