

ble, not only as regards himself, but so far as his associations are concerned, from any entanglements. If he is not, then he is not in a position in which he can even hope to have the confidence of the people. I am going to venture a statement in advance of any personal knowledge and it is that Mr. McKinnon was never recommended by the Fruit-growers Association of Canada, or of the province of Ontario, which would have the best possible means of knowing the person best fitted to discharge duties of that kind. My hon. friend is not open to censure for having made an appointment from his own party. That is the custom and no hon. member of this House will waste a moment in discussing it, but when the hon. member makes a party appointment and for that and no other reason, as he seems to have done in this case, he is open to censure. The Minister of Agriculture cannot tell this committee that he had a personal knowledge of Mr. McKinnon's qualifications. In any service at all, whether in law or in the knowledge of fruit, a man cannot possibly have knowledge unless he has experience and training. You might as well say that a bright young man would make a good lawyer without passing a single examination, as to say that a young man was fitted to be an inspector of fruit because his father bought a fruit farm while he was at college. The hon. gentleman says that he found this young man to be very useful, but he should have taken precaution to discover that before appointing him. Mr. McKinnon may know more about fruit than before he went to Paris, but it is perfectly clear that the Minister of Agriculture placed an inexperienced lawyer in charge of an agricultural branch, and that his doing so might have very disastrous results to the trade. I am not attacking lawyers.

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE. Hear, hear.

Mr. CLANCY. I rather envy those gentlemen who have a training as lawyers, but I pity them if they try to be farmers or fruit-growers. Hon. members of this House who know the history of this young man know that he had absolutely no experience in the fruit business, but nevertheless the minister elevated him to a position of great importance in connection with the fruit-growing industry of this country.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. I cannot now remember whether I asked anybody as to Mr. McKinnon's qualifications for this office, but he had undoubtedly been recommended to me as knowing a good deal about fruit-growing.

Mr. CLANCY. By whom?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. By the Hon. Thomas Bain, late Speaker of this House, whose judgment I will take

Mr. CLANCY.

upon such matters as readily as that of any man in Canada. Mr. McKinnon had shown in his work in the department, industry and intelligence and exceptional ability as a business man, as well as practical worth. He was a well educated man; he had a legal training, and the work he has to do as the head of that particular branch is particularly connected with the organization and administration of the Act.

Mr. COCHRANE. It must require a great deal of capacity to superintend eight or nine men.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. It does require very considerable capacity to organize entirely new work for eight or nine men in the country. I believed from what I had seen of Mr. McKinnon's work that he was equal to the position, and after eight months experience I can say that he has proven himself to be extremely capable. I can rest upon the justification which the course of events has given for my choice of that gentleman. Hon. gentlemen opposite, I am afraid, are a little led away by the fact that they have discovered that Mr. McKinnon is a Liberal and that his father is engaged in active Liberal politics. I do not wonder at that, but I do not think that should influence me in my judgment of an effective officer who is doing effective work. I believe I was perfectly right in putting Mr. McKinnon into that office, and I propose to continue him in it.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). What are the duties of this young gentleman? Is he required to know about fruit or fruit-growing?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. I would consider it necessary that a man in charge of this work should know something about fruit-growing, and I know that Mr. McKinnon does know a good deal about fruit-growing and about fruit. In addition, he had to do a great deal of organizing and of direction in connection with the administration of this Act which was entirely a new thing. Prof. Robertson and myself gave a great deal of thought and attention to that, and we had to have some men under Prof. Robertson especially in charge of that work, whose duty it would be to carry out the details of the plan which we decided upon. I do not know that Mr. McKinnon has ever examined personally a barrel of apples, but if he had to, I believe he would be quite capable of doing so. His work has been that of administration and supervision, while the other inspectors have done the actual inspecting.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). It is perfectly plain from the statement of the minister that this young man had not the slightest qualification for the discharge of his duties in connection with fruit.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. I do not acknowledge that at all.