

great service to those who are opposed to government ownership.

Mr. EMMERSON. These men must have received the usual notice because I received a telegram asking me to stay their dismissal which was to take place at a date some time after I received the telegram.

Mr. DANIEL. What length of notice?

Mr. EMMERSON. A fortnight, I think.

Mr. DANIEL. These men received no notice.

Mr. EMMERSON. They must have received notice or I could not have received that telegram. My hon. friend intimated that these dismissals arose out of the St. John election and were political in their character, but in his next utterance he says that one of these men had been long in the service and was a political friend of the party to which I owe allegiance. That surely would prove that the dismissal was not for political reasons.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. The man might have seen fit to support the late Minister of Railways, but could not screw himself up to supporting the minister.

Mr. EMMERSON. As I understand he was absent from the city and could not have taken part in the election, and the mere absence of a man would certainly not show that he was taking part in an election. The other man, it was represented to me, was appointed two or three years ago by the party in power. These were not matters for consideration in determining the advisability of retaining a man in a certain position. The Intercolonial Railway officials are besieged by a great many applicants for employment in different sections and many of these men finally succeed in getting employment as opportunity presents itself. If the management were to undertake in the case of each individual man all over the 1,500 miles of railway to investigate or if we were to say that the management cannot remove men from their positions without investigation it would lead to endless trouble. That rule is not applied in private corporations, it is not applied in the industrial corporations of this country. They reserve the right to employ and to dismiss as they please, and it seems to me that it is in the interests of the railway that there should be given to the management the right to continue to follow that practice.

Mr. DANIEL. Neither of these men has had any communication with me either directly or indirectly, by themselves or their friends. All I know about the case is what I have seen in the press and certainly the general impression among the people is that the government through the Minister of Railways has exercised its power in an arbitrary and cruel manner in this case.

No reasons have yet been given why these men were dismissed. Even yet the minister has not told us why these parties were considered undesirable employees, so that evidently he takes the position that having the power he shall exercise it and refuse to give any reason why. Having arbitrary power, he intends to use it in an arbitrary manner, but I do not think that such conduct will conduce to his reputation as a fair man, to say the least of it. This thing is a matter of common discussion among people of the same walk of life and they certainly are not sparing in their criticisms of the minister.

Mr. EMMERSON. We are dispensing with the services of employees every week, and the management do not see that they should be called upon to give reasons. The usual course has been not to give reasons. My hon. friend has sought to leave the impression that these men were unjustly dismissed on political grounds. Well, the case on behalf of these two men was put to the government by the strongest government supporters in the city of St. John, one of whom had taken an active part against my hon. friend; but I felt that, while I would have been very glad to accede to their request, I could not allow my personal opinions to interfere.

Mr. PUTTEE. When a man is discharged from the Intercolonial and applies for a discharge sheet, is he not given one, stating the cause of dismissal?

Mr. EMMERSON. That has never been done.

Mr. PUTTEE. In what position then would that man be on applying for employment on another railway? He would be asked for his discharge sheet. The hon. minister has given us the impression that when a man is discharged from the Intercolonial no reason is given, and that on other roads and in other industrial establishments the same course is pursued. The hon. gentleman is wrong. On all railways, except the Intercolonial, when a man is discharged, he is given a discharge sheet setting forth the reasons. That is the invariable practice in the case of an employee of any length of service. Any industrial establishment, which treats its employees as people having some interest in their employment, will give a discharged employee the reasons for his dismissal, and I am surprised to hear the Minister of Railways say that that practice is not followed on the government road. I was not aware until this spring that the Intercolonial was run differently from other roads as regards its employees. Suppose a man in the telegraph service or an engineer is discharged, is he not given the reasons if he applies for them?

Mr. EMMERSON. There is a special agreement with the Telegrapher's Union covering their case. We deal with the body