

no suspicion of the kind was responsible for his dismissal the late Mr. Cochrane thought he had done all that he could do to clear Mr. Carvill's reputation in the matter. Mr. Carvill has brought the subject to my attention, and to the attention of other members of the Government, in order, as the hon. member has just stated, to clear his reputation before the public. Those ministers to whom he wrote have been shown the file containing the documents relating to the case, and after looking over it they have concluded that no other action could have been taken than has been adopted up to the present time. My hon. friend does not ask that this man be reinstated; he simply asks that he be freed from any suspicion of theft. But he wants a commissioner appointed to take evidence in the matter. If there is any suspicion on the part of the people of St. John that this man had anything to do with the theft, I want to tell them that the officials of the railway in no way believed or had the impression that he had anything to do with the theft. They absolved him from all blame so far as that is concerned, though they thought that he was careless in his duties. I repeat that they never believed that he had anything to do with the theft, and as the Minister of Railways and representing the Government I say the same thing now. I have gone over the file several times, and I do not believe that Mr. Carvill had anything to do with that theft. If I can do anything further to clear his reputation, why, I want to do it. I have never seen him or any of his family; I do not know anything about them. But we do not in any way implicate him; his character is perfectly free so far as that incident is concerned. What would be the use in my appointing a commissioner to go down and take evidence, and hear some people swear that he had nothing to do with the matter? The statements that I have made here tonight should be sufficient to free him from any suspicion; there should be no necessity for further explanation. I hope, therefore, that if the people of St. John have any belief of that kind they will remove it from their minds and let Mr. Carvill go about the city as an upright and honourable citizen.

Mr. COPP: I have no doubt that my hon. friend is absolutely sincere and honest in what he says, and that he would very much like to clear Mr. Carvill from any suspicion in the matter. But there is only

one way that the minister can absolutely clear this man from the insinuations which have been cast upon him by gentlemen who had control of the Intercolonial railway at the time, the manager and his officials at Moncton. The minister publicly states that Mr. Carvill had nothing to do with the theft. Well, I have no doubt that the minister would gladly say that, but the point is that the damage has been done. I do not want to repeat the argument, but by their action these officials have placed Mr. Carvill in a most unfortunate position in the eyes of the public.

Mr. J. D. REID: I state here and now that the officials of the railway, whether at St. John or Moncton, have never even insinuated so far as I know—

Mr. COPP: Oh, yes.

Mr. J. D. REID: At all events the records on file show that they have never insinuated that Mr. Carvill had anything to do with the theft. Now, if a commission is appointed to investigate the matter something might be said that might be interpreted in an entirely different way. If the hon. member will say what employees made the statement to which he refers, we will take care of them; we will find out why they make those statements. But unless some evidence is forthcoming that such statements are being made surely this man's character cannot be more effectively cleared than by the statement which I have just made on behalf of the employees at St. John, Moncton or anywhere else on the railway. Why should we go to the expense of holding an investigation?

Mr. COPP: The expense would not be large. My hon. friend says that this man was dismissed because of incompetency. I have no fault to find, except this—and I make the statement with reservation because it is based on information furnished to me. This man was dismissed in March, 1917. According to the file, it would appear that this man was incompetent during the whole of his eighteen years of service; he was backward in sending in his reports, and so on. In December, 1916, hardly three months prior to his dismissal, Mr. Hayes increased his salary. On a previous occasion he asked him if he would accept a better position outside of St. John, intimating that he was paying him all he could for the St. John office but that he would be prepared to give him a position outside with greater responsibility and at a higher salary. Now that does not altogether indicate the incom-