

(:-) "Puralis" Soda. (:-)

THORPE & CO.,
(LIMITED.)**VICTORIA.****VANCOUVER****Made From Distilled Water**

TELEPHONE 435.

P. O. BOX 175.

THE LETTER CARRIERS.

As we said in our last, we cannot but regard the position of the letter carriers and third-class post office clerks as an exceptionally hard one. With the full amount, including salary and allowance—\$40 in all per month, less 90 cents for the superannuation fund, in which many of them are not likely to be participants—the position, owing to the miserable wages paid, is regarded by many as a mere temporary makeshift. Scarcely one of these officials is, on this account, ready to stay any longer than he can help. The job is not a soft one. In all kinds of weather, the postman is obliged to go his rounds, and the public are possibly more exacting upon him than upon any other class of official. For all that he has to do, even before the provisional allowance was knocked off, he had only \$1.33 per day. How many of the least skilled of laborers receive as little for their services? But deducting the \$10 provisional allowance per month, as has been done, what is there in 97 cents a day for an intelligent man, for the letter carrier must be able to read and write, and it would never do to send out on work like this many men whose only ability is to do work of the hardest and roughest kind? The third-class post office clerks and letter carriers of Victoria are a desirable class of citizens. Many of them are married men with families, to whom small as is the amount, the \$10 difference between \$30 and \$40 means the difference between the ragged edge of starvation and the ability to maintain themselves. But even then there can be no possibility of putting by anything for a rainy day, and, in consequence, at the very best, the only hope of many of the carriers is that when they are gone, Providence or some one more kindly than the Postmaster-General will supply the families they leave with the necessities which a paternal government, no matter how in its fiscal policy it may and is making rich men richer, contrives to rob certain classes of its own employees and make the general public poorer and poorer the longer they live.

Sir Adolphe Caron, who is at present abroad, should have seen to this matter

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before he went away, otherwise his cabinet colleagues ought to have given orders that for the present no changes should have been made in the direction complained of. As it is it looks almost as if the hon. gentleman had set the thing in operation and then gone away to avoid having to deal with the immediate consequences of the course pursued. But we may remark that the \$10 per month provisional allowance was voted by Parliament last session for the Victoria staff. Why was it then withheld? Is it the intention to make a new deal and, as some have supposed, to divide the amount so voted with the letter carriers of the newly constituted delivery service at Vancouver? This would be manifestly unfair. The House of Commons did not vote the money with that object in view, and if they had supposed it was to be so applied would have provided otherwise; and therefore the department is taking an unwarranted advantage of the action of Parliament.

But why does not the Government meet the case manfully and in the same

way that it did with the Custom House and Inland Revenue employees some time ago? Then it recognized everything upon which the claim of the Postoffice employees of Victoria based their claim to the provisional allowance and augmented their salaries. Why does it not take similar action in the present case and do what is only just to the men who were led to suppose that they would be honestly and squarely done by? Why do they make fish of one and flesh of another? Do Sir Adolphe Caron and his staff desire, at the expense of their employees, to reduce the adverse balance in connection with what they must recognize can never be a paying service, at any rate until the Dominion is much more extensively opened up than at present. If there must be economies let them be effected among the men who can well afford to stand a cut, and who never know what it is—unless their action be a wilful one—to run a race with the debt collector or in order to make ends meet to starve their stomachs and make their bodies shiver. This is the case with not a few of the men to whom we refer, and the resident members and the officers of the Department know it.—*Commercial Journal.*

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