

if it were a matter of importance, I could show evidence directly to the contrary of what my hon. friend states. The rule laid down by the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) with respect to the conduct of officials is one that I do not feel called upon to take exception to. I have told the committee that the cases to which reference has been made by my hon. friend from Pictou, (Mr. Bell) and the other cases concerning which complaint has arisen, will be inquired into. I will satisfy myself as to their correctness and I will deal with them. Now the question is raised whether the declaration of a member should be accepted. We must take such declarations as correct when made in this House. But I think I am not uncharitable when I say that these matters brought to the attention of the House by my hon. friend from Pictou are brought forward not with a view so much to correcting the conduct of employees of the Intercolonial as with a view to making political capital against the administration. And I think there is a great point of distinction there. I believe that in the management of the Intercolonial the minister should be surrounded by men in whom he has confidence. The employees all along the line should be men who, at least, are not disposed to put obstructions in the way of proper management of the railway. But I have known cases on the Intercolonial Railway—I speak, now, be it remembered from personal knowledge—I have known cases, for instance, of despatchers who have delayed trains and have boasted afterwards that they did it with a view to showing that the administration of the Intercolonial under this government was a failure in that the trains did not run on time. Now, that is not the kind of men we want. I am perfectly willing that the employees of the Intercolonial shall vote as they please. But I do not wish them to be animated by the desire to make the administration of the railway under the present regime a failure. If they attend to their duties without regard to politics, if they do not allow their feelings to interfere with their work in connection with the railway, then, so far as I am concerned, they shall be retained as employees of the Intercolonial. But if they are animated with a desire to make unsatisfactory the management of the road, to cause the people to be dissatisfied with that management, then, if I find evidence of that, I care not what the consequences to myself politically or otherwise, I will strike the official head off every such man.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. INGRAM. If hon. gentlemen opposite are cheering the sentiment that, if a despatcher takes advantage of his position to delay trains in order to bring discredit on the management he should be discharged, I fully agree with them. There is no man on this side of the House who will take

Mr. EMMERSON.

exception to that. It would be a remarkable state of affairs indeed if such an employee were to find any man who would endorse his acts.

Mr. EMMERSON. It is a condition of things that existed on the Intercolonial within three years.

Mr. INGRAM. I have only to say that if the minister discovered such an employee and could prove it, he should not lose a moment's time in discharging him. Now, I want to refer to statements I have made in this House from time to time as to men being employed on the Intercolonial on the recommendation of supporters of the government. I say that has been the rule for years and it is the rule now. And I wish to point out, as I have often pointed out before, that, instead of that being an advantage to a government supporter, it is often an embarrassment to him, and that the sooner it is stopped the better it will be for the government railway, for the members of this House and for the people of this country. My hon. friend (Mr. Emmerson) said that I had proved a great deal against the administration of government railways previous to 1896. Am I to understand that the former Minister of Railways and Canals (Mr. Haggart) instructed his officers at Moncton to allow only Conservatives to go out and vote while Liberals were prevented from voting? We have heard the denial of the hon. gentleman (Mr. Haggart). If the management is guilty of such an interference with electors, or if any superintendent under the management is guilty of it, the matter should be attended to. The same officers are managing the road to-day that managed it in those days, and I suppose they are easy to get at with a view to finding out the facts. Whoever is guilty of such a thing should be punished for it. Now, with respect to men being employed on the Intercolonial that were not necessary, I will bring proof that will be satisfactory I am sure to the hon. gentleman (Mr. Emmerson). Here is what the hon. gentleman himself said on April 25, 1902:

And while the Minister of Railways and Canals has stated before this House that he has given the utmost freedom to the employees of that road in respect to their voting, I want to tell him that his officers, and that his bosses, and that his foremen have not been so generous. I want to tell the minister that in many instances there have been good Liberal votes sacrificed, not in the interest of that fairness of which he has been an apostle, but of which his officials and his foreman have not always been apostles by any means. I have not seen eye to eye with the minister. I have felt on occasions that there had been men placed in the employ of the Intercolonial Railway who should not be there, and I have so told the minister.

Mr. EMMERSON. Hear, hear.