

goes astray, or something else happens, and it is a subject of inquiry. Instead of that being inquired about directly by the Controller in Ottawa, he would be advised of it by his local superintendent. The procedure today involves the most roundabout system of red tape. The inspector in Toronto, for example, has heard about it. What is his course of action? He writes to that mail clerk belonging to the Stratford division, who may be sitting in his office at the time; he writes to the inspector of Stratford, asking him to report upon the incident in connection with this trip from Toronto to Orangeville; the latter writes to his mail clerk, whom he does not see, and he gets his answer, and there are three letters. Then that answer is sent to the Toronto inspector; then he has to have it confirmed by a similar roundabout procedure. He writes to the inspector at Barrie, who writes to his mail clerk, and he sends his answer back to the inspector in Barrie, and then that letter is sent to the inspector in Toronto, and there will be ten letters written, and ten or fifteen days will elapse before the supposed transaction has been dressed up. Meantime the public service has suffered. That is a sample of the system of red-tapeism that has been built up by having these little groups or departments of the postal service scattered through the province of Ontario. Instead of this service being built up for the benefit of the people, there has been no practical administration at the head of it, and a system of red-tapeism has grown up, and the public is suffering. There is unnecessary expense and inefficiency in the service, and delays. The mail clerks are not encouraged in efficiency, and there is no supervision over them to speak of. They were not rewarded by reason of their efficiency. There were when I took office 404 railway mail clerks in the service of this country, a considerable number of whom would be unnecessary had they had proper encouragement and been under a proper system, free as much as possible from red tape, under a system devised solely in the interest of the people. When I detach that work, if you will permit me to do so, from the inspector's office,—

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). Would the hon. gentleman allow me? How would it be, for example, in Nova Scotia? As I understand, there is one inspector for that province and another for New Brunswick?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. Yes.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). Well, now, do any of the mail clerks, for example, leaving Halifax in the morning, run beyond the jurisdiction of the inspector of Nova Scotia? Do any of them, for example, run as far as St. John?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. I am not familiar with that particular district,

Mr. MULOCK.

but I will give the hon. gentleman an illustration. There are mail clerks who run from Lévis to Moncton, and there are mail clerks who now run from Moncton to Lévis. We have, temporarily, at least, abolished these inspectors' lines, the divisional lines, in so far as the railway mail service is concerned. The railway mail service is the same as that of the conductor, who continues his run to a reasonable distance, instead of having to break his journey because he has reached the end of his district. Of course, it is not to say that the abuse has existed to that extent, but it has existed to some extent. Now, to continue the line of explanation evoked by the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule). By this transfer of railway mail clerks from the local officers or inspectors to the Controller at Ottawa, the delays and the expenditure to which I alluded will be obviated, and the inspectors will then be at greater liberty to discharge the duty for which they were originally intended, for which their offices were created, namely, to regulate the work, such as inspection of post offices, watching the land service and the mail services, and to be on the move more or less, as in England, travelling from post office to post office, looking after their offices to see that they are kept well and in good order, to see that the postmasters understand their duties, and to avoid such things as obliged me to ask a vote of Parliament to prevent last year. I do not know that these frauds could have been discovered, but, as far as possible, there will be an active supervision over these postmasters and it will also enable them to feel that there is a reasonable supervision over them. It will leave the inspectors free to properly discharge the duties attached to their offices and it will also be a great saving of expense as time goes on. If this Bill is passed I do not intend to make the arbitrary use of it that has been suggested by some hon. gentlemen. I intend to use all these high offices as prizes for the worthy members of the mail service. As my hon. friend from London (Mr. Beattie) has illustrated, for the information of the committee, perhaps, the hon. gentleman will be good enough to tell me to what political party Mr. McWhinney belongs, whose appointment I recommended to Council, for the time being?

Mr. BEATTIE. Mr. McWhinney has been in the service for forty years and he is also a very good Conservative, I believe. I must say that he is a most efficient officer. He has held the position of inspector or superintendent, as you now call him, for a number of years. He visits all the trains coming and going and looks after the mail clerks. I think that before being taken into the post office he was a mail clerk on the train. He was then promoted to the inspector of mail clerks. As far as I understand it