

not like to bring before the House, but if I may speak of the general tenor of the letter, it was a request for the appointment by His Excellency the Governor General of an administrator, who would give the necessary sanction to certain Bills this session and who would also prorogue parliament. My hon. friend (Mr. Maclean) asked me who is administering the other duties of the Lieutenant Governor. It seems to me there was no need for him to put such a question. Sir Oliver Mowat is the Lieutenant Governor of the province, and is administering all the duties of the office except those which he himself has asked to be assigned to another person. The reason why Sir Oliver Mowat asks that an administrator be appointed to give the sanction of the Lieutenant Governor to the Bills passed during the session and prorogue the session, which is not expected to last very long, is that he has been incapacitated by an accident, which he met with some days ago, which confines him to his room. Otherwise he is in good health and quite able to discharge, and is now discharging, the duties of his office. My hon. friend says that Sir Oliver Mowat is not able to discharge the duties of his office, that his health has incapacitated him from doing so. That is the language which my hon. friend used a moment ago, and I suppose he still stands by it. Well, I have the word of Sir Oliver Mowat himself, for whom my hon. friend says he has very great respect, that he is quite able to discharge all the duties of his office except those I have stated, and the inability to perform which is due solely to physical incapacity. Sir Oliver says that he is otherwise in good health. My hon. friend has told us that—and in this he voiced the opinion not only of the people of Ontario but of every Canadian that he has the greatest respect for Sir Oliver Mowat. We all have the same respect and when a man of the authority of Sir Oliver Mowat, when a man who commends to such a high degree the respect, confidence and admiration of the whole community, says he is quite able to administer all the duties of the office, it seems to me my hon. friend has in that statement an answer to the doubt he has expressed, and ought not to go any further, if indeed he has the respect for Sir Oliver Mowat which he professes to have. It seems to me that my hon. friend ought not to insist that Sir Oliver Mowat is not able to discharge the duties of his office, when he has the assurance of Sir Oliver himself that he considers himself quite able in every respect to discharge all the duties of his office except those which call for such physical exercise as to require him to move from one place to another.

Mr. F. D. MONK (Jacques Cartier). Might I ask the date of that letter?

THE PRIME MINISTER. I really do not recollect, but it is within the last ten days. I am sorry that I have not the privilege of

bringing it to the attention of the House, but if I remember aright, it was written within the past ten days. Under the circumstances what more can be said? Sir Oliver Mowat had a fall on the stairs which injured his leg so that he cannot walk, and is therefore not in a condition to go to the House and sanction Bills or prorogue the House. That is why we appointed an administrator. Let me go further. This is the third time this matter has been brought to the attention of the House. Sir Oliver Mowat is Lieutenant Governor by virtue of the commission issued to him on the proper authority, that of the Dominion government. He can be removed to-day at will, but until last November he could not be removed except for cause. Had we renewed his commission, he would be in the same position. My hon. friend need not go far back for a precedent to which no objection was taken. Some few years ago, we objected to lieutenant governors being kept in office year after year without any renewal of their commissions, but no fault was ever found when a lieutenant governor was kept in office for some months longer than his actual term. Some few years ago, the late Sir George Kirkpatrick was appointed Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. He was sworn in on the 13th of May, 1892, and his five years term expired on the 13th of May, 1897. But he remained in office during the term of his natural life, or some six or seven months after his commission had expired. He was in very poor health, had undergone an operation, and it was well known he could not live much longer, but we did not choose to disturb him and left him in the enjoyment of the office which he held with the concurrence and respect of everybody in the province of Ontario. I would like to know why a different rule should be applied to Sir Oliver Mowat. Does he not enjoy to as high an extent the confidence of the people of Ontario as did his predecessor? For all these reasons it seems to me that my hon. friend is not playing the best part he could. If I judge rightly the trend of public opinion, I am warranted in saying that if there is a man in whom the people of Ontario at this moment have confidence to guide them through the political crisis there existing, it is the man who has for so many years enjoyed to the fullest extent the confidence of that province.

Hon. JOHN HAGGART (South Lanark). This side of the House, Mr. Speaker, as well as the other side, are extremely gratified to learn that the only reason for the appointment of an administrator for the province of Ontario are those assigned in the Canada 'Gazette.' If an administrator be required on account of the physical condition of his honour the Lieutenant Governor, the government were perfectly justified in acceding to Sir Oliver Mowat's request. We are all glad to learn from the right hon. gentleman that the alarming reports as to the mental