

Mr. LAFORTUNE: I have not a word to withdraw.

Mr. DOHERTY: That is exactly what I said.

Mr. LAFORTUNE: I have my archbishop with me.

Mr. DOHERTY: I congratulate the hon. gentleman upon the company in which he says he finds himself, but I am not afraid that he will succeed in destroying the confidence of that gentleman in myself. The ex-Secretary of State did not leave this Government because he had made a pledge that he thought this Government was breaking. The member for Montcalm, who has waited so long to discover his innate admiration of the member for Hochelaga (Mr. Patenaude), certainly does not entertain a higher opinion of that gentleman than I do. It was a loss to the Government when Hon. Mr. Patenaude thought it his duty to withdraw from it, and it would be a great loss to the public life of Canada if he should permanently withdraw from it. I sincerely hope that wherever it may seem to him that the path of duty lies, he will continue to follow that path and to give his valuable service to our country. But the ex-Secretary of State knows precisely all the facts with which we have been dealing and I leave it to him whether there was any question of broken promise or broken pledge on his part or on mine. Moreover, I leave it to his letter of resignation to contradict the unfounded statement of the member for Montcalm that he resigned rather than break a pledge that was given and that reproach should be addressed to me because I had not done likewise. Hon. gentlemen who appreciate what honour means should be careful not to impugn a man's personal honour as mine has been impugned by the member for Rouville—I give him the credit that his language was more delicate than that of the member for Laval (Mr. Wilson) and the member for Montcalm. This subject is not as important, from the public point of view, as these hon. gentlemen seem to think it is, but it is of vital importance to me, because it touches my personal honour.

Let me advert for a moment to the use which the member for Laval did not think it beneath him to make of an answer given on behalf of the Government to a question put by the member for Russell (Mr. Murphy). I have not the slightest doubt that the member for Russell got an answer to the question that he

[Mr. Doherty.]

intended to put. I know the member for Russell too well and have too high a respect for him to imagine that he would try, under the guise of a Parliamentary question, to pry into the private correspondence of a gentleman because he happened to be a member of the Government. The member for Russell asked whether there had been any correspondence between this Government, or any member of the Government, and any prelate of the province of Quebec. We would not have done to the hon. member for Russell (Mr. Murphy) the injustice to suppose that he was trying to ferret out private correspondence between members of this Government and their friends. The hon. member for Russell is a gentleman, and I am quite sure he never meant to try to do anything of the kind. Such action would be beneath contempt. How it should be more justifiable to try to ferret out the correspondence between a gentleman, because he happens to be a member of the Government, and another gentleman, who happens to be a clergyman or a prelate or a bishop in the church to which that gentleman happens to belong, is something that I cannot understand. I want to be just, and I am only just to the hon. member for Russell when I say I am satisfied he had no such idea in mind, and equally am I satisfied that he never conceived of the use to which the hon. member for Laval (Mr. C. A. Wilson) would be willing to put the perfectly proper answer the hon. member got, that there was no official correspondence by the Government, and that the Government did not charge itself with investigating the private correspondence of its members. The hon. member for Russell never can have foreseen the use that that answer would be put to. The hon. member for Laval, the other evening, in the presence of the hon. member for Rouville (Mr. Lemieux), who did not condemn his action—I am satisfied if he thinks about it, he will condemn it—proceeded in this House to find fault with this answer and, having satisfied himself from it that there was private correspondence, to draw this extraordinary conclusion: "there was private correspondence because the Government said there was no official correspondence—which was the only matter at issue—and moreover, it has been said that a minister made a promise to an archbishop; by this system of reasoning I have arrived at the conclusion that there was private correspondence between the minister and the archbishop; therefore, it is proved, as clear as