

But the question arises : What did that Minister have in his mind, or what changes would he wish to make in the Annuity Act when he spoke publicly on the subject in the recent election contest. He evidently is not satisfied with it as it stands, and must be, therefore, opposed either to its principle, or to some, if not all, of its provisions. On the occasion I refer to, which was the first attack made by a prominent public man, the Minister's standing at the Bar and in public opinion was so deservedly high that anything he said, naturally, attracted widespread attention. To some it did appear not a little unusual that, having so recently entered the Government, and thereby in a constitutional sense adopting and accepting full responsibility for the measures and policy of the Government, he should be found assailing one of its most recent legislative Acts. The undersigned believes an explanation of this apparently curious circumstance will be found in the fact that the Postmaster-General was not clearly understood, and that his words were not correctly reported. True, he is quite new to political life and without Government experience, so that he may, naturally, in the heat of an election contest, have intended only to suggest that amendments should be made to the present law, having relation simply to future annuitants, and which would not alter the status, or effect prejudicially any who are at present receiving grants under the existing enactment.

If, however, there be any who would advocate repeal as to present beneficiaries, or a modification which would, or might,

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the benefit Parliament has granted, and which he now enjoys, the undersigned would urge such advocates to pause. In this category, it would be unfair to include the Postmaster-General, who is too able a jurist, and too just a man to give countenance to such legislation. But to all who may be included, and there may be some of the highest character, but who have not thought the subject out, the undersigned would say that such legislation, as he shall proceed to show, would do an incalculable and irremediable injury to the reputation of the Parliament which adopted it and the country in which it was enacted.

We, in Canada, have been intensely proud of our connection with the Motherland, and have ever sought to emulate the splendid examples she has set us in her past history ; the traditions which have surrounded her legislation ; the scrupulous regard for justice, and the sacred recognition of private rights growing out of her Parliamentary enactments, which have always distinguished that legislation, have been held by us in Canada, in the past, as guides and examples for us to follow. Neither the day nor the occasion has yet arrived in this country, the undersigned ventures to believe, when we can afford to disregard these examples, and unless we are prepared to depart now from the wise and just safeguards these examples afford us, the proposal to annul the annuities or modify them in any sense