

satisfactory and commendable than that of Mr. Clement. He was picked out as a man specially qualified for the position. He was a lawyer of first-class standing, a man of unblemished character, a man who had given special attention to the study of constitutional questions, and consequently, although he never was in Parliament, he was a man who had his attention attracted to questions that would naturally arise in connection with the administration of the district: he is the author of a work on the constitution of Canada. Mr. Clement is a man of recognized standing, recognized ability, and recognized character, and I have never heard any one suggest that Mr. Clement's appointment was not one of the best that could possibly be made.

These were the men we appointed in the district. As to the few minor officials we sent up, they were only a few in number, with the exception of the class of labouring men and assistants, who would be hired in this country by the day, and who are only sent out because they are difficult to get there. There is more or less difficulty about getting for the minor positions men of good standing in the east to go to the Yukon. Men of good standing and assured positions do not care to give up their business connections and possibly take the chance of wrecking their lives, unless they happen for some reason to be of an adventurous temperament, and that would not be a particularly good qualification, when we came to select such men. Mr. Speaker, we sent men in there of recognized good character. I have not heard it suggested that a single man we sent to the Yukon, down to the lowest labouring man in connection with any party that went to that district, had a single cloud upon his character before he left this country. Then, Sir, if that be the record, I want to put the Government in the judgment of the House and the country upon this point. For the last year—perhaps not for the last year, but certainly for the last six months—I have been charged, and the Government has been charged, with a grave and serious offence in connection with the appointment of officers in the Yukon district. I have been charged with the appointment of a horde of useless political parasites, of debauching and prostituting the public service of this country by the class of men I have appointed, of throwing aside old and tried public servants, and of putting the public service in that district in the hands of men who had no qualification for the position.

Now, I have read you the record of these appointments, and I ask the gentlemen of this House, if it is not so, that never in the history of Canada has a series of appointments been made with more care, and with more universal approbation as to each appointment that had been made.

Mr. SUTHERLAND. Too many Tories; that is the only trouble.

Mr. FOSTER. That sticks in your nostrils.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR (Mr. Sifton). I do not mind being attacked by the press of hon. gentlemen opposite, but it would be desirable that some little faint regard for the facts of the case should be observed, when the discussion of these matters is going on in this House. I have not rushed into newspaper interviews to deny the statements which I have punctured one by one, as I have gone through this statement, but I have waited until I was challenged in the House of Commons to rise in my place and prove that the charges which have been made against me, in connection with the administration of my office, are absolutely without foundation. In dealing with some matters, chronology is everything, because a man may be quite free from blame, if he does a thing in dealing with matters under certain circumstances, when he might be very subject to blame for taking the same action under different circumstances. A man may be free from blame, if he does a thing on the 1st of the month, whereas, if he did the same thing on the 15th of the month, he might be subject to serious blame on account of new information being received by him in the meantime. I, therefore, want to direct the careful attention of the House to these appointments in connection with the dates. I recommended Mr. Ogilvie's appointment on the 30th June. There was no complaint of any kind that I know of against Major Walsh or his administration at that time. I had not the faintest idea that anybody had an idea that Major Walsh was not doing everything that could be done, and doing it in the best possible way, when I appointed Mr. Ogilvie, and urged Mr. Ogilvie to go forward as soon as it was possible for him to go.

It is a large task for a man to undertake the administration of a district like the Yukon. There is no man in this House of Commons to-day—not even my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition (Sir Charles Tupper)—who has had to organize a new district, organize a government, think of everything that is to be thought of in connection with the government, take a new country and a people with nothing done, and think of everything and provide for everything. There is not a man in this House who has ever had to do it before, not one—not even my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition. There never has been a task of that kind before that one man had to take hold of. The North-west Territories had to be administered, but the administration there grew up gradually. It did not have to be made in a minute; it grew up slowly; police were sent out first, and one thing after another was done. Any such avalanche of responsibility as we have had in connection with the Yukon, never was thrust upon a Government in connection with the North-west Territories. Well, I urged Mr. Ogilvie to go quickly. I said there was no complaint