

tion to himself, either to the Premier of Canada, or to the Governor General of Canada. I need not say, Sir, that, being absolutely innocent of the charge, I demanded, at the very moment the insinuation was made, that that statement should be sent to His Excellency, to whom, as a member of his Privy Council, I was responsible for honourable, manly and above-board conduct. Those charges made by a member of the Privy Council had been concealed. I understand, in a drawer for two or three months, and then, at an important juncture, they were thrown at me without a moment's notice, and I acted as I have stated to you this afternoon. That matter, as it concerns my honour as a Privy Councillor of Canada, is now before His Excellency, and I do not intend, in accordance with the rules of decency and of courtesy to him, to discuss the subject this afternoon—more than to say this, that no baser lie was ever told of a public man in Canada, and it was part of a foul and dirty conspiracy to ruin an hon. member of this House, and a member of the Government of Canada. I am bound to say, however, that since the hon. gentleman has stated this afternoon that he did not write those letters, I am prepared to accept that statement. I never said that the member for West York wrote the letters. What I did say was that the Postmaster General consulted the member for West York, that the member for West York hawked those letters around the city of Toronto, to Mr. Beattie Nesbitt, to Mr. Richard Armstrong, and to men who had nothing to do with members of Parliament, or with members of the Government of Canada—

Mr. WALLACE. That is absolutely untrue.

Mr. MONTAGUE—and that he charged me with writing those letters. Sir, I have only to say this, that when the whole subject is investigated, as it will be investigated in a court of law, then the hon. member for West York will have an opportunity of proving his innocence of the charge which I then made. I am here to say to this House that the charges made against me, humiliating and annoying as they are, are as false as it is possible to make them; and I am here to say also, that with regard to any member of this Government, or with regard to any member of this House, since I have had the honour of a seat here, I have never yet committed an act that could not bear the light of day, or that would not do me honour.

Sir ADOLPHE CARON. The reason given by the hon. member for Haldimand (Mr. Montague) for not entering into a discussion of this subject at the present moment, seems to me absolutely conclusive. If, as is quite true, the matter is in the hands of His Excellency, it seems to me it would be unbecoming to enter into a discussion of the subject, and unless one can en-

Mr. MONTAGUE.

ter into the discussion of that subject, it is impossible to make any statement. I am, however, prepared to say this, that as soon as the matter came to my cognizance in the press, I stated then, as I now state to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the House, that, directly or indirectly, I had nothing whatever to do with authorizing the publication of a matter which I considered personal between the hon. gentleman and myself. Not only had I nothing to do with this publication, but when I saw the statement in the paper, I found that it was made by one who knew nothing about the case, or very little about the details. I found inaccuracies in that publication which, knowing the matter as I did, proved to me that it was based upon reports, and was not made with full possession of the facts. Now, Sir, I am prepared to say that in so far as the denial from the hon. gentleman goes, it is my duty, and I say so here before the House, to accept that denial. As to the statement that reports have been circulated, for one object or another, that those letters were hawked about Toronto, I can tell the hon. gentleman that those letters have always been in my possession, and have not left my possession unless I knew where they were going when I sent them, under my own positive instruction, by reliable persons, to reliable people who were investigating them. That is the only statement which I consider it proper to make at present.

Mr. SCRIVER. It is not my intention to take any general part in the discussion which has sprung up regarding the situation as it affects the Cabinet. That discussion, perhaps, from the point of view taken by this side of the House was carried on by the leader of the Opposition and the hon. knight who sits before me to a sufficient length to enable all members of the House to understand the true position. I will simply say that since I became a member of this House, a quarter of a century ago, my experience has never included anything approaching the present condition of things. I would not have said one word on the situation were it not for the fact that an old personal friend of mine, not a political friend, has been assailed in the house of his friends in a manner which constrains me to say a few words in his defence. I cannot but feel as an independent member of this House that the Premier of this country has been assailed in a manner which very few would have expected to witness. If he has not been stabbed in the back, he has been, in the words of a late Governor General of this country, struck below the belt, at least. It was my good fortune when I first became a member of this House, twenty-five years ago, or thereabouts, to find as one of its members the present Premier. Although we were not at one in regard to all of our political views, we saw alike in respect to