

ence. At any rate, we should be on guard here. If hon. gentlemen from a distance wish to be absent for any length of time, there is no stringent law that compels them to remain here. They are free to stay at home if they have a great deal of work. We have ten days' absence allowed us, which is equal to two weeks more.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Fifteen days ?

Hon. Mr. POIRIER—And I would suggest to the hon. Secretary of State that instead of Tuesday the 11th of March, he should make it Wednesday the 12th, which would allow those members residing a long distance from Ottawa to be here for the first day. Many of us, especially from Nova Scotia and Cape Breton, cannot be here for the opening on Tuesday, and by making it Wednesday it would enable those among us who wish to be here for the opening, to be present, and I believe that would be a sufficiently long recess to take just now.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—I think the hon. gentleman from Calgary misunderstood what I said. I did not say the adjournment was lengthened at the instance of senators who reside at a distance from the Capital. I said the only excuse that could possibly be given would be to allow those living at long distances to go home. Whether I am in a position of splendid isolation or not, is of little consequence on this question at least, but I have always held the view since I have been in the Senate—and I have not seen anything to cause me to depart from it—that hon. gentlemen living in Montreal and close to the Capital are always the ones who want the adjournment. It is not the members from British Columbia and Prince Edward Island, but those gentlemen who can go home every evening and return the next morning, and be in time for the session, who urge the long recess.

Hon. Mr. WOOD—(Hamilton)—I think the hon. leader of the opposition is not reasonable.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Do not say the hon. leader of the opposition. Say the member for Hastings.

Hon. Mr. WOOD (Hamilton)—He is a man of business, and ought to see that it is better to have one adjournment of three weeks than two of two weeks each, as we had last year.

Hon. Mr. POIRIER—And we will have it again this year.

Hon. Mr. WOOD (Hamilton)—Why should we not hold evening sessions, and overtake the business, and finish it in a very short time? Up to the present, my experience in this place has been that, as a general rule, we come here and listen to prayers, and then go around the town or do something else.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—That is good occupation.

Hon. Mr. WOOD (Hamilton)—I have come here to work and not to loaf around the town. If there is no work to be done, I do not see why we should be brought back here. The House of Commons, I understand, are getting along fairly well with their work, and by the time we return in three weeks we may have work for the rest of the session, but I prefer one adjournment of three weeks, instead of having another adjournment in the middle of the session on account of lack of work. I think this would suit the members who have to go almost to the ends of the Dominion. Why should they not have an opportunity of going home and remaining a week at home? It takes some of them a week to go and a week to return.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—What does the hon. leader of the House propose to do with reference to the extension of time for the presenting of petitions? The time will have expired when we return.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—On the recommendation of the particular committees, the House always extends the time.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—That has to be done afterwards.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—The sense of the House seems to be in favour of the longer term. I see a number of empty benches now. Some hon. gentlemen seem to have gone away in the belief that the adjournment would take place anyway.