

Montreal harbour, and it is taking up the question of improving Halifax harbour, and Quebec harbour.

This Government has been active to the last degree during the past year, and any criticism as to its not being active, either in bringing down legislation or in carrying out the provisions of legislation, or in carrying on the business of this country, is not well founded.

I have occupied the time of the House very considerably this afternoon. Let me say this, for, after all, I desire to make all allowances, or any allowance that should be made. I spoke rather strongly in regard to my right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) attacking myself and this Government with regard to the cement duty reduction without having made himself acquainted with the information in my office. I still feel that it was unfair to me; but I believe, in view of the explanation I have given, and the facts I have produced, that he will come to an entirely different conclusion, and will be the first to say so. I am sorry he was not present when I gave most of the evidence I submitted. I think that neither this Government, nor his Government, if it had been in power, could have done otherwise than was done. This Government may submit its record during the past year with confidence to the judgment of the people of this country.

Mr. LOUIS J. GAUTHIER (St. Hyacinthe): Mr. Speaker, I must say, at the beginning of my remarks, that it is not from presumption that I ask the attention of my fellow members, but it is from the desire to exercise my privileges as a member of this House. I wish to state the position I will take in regard to the vote which I shall give on the main motion as well as on the amendment now submitted for our consideration. I am at a disadvantage because of my lack of experience in the House and especially because of the language which I am using in discussing the questions of the day and answering hon. gentlemen opposite who have taken the floor since the beginning of this debate. But, I consider that I have a duty to perform, and that this is a time to set aside all bashfulness and natural timidity, and to do my best to do justice to the cause which I represent. Facing the issue immediately, and expressing my regret that the hon. member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) is not in his seat, I will deal with the remarks which have been made by my right hon. friend the leader of the Government, Mr. Borden in his speech on the subject to which I propose to devote some attention. I quote the words of the right hon. gentleman. He said that the hon. member for Jacques Cartier in retiring was actuated by the highest of motives. I

understand that this statement is correct and it is of the same fabric as the editorials which have been published in the newspapers favourable to the present administration since the departure of the hon. member for Jacques Cartier from the Cabinet. The apparent object of these statements is, in plain words, to make the hon. member for Jacques Cartier appear as a hero. If the hon. gentleman was a hero for the reason that he went out of the Cabinet and if he was actuated by the highest motives, was he a hero when he came into the Cabinet? What was the motive that actuated him when he came in? If we refer to the debates of last session, when my right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) was inquiring as to the position held in the Cabinet by the late Minister of Public Works, we will find the defence of the entrance of the hon. member for Jacques Cartier into the Cabinet from the lips of the right hon. the Prime Minister himself. Then that right hon. gentleman said:

I have no fault to find with the right hon. gentleman for calling attention to the fact that my hon. friend the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Monk) when this matter was under debate two sessions ago did not see eye to eye with me on the question of emergent conditions which at that time I thought confronted the Empire. Those conditions appealed to me in that way at that time by reason of very grave declarations that had been made by the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and the First Lord of the Admiralty of Great Britain. I am ready to admit, in fact we were afterwards taunted in this House by hon. gentlemen opposite with the fact, that these declarations were, to a very considerable extent, modified by subsequent statements made in the British House of Commons by the advisers of the Crown, by the Prime Minister himself, I think, and also by the First Lord of the Admiralty. It is true that the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Monk) and I did not see eye to eye, but the point that divided us at that time was not a question of policy, but a question of fact.

If I understand the remarks which I have just cited, when the hon. member for Jacques Cartier went into the Cabinet, he was on the same platform as the right hon. leader of the Government. They had the same policy, the only difference between them was as to a question of fact. The leader of the Government thought that there was an emergency and the hon. member for Jacques Cartier thought that there was none. That was the question as it was stated before the House by the leader of the Government last session.

What do we see now? We see that, during the electoral contest in the constituency of Hochelaga, the Secretary of State (Mr. Coderre) had to submit to an election contest and there was a letter published over