

by the member for West York? Is it not this: That when Sir Adolphe Caron went to the member for West York he called his attention to the fact that it was my handwriting? What motive did the member for West York have for this? Is it not the same motive which prompted the man who wrote that anonymous letter, and endeavoured to fasten the charge upon me, the motive of desiring to ruin a man who, whatever his faults may have been, has done his best upon the platform of this country for the party to which he belongs, and for the principles which he has held. I appeal to my hon. friends opposite. I have hit them as hard as I could in public debate, but there is not a man of them in this House to-day who will say that I have ever hit below the belt, either in this House or upon the platform, that I have ever yet done an act which should bring a blush of shame to the face of any man who is proud of his position as a Canadian in the public life of his country. Sir, after this matter had gone to His Excellency, after His Excellency had looked into the matter between Sir Adolphe Caron and myself, I think, in obedience to the rules of decency, in obedience to the respect in which we should hold the representative of Her Majesty, and in obedience to that respect which should guide one member of this House in his intercourse towards another, it might well have been let rest until the courts may deal with it, until the courts will deal with it. And men are afraid that the courts will deal with it, for when I came to engage a counsel in Toronto to deal with it, the best criminal counsel in the province of Ontario, I found that the member for West York had engaged him in advance. I have only to say this, that when this subject is dealt with in the courts, and when the photographs of these letters are distributed to members of this House, and are printed in the press of this country, there is not a man in Canada, expert or no expert, who will say that there is a trace of resemblance between my writing and the writing of those anonymous letters; and I wish to God, for the honour of this House, and for the honour of Canadian public life, that another man in this House could say the same thing.

Sir ADOLPHE CARON. I need hardly say how deeply I regret that the matter, which I considered from the very first a matter personal to Dr. Montague and myself, should have been brought up again this afternoon. I regret more especially that the hon. member who has made the statement which he has made, although coming up to my seat and telling me that he was going to make a statement, should not have considered it necessary, as he was using information which he supposed to have come from myself, to let me see the statement before he gave it to the House.

Mr. MONTAGUE. And had given me notice.

Mr. MONTAGUE.

Sir ADOLPHE CARON. And had given notice of his intention to proceed in this matter. Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not consider that the statement made by the hon. gentleman changes in any way the position of the case as it stands before the House and before the country. I wish at this moment to express how deeply I regret that His Excellency's name should be brought up in connection with a matter of this kind. But I know that on both sides of the House it will be the feeling of every hon. gentleman that if he did consent to look into the matter, it was because of the fact that it concerned two hon. gentlemen who were his constitutional advisers, and who were sitting in the Cabinet with the Prime Minister whom he had charged with the responsibility of advising him. I wish to say now, without going into a discussion of the statement, that the declaration I made the other day to the House is the one which I am prepared to stand by. I received from Dr. Montague a denial of his connection with the anonymous letters. Beyond this, the circumstances under which he was supposed to be connected with the case were explained to me by the hon. gentleman. I stated openly and frankly to the House, as I did to the Governor General in a letter under my own signature, that I accepted his denial, and I repeat it to-day; and I think when a matter of this kind has been settled in the manner in which it has been settled between the two parties interested, it would have been better to have allowed it to remain as we left it, after the Governor General had given, not his sanction, but an expression of his opinion that it was satisfactorily settled, as I state again it was.

Mr. LAURIER. The House, I am sure, will readily understand that I have no intention whatever of even alluding to the little episode of which we have just been witnesses. I rise simply to address myself to the statement made just now by the hon. gentleman who leads the House with respect to the negotiations that are now going on between the Prime Minister and certain parties with a view with reconstructing the Cabinet. If I understood the hon. gentleman rightly, he told us that at the present time negotiations were going on with certain parties, that they have advanced to a certain stage but are not yet completed, but he hopes that by to-morrow he will be in a position to give to the House a full statement. Under such circumstances I certainly deem it my duty to put no obstacle in the way of the Prime Minister, and I shall not offer any objection to the hon. gentleman's motion. But perhaps the hon. gentleman might tell the House, if he can conveniently do so, if certain gentlemen who a week ago to-day he told us would not serve under the present Premier have thought better or worse—I will not say which—but have, at all events, thought differently and have now gone half over to the fold. That is all the