

for the discussion of that measure which will no doubt occupy the attention of the House as long as it will desire to sit to-night. I feel that I would only be doing justice to that hon. member if I moved to adjourn the debate.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. I do not see any good reason, why at this hour of the night the debate should not continue.

Mr. PORTER. It is pretty late to proceed with the discussion of this question now.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Go on.

Mr. PORTER. I understood that I was to adjourn the debate in order that this other measure might be discussed. I have been sitting here since three o'clock this afternoon after spending a whole night on the train, and I think it is rather pressing me to ask me to proceed with the discussion at this late hour. No time will be lost by adjourning the debate, and adopting the course a member of the government has asked me to assist in pursuing.

Mr. SPROULE. There has evidently been a misunderstanding, because I was told that Mr. Porter was to adjourn the debate and that the government intended to discuss another Bill. Mr. Ritchie, of Toronto, was my informant, and I replied to him that it could only be done by the unanimous consent of the House. There must be some misunderstanding.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. I do not know that there is any misunderstanding, and if so, no one on this side of the House is responsible for it. If the hon. gentleman (Mr. Porter) wishes to ask for the privilege of adjourning the debate that is one matter, but if that is done there is going to be no public Bill or order considered to-night so far as I am concerned.

Mr. SPROULE. I am not asking that any public Bill should be considered.

Mr. PORTER. I may have misunderstood my informant, and I may be wrong in stating what I did state to the House. If so, I am very pleased to withdraw it, and I would ask as a special favour to myself that it be not insisted on that I should proceed to-night.

Mr. FIELDING. I have nothing to say regarding any understanding, but we have on several occasions recently been asked to adjourn early and we have always consented upon the assurance that the next night we would not adjourn early. I think the next night has arrived now, and we should continue the business.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Go on.

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, during the course of this debate we have heard a great many expressions of surprise at the position assumed by the right hon. the First Min-

Mr. PORTER.

ister upon this question. These expressions of surprise have emanated very largely from this side of the House, but, having heard the address delivered by the right hon. gentleman on the introduction of these Bills and his subsequent explanation of the amendment which is now under discussion, I am bound to say that the attitude assumed by the right hon. gentleman is not to me a matter of surprise. It is to me more a matter of regret. I say it is not to me a matter of surprise, because from my observation, the course of the political life of the right hon. gentleman since he was entrusted with the confidence of the people of this country, has been characterized by such qualities of insincerity, of deception, and of pandering to outside influences as to lead me to the conclusion that the course pursued by the Prime Minister on this occasion is perfectly consistent with what has been his political career heretofore. I say, Sir, that since the right hon. gentleman obtained power in 1896, he has shown such a willingness to sacrifice principle; he has shown such a willingness to deceive the people of this country by the tortuous course he has pursued in this parliament, and he has shown such an utter want of principle as to satisfy me at least—and I think to satisfy the people of this country—that he is no longer entitled to the trust they reposed in him.

I have said, Sir, that his political career since 1896 has been characterized by insincerity, deceit and pandering to outside influences. Now, it would be unfair to the right hon. gentleman to make that assertion unless I were able to offer some reliable evidence in support of it. Let me, then, offer to the House a few illustrations to prove the assertions I have made.

Perhaps the greatest question that has engaged the attention of the right hon. gentleman and his government since 1896 is the trade question. When the right hon. gentleman received the suffrages of the people of this country in 1896, and prior to that time, what was his attitude upon that question? I might go almost so far as to say that he was an avowed free trader. He was taken to be a strong advocate of the principle of free trade. I cannot say that he was a champion of free trade—and here comes in the evidence. We all remember the speeches delivered by the right hon. gentleman on that question in the province of Quebec, and also his speeches in the province of Ontario; we know how his speeches in one province differed from his speeches in the other. It is perfectly evident to any one who takes the trouble to read those speeches and consider them that on that important branch of public policy, he was playing a double part and was deceiving the people of this country. When he came into power in 1896, he was not satisfied apparently with the deception that he practiced up to that time; but