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### Fielding on the Blockade.

Hon W S FIELDING (Minister of Finance). I regret that my hon friend did not deem it expedient to wait until my hon colleague the Minister of Customs returned and was in his place.

Mr OWEN. I was hoping he would be in his place this morning. Mr FIELDING. No doubt my hon friend hoped that the minister would withdraw his valuable voice from the political campaign. But if, in the exercise of his judgment as a citizen, my hon colleague sees fit to absent himself, as other hon members are doing, in the exercise of his rights as a citizen, that is no reason for attacking him in his absence. It is no reason why, if the hon gentleman has anything to say against the minister, he should not wait until my hon colleague is in his place. I can assure him that he will have difficulty in persuading the country that the Minister of Customs would make a statement before my public audience which was not made in good faith and could not be substantiated. He is too well known for any one who knows him to assume that he would do anything of the kind. I repeat that not a dollar of supply has been voted for the Customs or Post Office Departments.

Mr OWEN. Have not all the supplies that have been asked for been voted?

Mr FIELDING. They have not been voted at all.

Mr OWEN. Have they not passed this House?

Mr FIELDING. They have not. I say that they have not been voted. Not one dollar of supply has passed this House.

Mr OWEN. Did they not pass this House in Committee of the Whole?

Mr FIELDING. Yes.

Mr OWEN. Then the fault lies with the government in not having brought down a Supply Bill.

Mr FIELDING. Does my hon friend contend that every time we pass an item in the Committee of Supply we must immediately bring down a Supply Bill? Last night we passed a couple of hundred thousand dollars for the Department of the Interior, and according to my hon friend's view we should immediately bring down a Supply Bill converging these items.

Mr OWEN. Are you sure you have not used that money for any other purpose?

Mr FIELDING. We have not. There is no power under Heaven could get a dollar of that money until the votes pass through their several stages in this parliament—not only of this House but the Senate as well. When my hon friend says that we did not bring down a Supply Bill, he is mistaken. We did some time ago, and after the usual procedure it became law; but surely he will not seriously say that every time we pass an item we must bring down a new Supply Bill? Such a contention is preposterous. The Supply Bill is brought down after we have passed all the estimates. The estimates are then consolidated into a Supply Bill which is duly presented. But the hon gentleman assumes that the moment the Post Office items were passed we should bring down a Supply Bill then later on brings down another Supply Bill when the Customs estimates are voted, and so on with each department. My hon friend must see that the argument he advances is entirely unwarranted.

Mr OWEN. I notice that we passed last month over \$11,000,000 of Supply through Committee of the Whole. Was it not worth while to bring down a Supply Bill covering these items and thus enable the employees to obtain their wages?

Mr FIELDING. I am not disposed to discriminate. I am not disposed to make fish of one and flesh of another. The public officials and others who have claims against the government in the different departments and provinces have all equal rights and I do not propose to discriminate among them. I do not

propose that the employees in one branch shall be paid for their services and the others not.

Mr OWEN. I have not forgotten that the Minister of Finance did say a few months ago that we have no rights in this House.

Mr FIELDING. That phrase for a time seemed to do my hon friends opposite some good. I will be glad to repeat the same statement and give my hon friends the benefit of it once more. Every member of this House and every group of members has just as much rights as the majority accord to them, and no more. That is true to-day as it was true then. But the trouble is my hon friends opposite have abused their rights. The trouble is that we have got into the habit of permitting an easy going method of procedure whereby hon gentlemen opposite are permitted to delay the business of the House to an extent that would not be allowed in any civilized country outside of Canada.

Some hon MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr FIELDING. It was just such difficulty that compelled the mother of parliaments to adopt a procedure which allows the majority to rule. But it is difficult to bring some people to understand why the majority of this parliament should not rule. Let it be understood that if men on both sides would realize their responsibility, if they would realize their obligations as well as their interests, they would admit that this parliament has allowed a latitude and freedom of discussion which enables any half dozen of men in this House to hold up any one measure the whole session. It was never supposed that any members would abuse that privilege the way hon gentlemen opposite are doing.

Mr OWEN. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance if he remembers the hold-up in 1896?

Mr FIELDING. Yes, but in 1896 there never was an hour when the necessities of the public service were not provided for. In all the discussions in 1896, supplies were available, the public servants were being paid, the public works were going on, contractors were getting their money and they were paying their workmen, and these, in turn, were paying the grocer, the butcher and the baker—all the wheels of government were turning and there was no obstruction. That is not the condition to-day. Supplies that were held up in 1896 were the supplies of a future period, and there was always abundant money for the immediate purpose of the government. That is not the situation to-day. To day, by the exercise of a privilege that this House mistakenly has given to the minority, a privilege which is not granted in the mother country, a privilege which is not granted in the corresponding body at Washington, a privilege more liberally interpreted in this House than in any other legislative body in the world, hon gentlemen opposite have been able to hold up the supplies and prevent the people of this country from getting the money which is their due.

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Formality necessarily plays an important part in social life. It has its place and should be observed, but there are not two ways for true friends to shake hands in this country. They must be honest to those they greet as fast friends, or they lie a openly as by the spoken words.

People who are devout friends do not have a dagger hidden under their coats when the offer terms of salutation and affection. Neither do they have icy, limp and repulsive hands to clasp your own, when a good, soul-given shake is in order. Society may be excused and forgiven for most of its errors and foppishness, but in teaching people to shake your hand as tho' it were a reptile, it has taught deception, treachery and vulgarity.

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