

Minister of Finance. But has the Minister of Finance attempted to justify them? He has done this: he has made statements which might or might not have been received by the House if we were sitting in Supply, and the hon. gentleman was asking a vote for this purpose or that purpose. He has said this was necessary and that was necessary. The point is not whether it might have been prudent for the House to vote the money. The point is that the Government, not recognising the powers and limitations prescribed by the statute, have chosen to vote moneys by Orders in Council which should only have been voted after having received the sanction of Parliament. Two things that must concur are—first, that the expenditure is unforeseen, and next, that it is urgently and immediately required. Has the Minister of Finance attempted to say that one-half of these expenditures were urgently and immediately required? Has he attempted to argue that the issue of these warrants was within the powers given to the Government by Parliament? He has not done so, nor has the First Minister. Then, I say that the document on its face clearly shows that the Government have been guilty of issuing those warrants unconstitutionally and illegally. I know the facts connected with one or two of those items myself, and I know they cannot be justified; I know the money was spent illegally. Here is a small item of \$3,800 for filling in a station yard at Charlottetown. That was not a matter which was not foreseen, because it is many years since it was reported upon by the engineer in chief as a work that ought to be undertaken by the Government. Nor was there any particular urgency about it. The space filled in has remained for many years unoccupied, and will, I venture to say, remain unoccupied for years longer. But just before the elections came on it was thought advisable to give employment to the large class of unemployed. Orders came down from Ottawa that the unemployed of Charlottetown should be engaged at the public expense. That was the urgency. No doubt, my hon. friend thought the public good would be served by gentlemen being returned to Parliament to support his Government, and the money was spent to secure that return. Not every unemployed man, but every unemployed man who could go to the hon. gentleman's candidate and obtain a certificate of character, could go and get work and be paid out of the public moneys of Canada, illegally appropriated by hon. gentlemen for an illegal and immoral purpose—the purpose of trying to control in an improper way the voice of the people. I venture to say that those who take up this statement and go through it, and have a knowledge of the facts contained in it, will be able to make the same statement as I have made. If these are the facts, the remarks of the hon. member for Bothwell are strictly true that these warrants have been issued illegally and unconstitutionally, and I am glad that this new Parliament, at its first meeting, should take the opportunity of putting on record, clearly and distinctly, its views on this matter. The hon. gentleman says he recognises the truth of the proposition laid down by the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright); but if he recognises that proposition in theory, he has flagrantly abused it in practice.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I might call attention to the fact that if there be any confusion, it was none of my making, because the date, the 14th April, is given in the document itself.

Mr. BLAKE. Of course the statement of the Minister of Finance was based on an entire misapprehension of the character of the document with reference to which he made that statement. He said there was a typographical error. There is none in the return, which is perfectly accurate. It is a statement of the Governor General's warrants issued, and it gives the numbers and dates, no doubt, accurately,

Mr. DAVIES.

with reference to the warrants issued on the 14th April, just as it does with reference to the warrants issued before.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Does not Mr. McGee's correction in red ink alter the dates?

Mr. BLAKE. It does not. Mr. McGee says:

"I have corrected the subjoined list in red ink, showing the dates upon which the Orders in Council issued, authorising special warrants in so far as the date 14th April is mentioned."

But this return does not purport to give the date of a single Order in Council. It does not deal with them, but with the dates of warrants in all cases, as well in the cases of warrants issued on the 14th April as in the others. There is no typographical or other error corrected, but an additional piece of information is supplied to us, namely, the dates of the Orders in Council upon which the warrants of the 14th April were in fact issued. There is nothing incorrect in the paper. The First Minister says this is a technical point, that these warrants were issued after the 14th, and the Orders in Council just before. It is a technical point to pass Orders in Council the day before Parliament meets in order to escape from the jurisdiction and the control of Parliament, as to the votes of money required. It is to prostitute the powers which the Government are given under the law, to issue warrants when no public necessity required the money to be paid before Parliament met, in order that the Government may close the transaction and then call upon us to go through the empty form of saying the money should be paid. I agree in the criticism made of the general declaration of the hon. the Finance Minister. He said he entirely agreed in the general view taken by the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright). Why, we all understand that there is nothing more popular than the agreements in declarations of a high standard of morality, or of a high code of public virtue, and there is nothing more unpopular than the application to particular instances of that high standard of public morality and virtue. "I entirely agree," says the hon. the Finance Minister, "in the principle laid down, but I object to its being applied to the cases in hand." It is only in cases of urgent necessity, in which the public interest does really require an expenditure to be made, that, owing to certain circumstances beyond the control of the Government, could not be foreseen in time to obtain parliamentary approval, that this power of issuing special warrants ought to be used. We find, by this statement, it has been used to the extent of \$2,000,000, and the hon. the Minister of Finance claims, rightly used. But on what grounds does he justify it? In almost every case, he confines himself to the statement that the money ought to be voted by us because the expenditure was a good and proper one. This would be a good reason, if true, for the hon. gentleman, when bringing down an estimate, to ask Parliament to pass it; but it is no reason for asking us to vote him this money which he has expended in this unauthorised way. More than a justification of that description is required for the exercise of this particular power. The law does not entrust the Administration with the power of making expenditures during recess simply because the expenditures may be good in themselves; the law does not authorise the Government to incur expenditure which is simply to be justified, when Parliament meets, by the statement that this would be a proper thing to vote if you were here, and therefore we were justified in spending the money without your consent. The law imposes certain restrictions—restrictions which are not adequate, but it certainly does impose restrictions upon the expenditure by the Administration, outside the Session of Parliament, of moneys which Parliament did not vote. What is the marginal note to this clause of the Act? "Accidents during recess of Parliament." That is the interpretation which is given. Then the clause goes on to say: