

period. We know further that for nearly a week before the parliament was terminated, the government of the day ceased to push the measure, before the House, of remedial legislation, in order to obtain a sufficient supply to carry on the business of the country until the elections were over and parliament met to provide for the balance of the year.

Hon. Sir OLIVER MOWAT—Where shall I find those proceedings?

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—You will find them in *Hansard*.

Hon. Sir OLIVER MOWAT—I thought perhaps you could give me a reference.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—I cannot now give you a reference; but this I can say, being then at the head of the government, I know the instructions to the ministers. My hon. friend to my right (Mr. Ferguson) sent this note to the Hon. Foster in the House of Commons: "Did you make a proposition to Mr. Laurier on the floor of the Commons last session that supplies for a limited period should be voted, or was such proposition made personally to Mr. Laurier?" His answer is "both." That is, he made the proposition to Mr. Laurier personally, and made it on the floor of the House also, and I have a distinct recollection of the circumstances that took place, because it was an important matter. The difficulties arising out of want of supplies to carry on the affairs of the country after the 1st of July, was discussed a number of times by the council, and when we decided to drop for some days the agitation on the question of remedial legislation, it was for the very purpose of enabling the House of Commons to pass the necessary supplies in order to be enabled to carry on the affairs of the government, and which they positively refused to do. The government was acting precisely in accord with the authority cited by my hon. friend, which is, that:—

When parliament is about to be dissolved upon a ministerial crisis, it is obviously improper to call upon the House of Commons to vote either the full amount or all the details of the proposed estimates, and so commit the country to the financial policy of ministers whose fate is about to be determined by a general election. The duty of finally deciding upon these estimates should be reserved for the new House of Commons. Meanwhile the supply

of credit should be restricted to such an amount as may be absolutely required for the public service until the re-assembling of parliament, and the votes on account should not be regarded as in any degree pledging the House to an approval of the entire estimates.

Now that is precisely what the late government asked the opposition to do, and what they absolutely refused to do. My hon. friend forgot to read a precedent even for granting the whole of the supplies. Todd says, in the second volume, dealing with the same question, at page 504:—

By necessary business is to be understood such measures as are imperatively required for the public service or as may be proceeded upon by common consent, it is inconsistent with all usage and with the spirit of the constitution that a government should be enabled to select the measures which it thinks proper to submit to the consideration of a condemned parliament, or to exercise its own discretion or for party purposes as to what measures it will bring forward or what it will withhold. Upon the same principle it is customary when parliament is about to be dissolved whether upon the occurrence of a ministerial crisis, or for any other reason to restrict the grant of supplies to an amount sufficient to defray the indispensable requirements of the public service until the new parliament can be assembled.

Hon. Mr. POWER—Until the new parliament can be assembled?

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Yes. That is what we asked and what you refused, and yet you hold us responsible for not having a supply to carry on the affairs of the country after parliament died of a natural death. Under ordinary circumstances, parliament might have been kept in session for two or three months in order to obtain supplies, but the opposition of the day knew that the existence of the parliament ceased upon a certain day in April, and they knew also that if they could, by any mode of obstruction, by any factious opposition known to those who desired to prevent the business of the country being carried on, prolong the session to that date, that they could prevent not only the passage of any measure which the government might desire to place upon the statute-books, but also prevent them from obtaining one single cent to enable them to carry on the affairs of the country. If any party is responsible for the necessity which presents itself to the government to violate the law and ask the Governor General to do that which, under ordinary circumstances, should not have been done (and even under these circumstances it is