

My hon. friend (Mr. Bell) said he was prepared to support that by evidence, and yet the hon. the minister laughs at the idea and does not seem to think it is worthy of any investigation whatever.

In 1897 Mr. Ganong asked this question :

1. Is it true that Michael Behan, storeman on Lachine Canal at Montreal, was dismissed on 30th April without any previous notice ?

2. Was he so dismissed by order of the Minister of Railways and Canals ?

3. On whose recommendation was he so dismissed ?

4. Why was he so dismissed ?

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS.

1. The services of Michael Behan, storeman on the Lachine Canal, were dispensed with on the 30th of April last. 2. Yes. 3. At the request and upon the representation of the members of parliament for Montreal districts. 4. No written complaint was lodged in the department.

On the statement of members of parliament that this gentleman had taken an active part in politics, a statement unsupported by an affidavit, the Minister of Railways dismissed this Conservative employee, and I am sure the present minister will not think it strange that members of the opposition should bring to his attention cases of this kind. I have here pages of matters of this kind but I shall not weary the committee with them. It seems that the government have one set of rules which they apply to Liberal-Conservative civil servants and another set of rules which they apply to Reform civil servants. I am surprised that the hon. minister who has newly come into office, a gentleman from whom we expected better things, a gentleman who had made great pretensions in his own province of purity and morality, a gentleman who held himself up as a moralist and who we expected would discharge his duties without fear or favour, on these things being brought to his attention should laugh at them, making no answer to the question and not even going so far as to show what the policy of his department is with respect to the officials of that department who take part in politics. Sir, it is no wonder that the civil service in this country is going down.

Mr. WM. ROSS (Victoria). No ; it is going up.

Mr. BLAIN. I am sure my hon. friend is good authority because he is superannuated from the civil service himself and receives almost as much from his superannuation as he does from this House.

Mr. WM. ROSS (Victoria). There have been increases of salary all around, you know.

Mr. BLAIN. I am surprised and the people of this country will be surprised when they hear the hon. gentleman deal with this matter in this way. It is the right of every man in this country holding a civil service position to go to the polls and vote, but when the government makes a bold state-

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ment that their policy is that an official who enters into partisanship and takes part in political meetings shall be dismissed then I think the government officials of this country, whether Liberal-Conservatives or not, have a right to expect that the rules laid down for officials belonging to one party shall be applied to those who belong to the other party.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. The rule laid down by the hon. minister's leader in 1897, as I recollect—and it is a rule upon which action was taken in a great many cases—was this : There was no objection to any public servant exercising the right of the franchise, but when any public servant went beyond that and took an active open part in any election, the policy of the government would be that that public servant would be relieved from his public duties so that he might devote the whole of his time to the political affairs in which he took so much interest.

A great many men were dismissed by this government on that account, many without investigation. One man in my own constituency was dismissed simply because he asked a civil question of a Liberal candidate at a public meeting, and he was dismissed without investigation or inquiry whatever. I have under my hand a list of about twenty officers of this government, with salaries ranging from \$2,000 down, who took an open and active part in this election. Not only did they take an open and active part, but one of them at least boasted, after the election was over, of the corrupt acts to which he had been a party. Evidence of that can be given. Under these circumstances, I do not think it will do for the Minister of Railways and Canals to dismiss this matter with a mere shrug of the shoulders, unless he is prepared to announce a new policy for his party and absolutely depart from that proclaimed by the Prime Minister only four or five years ago.

Mr. EMMERSON. It is not necessary, I presume, to get into a discussion of all these matters. My hon. friend from South Lanark (Mr. Haggart) has been answered very fully by the statement of my hon. friend from East Elgin (Mr. Ingram) as to the management of the railway during his regime.

Mr. INGRAM. And you, too.

Mr. EMMERSON. I, of course, understand that my hon. friend included me. The hon. member for South Lanark referred to what transpired during his administration. Of course, I do not know whether the particular matter I am about to refer to came within his knowledge at the moment, but I am sure he has heard that just previous to the elections of 1896 there was a list made out of the train hands of the Intercolonial who go out of Moncton. That list was put in the hands of the train despatchers, with