

number of judges. If I was wrong, that is no reason why these gentlemen should do wrong. They should rather seek to correct the wrong.

I have no quarrel with the Government on account of the appointments to judge-ships in the province of Quebec up to this date. Mr. Justice Langelier is certainly an ornament to the bench, and, since his appointment has given the greatest satisfaction to the bar and to litigants. In Mr. Justice Lavergne, we have a most painstaking and conscientious judge; and Mr. Justice Lemieux has certainly the varied experience both in criminal and civil law to make him an excellent judge. But I wish to warn the right hon. Premier that if the appointment which is mentioned as about to be made for the district of Arthabaska is made, the right hon. gentleman will be doing a thing he will regret, and will be raising to the bench a man who has no business there and who certainly will not be a worthy colleague of the gentlemen who are on the bench in the province of Quebec to-day.

The PRIME MINISTER (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). My hon. friend (Mr. Casgrain) has certainly spoken with a candour for which he is entitled to some consideration. But the very candour of his remarks shows the difficulty and deficiency of our system. At the present time, as has been remarked already more than once, under this system we have the duty settled upon us of paying the judges, while the duty of organizing the courts is placed upon the local legislatures. Of course we have to act upon the acts of the local legislatures. But, in the matter of organization of the courts, we are largely to be guided by the opinion of the Attorney General of the province at the time, who recommends the changes. If the Attorney General, who recommends the changes to the Federal Government, and who asks the legislature to vote in favour of the appointments of the new judges and the organization of districts, at the same time—not three or four years afterwards but at the same time—has the candour to say to the Federal authorities: While I put this on the Statute-book you must not mind it; it does not represent my own views, but, in this matter, I am simply acting from political motives—if the Attorney General does that, he naturally relieves the Federal Government of very serious difficulties. But my hon. friend will not be offended, at me or at the Government, I hope, that we took his action as meaning something, that we thought that when he was exercising the great and important powers of Attorney General of the province of Quebec, he was not deceiving the public but was acting upon his own judgment. Of course, we may have been blamable in one thing—and that was believing that he was serious when he told the legislature of the province of Quebec that they should have another judge put upon

the bench. We thought we had to deal with an hon. gentleman who had reputation at stake and was honest in intention. We could well understand if he were to say that he had since changed his views. But he tells us, with great candour: I was merely acting from political motives. And he goes on to suggest that we were proceeding upon the same motives. I leave him his suspicion and his acts. We took him seriously. I must say, to the credit of the hon. gentleman, that his views, though they were, at that time—I was going to use perhaps a harsh adjective—they were not so devoid of force and value as he would have us think at the present time. I must tell him that he has no reason to disparage himself on this occasion, he is well supported by authority, and he does not do himself justice when he belittles his own judgment as he has done. He was not in the House, I think, the other day when I quoted the opinion on this subject of the appointment of a second judge for the district of St. Francis, of no less a person than the chief justice of the district of Montreal, Sir Melbourne Tate, in the month of September last. I will quote his opinion again for the benefit of my hon. friend:

While it is right and proper that justice, civil and criminal, should be administered in each district, I do not know of any paramount reason why a judge should be required to reside in any of these districts, with the exception of St. Francis, and perhaps Ottawa. In the former, the work is too heavy for one judge, who has several circuits to attend besides the one at the chef lieu.

Now, I take occasion at once to agree with the statement which was made a moment ago by my hon. friend, that the work could be done, not by a second judge to reside at the chef lieu in Sherbrooke, but by Mr. Justice Lynch, or any of the other judges residing in adjoining districts. But that is not the view taken by the chief justice himself. Mark his words:

While it is right and proper that justice, civil and criminal, should be administered in each district, I do not know of any paramount reason why a judge should be required to reside in any of these districts, with the exception of St. Francis.

So the chief justice of the Superior Court in the district of Montreal is of the opinion that a second judge should be appointed under the statute made by my hon. friend, and that in order to discharge his duties, he should reside in that district. Therefore, my hon. friend had no occasion to disparage his own judgment as he has done, because I may say that his opinion on such a subject is as good as that of any one in the province of Quebec. Now, is not the opinion of Sir Melbourne Tate conclusive that in this case there is not, as was stated by my hon. friend, any political or sinister motive on the part of this Government, but we are simply acting in the best interest of the