

ulation of each. It numbers amongst its members gentlemen who had been on the direction of the late Inter-oceanic Company, and it includes the names of men whom every one would acknowledge, would never willingly associate themselves with any dishonourable enterprise. It is difficult to believe that these personages are either the willing or unconscious tools of Sir H. Allan. Hence, we must arrive at the inference that, at all events, if the crime was imagined, it can scarcely have been consummated. This would not in the least excuse its authors, but if a thing has not been done, the fact affords *prima facie* grounds for believing that it was not intended to be done. Lastly, I have received the most solemn assurances from my Ministers, both individually and collectively, on their word as men of honour, and on their fealty to the Crown as my sworn Councillors, that they are absolutely innocent of the things laid to their charge.

On a balance of the foregoing considerations, can any one say that I should have been justified in deliberately violating my first duty as a constitutional ruler on a premature assumption of the guilt of these gentlemen?

But a still more important question remains behind. Had I any means of knowing that my Ministers had forfeited the confidence of the House of Commons,—for, of course, if this were the case, any inward impressions of my own would cease to be elements of the problem?

What were the facts upon which I could rely? During the whole of the preceding Session the Government had marched from victory to victory, as will be seen by the subjoined record of votes taken on test divisions:—

7th March, majority for Government	16
18th do do do	25
2nd April, do do	31*
17th do do do	26
7th May, do do	31
8th do do do	33
12th do do do	24
16th do do do	35

They had left off with a majority of 35 at their command. The ordinary presumption would be that their supporters still adhered to them. Had anything occurred to invalidate this conclusion? The publication of the documents I have referred to? Judging from the process of thought in my own mind, which compelled me to suspend my verdict, I could not bring myself to believe that Parliament had jumped to any premature conclusion. But I had one other indication to assist me. Ninety-two Members of Parliament declared themselves opposed to the views of Ministers on prorogation. Where were the other one hundred and seven, and what were their opinions? Of the thirty-five or forty who were in their places, not one took steps to make me aware that they had ceased to support the Government. Their names were conspicuously absent from the Memorial. The sixty or sixty-five Members who were away cannot complain if I have interpreted their absence as an indication that they endorsed the policy of Government, so far at least as prorogation was concerned. That the Memorialists were so many and no more was in itself significant, for it gave the measure of the effort made and the maximum result. They were not even a moiety of the House. They were a minority, and therefore not in a position to acquaint me with the wishes of the majority, or to speak in behalf of Parliament at all. So acutely was the force of this fact felt that within a very few days after prorogation, it was industriously circulated by all the Opposition newspapers, that in refusing to acquiesce in the suggestions of the signatories of this Memorial, I had flown in the face of a "majority" of the House of Commons. It is said that hypocrisy is the homage paid by vice to virtue. The pertinacity with which

\* Mr. Huntington's Motion.