

age to him. He handed down his specifications, and proclaimed in London and in Toronto and in Ottawa that the conditions could not be departed from, and that the work had to be done in Ottawa. He received only one formal and complete tender; that of the British American Company. He received two informal tenders, one without the deposit of \$50,000, the other with a rider that all engraving that should have been done in Ottawa be cut out and sent to New York. He ignored the formal and perfect tender and he did not even communicate with that tenderer, but undertook to communicate with the American and alien company to the end, that he gives way to every one of their contentions and is to-day, or will be, the possessor of an establishment in this city where the simple mechanical work, and that only, is done; and the heart and soul and essence of the business is to be done in the city of New York and by an alien corporation. Well, Sir, why should we ignore a Canadian industry? Will any man take the history of that work in Canada, where art was small in the beginning, where skill gave place to brawn and naked strength, and where all this nicety and beauty of detail and of conception had to be a gradual process, a fruition worked out through the hard struggles and stages of successive years. Will the hon. gentleman remember that the Canadian Government has, to a certain extent, fostered that talent and brought it out until it has made an accretion of it which has done honour to Canada. Our present Finance Minister has the doubtful honour of entirely passing by, ignoring, setting back all of that, leaving it houseless and homeless, so far as the patronage of the Government is concerned, and of transferring it all to a large and alien corporation. It is a distinction which I do not covet; it is a distinction which I think my hon. friend (Mr. Fielding) should not covet. And for what reason? There is no reason that he dare to give this House but one; that is, that he declares he has got it done a little cheaper. But how much cheaper? When he takes into consideration the matter of engraving, he has got to meet the whole bill for the engraving of every die that is necessary for the making of all the notes and stamps and which he would not have to meet if the old company had been given the contract. And if it comes to that, what is the saving, anyway? There is an actual loss, for the company which has, up to the present, been doing the work, offered, on the 15th day of January, to do it at the same price as the American company, and the Minister of Finance would have escaped all the extra cost of engraving, because these dies are in the possession of the present contractor. Dies never wear out when they are made. When your efficient skilful man put in his two months of labour, and the portrait or vignette is finished,

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that is hardened and remains there for ever. All that you have to do is to transfer it at any time to a new roll, and make from that a new plate, and you have everything. These are two simple mechanical processes. All of that accretion of skill is contained there in that building which we forced them to come to Ottawa to build, and to put their brains and money in, and he has only the petty excuse that his honour would not allow him, after he had committed himself to the other company, to accept the Burland Company's offer, and give the work at the same rate to the Canadian company. I think that is worthy of note; and if the hon. gentleman attempts to argue that the engraving was not the essential feature of the whole work, he will have a hard row to hoe. That is undoubtedly the essence of the whole thing, and it was that which the present contractors had to cope with, and for which they had to incur heavy expense in a small field, bring their men to a high condition of skill, and keep them employed, though for months of the year they were paid when there was not work to be done. They were kept there, and were a source of expense to the establishment, and added to the cost of the work in the establishment; yet even with all that, the company would have done the work in the end just as cheaply as the American company, and this would have saved money to the country. My hon. friend took the stamped envelopes out, and actually increased the expense of the Government in so doing. Did he do that for the sake of economy? Was he in for saving? If so, I could have given him a suggestion as to how he could have saved probably \$100,000, and saved it easily. He could have had the Queen's Printer print all the postal cards for the use of this Dominion. That is a simple process mechanically. All you have to do is to have one or two little dies engraved, which are very simple and very easy to be made. Once the engraving is done at a cost of probably not more than \$100, and the plate is fixed, the work resolves itself into the purchase of paper, and the mechanical work of passing it through the press, cutting and trimming it, and sending the cards to the Post Office Department.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. Did you do it?

Mr. FOSTER. These gentlemen seem not to have one positive quality. When you point out one single thing to them, their only defence is, "Why didn't you do it?" The Minister of Finance was going on this, his only plea, that he wanted to save. You have a printing establishment and a staff of men; you have the capital and maintenance already provided for; and in order to print the postal cards, all you would have to do would be to pay a hundred dollars or two for the engraving and get one or two inexpensive machines.