

Hon. Mr. POWER—There was a Liberal government in power, and the Conservative government had gone out of office. The Liberals had taken their places and the Liberals complained that the employés of the offices were hostile to them, and apparently they spoke of concealed hostility. I shall read the whole passage :

With respect to the complaint urged by the executive council that the existing administration has to encounter the active or concealed hostility of many persons holding official employments, and that one head of a department at least voted against the return of the attorney general and provincial secretary to the assembly, I have to observe that I am aware of no remedy against what is termed "the concealed hostility" of persons holding permanent offices to an administration opposed to that to which they may have been indebted for their appointments.

It is impossible but that such persons should, like all others, have their personal political feelings, and it is not unnatural that they should desire the advancement of the party to power, to whom they are thus indebted, but these persons must be aware that the condition upon which they will be suffered to enjoy exemption from dismissal for any other cause but that of positive misconduct, will be that they should abstain from taking any active part in political contests.

Hon. Mr. MACDONALD (B.C.)—That is not analogous. When the elections took place they were not in power and therefore they were not opposed to them.

Hon. Mr. POWER—I think I had better go on with the quotation. It reads :

Such indeed is the well understood rule which prevails in this country, and I am of opinion that a similar rule should be enforced in Nova Scotia. In a smaller society of a colony, it is not unreasonable to expect that party disputes should run higher than in the larger and more settled society of the country ; and it becomes the more necessary, therefore, that in the colonies neutrality in party contests should be observed on the part of holders of office not regarded as political. I should think it by no means unreasonable to make it known to such persons, that they would be expected to abstain from the exercise of their right of voting at elections against any member of the existing administration for the time being, inasmuch as they could not give such vote without forfeiting their neutral position in politics which is the condition of their permanent tenure of their respective offices. Perhaps it might not be unattended with advantage to enforce this rule by legislation, and to impose upon the holders of subordinate situations in the public service in Nova Scotia, the same disqualification from taking any part in elections to which all persons employed in the collection of the revenue are subjected by the law of this country.

Now that last suggestion of the colonial secretary of that day was due to the fact, I

presume, that in those days there was open voting. Voting by ballot was unknown, and he recommended the disfranchisement of those officers because they could not vote without the way in which they voted becoming known.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Is the hon. gentleman aware that in 1845 civil servants in England had no right to vote ?

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—I am aware they had not, as a rule, in England.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—They had no right to vote in England in 1849.

Hon. Mr. POWER—I am not saying they had.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Then the rule would not apply.

Hon. Mr. POWER—Hon. gentlemen will see that the doctrine, which I think is sound doctrine, laid down by the colonial secretary, and the doctrine practised in England is more severe on the employés than the doctrine laid down here by the leader of this House and by the Minister of Railways in the other Chamber.

Hon. Mr. MACINNES (Burlington)—What year was that, may I ask ?

Hon. Mr. POWER—The colonial secretary's despatch was in 1848.

Hon. Mr. MACINNES (Burlington)—The reform of the civil service did not take place at that day. The civil service of England was afterwards remodelled and reorganized under a commission.

Hon. Mr. POWER—That does not alter the position in the slightest degree. It is true that in 1854 they began the reform of the civil service in England, and in 1874, after the ballot law had been introduced, the disqualification from voting was removed ; but I have given the principle which is laid down by the best English authorities ; and, as I say, the principle and the practice laid down by the English authorities are more adverse to the employés than the doctrine laid down here by the leader of the House and by the members of the government in the other House.