

rorism under the Liberal-Conservative Government, and that employees were slaves. What will be the position of the employee on the railways and canals when he reads the dictum of the Minister, and when he understands what that dictum means, that he must crawl before the defeated candidate or the person who wished to be a representative of the people, and must do his bidding, and fawn around him before he has a chance to get a place on railway or canal, that his political future is to be reserved and conserved to him by this same fawning to the defeated or prospective candidate, or even to the member. Will that make a slave or a free man? Is that going to improve the position of the labouring men of this country, their bread and butter depending on the mere whisper of a defeated candidate in the ear of the great man who employs them. On the one side there is his manhood and independence as a man; on the other side there is bread and butter and the defeated candidate, who cannot secure the suffrages of the people, standing as the fate to decide whether that man shall get his bread and butter or keep his independence. Does that make labouring men good citizens of this country? I think no man will answer that it does. The principle is wrong, and the practice based on that principle cannot be considered to be right by the good common sense of this country. There is no principle of justice in it. Again, who is to run the Department of Railways? The department is an entity from the head down to the lowest man in the service of the road, and its prosperity depends upon what? Upon the discipline and the quality of the servants employed on the road. Where will the discipline of the road be after the dictum of the Minister of Railways has gone out, that every labouring man, every temporary man, every one of the two or three thousand men on the railway is dependent upon the breath, whim or will of a defeated candidate as to whether he shall retain his place or not. If the men depend for the position on a defeated candidate, that man is their master, not the superintendent of the section or the superintendent of the line. They have obtained their places through the defeated candidate. They know they can keep them if they remain on the right side of the defeated candidate. Where is the position to the road? Throughout the service there will be lack of discipline and disregard of the officers of the road, which will come about entirely from instilling into the minds of the employees, which the hon. Minister has done under his dictum, the idea that if they want to get on they must fawn to the defeated or successful candidate, and if they want to retain their positions, all they have to do is to pursue the same course. I say it is against the discipline and usefulness of a great system like the Intercolonial Railway to introduce a practice founded on

**Mr. FOSTER.**

a principle of that kind. More than that, Sir, who is to run the road? It is to be run by the representatives of the people and the defeated candidates of the people; Liberals, of course. They are to run the Intercolonial Railway so far as the officering of the road is concerned. Look at it from whichever point of view you like, the statement that has been made, and the rule that has been laid down by my hon. friend (Mr. Blair) is a vicious statement and a bad rule, and it cannot but be productive of evil in the service of the road and in the general interest of the country.

But what justice is there in this, Sir: that a man shall stand up here and declare that political neutrality is the price to be paid for office, when the very moment that they create a vacancy by this kind of sword practice, the very next moment, who fills it? Is it the neutral man in politics; not by any means. It is filled by the most decided partisan in politics. Is there any justice in that? If hon. gentlemen, on Liberal principles and on the line of policy which they consider is good, say that political neutrality must be the price of office, let them make it that, so that both the man who holds the office shall know it and the man who wants the office shall know it. But, so long as what is the penalty in one case becomes the reward in the other case, the hon. gentlemen opposite are inconsistent, and instead of curing they ten thousand times aggravate the very evil they say they wish to cure. These are sentiments which I believe we, sitting without partisan bias,—if we could put ourselves in that position for a single moment—would believe to be proper and right. Will the course taken by my hon. friend (Mr. Blair) help or hurt in that matter, and what is to be the effect? Hon. gentlemen opposite sometimes talk about the spoils system of the United States, but these hon. gentlemen know very well that they cannot make that reproach to the United States to-day. The time was when they could. The time was when this vicious system which my hon. friend (Mr. Blair) is introducing into Canada now, which teaches every man to fight for the spoils of office, and to get them by making himself solid with his party candidate; the time was when that was in vogue in the United States. But that was years ago, and to-day the system no longer exists. Within the last ten years the civil service on fixed principles has given place to the spoils system until now on a change of Government, there is the smallest possible change of the offices in the United States. They have left the spoil system, but we are going back to it. Let it be recorded in history that the party which is post-dating civil service progress in this country, is the great Liberal party which might be expected to be in favour of the strengthening and purifying of our civil service. My hon. friend (Mr. Blair) made the observation, that he does not propose