

OTTAWA LETTERS.

Voting Salaries of Permanent Employes at the Capital.

A Very Bad Break on the Part of Sir Henry Gustave Joly de Lotbiniere.

Hon. Mr. Tarte Guilty of Downright Falshood—Mixed the McMullans Up—A Long Discussion Over the Dismissal of Mr. Balderson.

Ottawa, May 6.—Most of the day yesterday was spent in the discussion of the spoils system as applied by the present ministry. The matter came up this time on a motion of Mr. McCleary, who had previously been headed off on several occasions. Mr. McCleary is interested in the case of Mr. Fairbrother, late postmaster of the village of Beamsville, Ont., whose office has an income of \$700 or \$800 a year. Mr. Fairbrother has been dismissed for the alleged reason that he had been an active partisan representing one of the parties in the booth at election day, attending political conventions, and also for malfeasance in office by refusing the people the use of letter boxes, in neglecting his office, in reading post cards, etc. The charges seem to have been made by an assistant, who, as it turned out later, had a dispute with Mr. Fairbrother about salary and made use of the influence of Mr. Gibson, the government member for this county. So far as could be learned of the discussion this assistant went to Mr. Gibson with as many lies as a czar.

A very comfortable appearing man is Senator Perley of the Northwest. In the course of a conversation yesterday Mr. Perley spoke of his own farm and farming in the district of Wolseley. Mr. Perley was a farmer in New Brunswick, who after a long struggle to pay off mortgages, concluded to abandon a fine farm there and make a new one in the Territories. He and his boys farm together, and have now five and three-quarter sections of 640 acres each. A part of this land is in pasture, some in hay. Mr. Perley remarks that his boys have finished seeding 200 acres of wheat and 100 acres in other grain. "I am not a wheat farmer," he says, "but I hope to be one some day when I get up to 1,000 acres." Even then he does not propose to be exclusively a wheat farmer. He does not believe in keeping his eggs in one basket. Last year he sold 3,500 bushels of wheat at an average price of 63c. per bushel. His crop was 30 bushels to the acre. This year the acreage will be much larger, but if the crop falls altogether or is frost-killed, Perley will not be without something for his year's work. He keeps 40 cows and has a contract to supply the dining room cars of the Canadian Pacific with butter at 25c. a pound. This is a high price in the west, but the company requires a first-class article, and the sector prices for butter will kill any dairyman. Last year he sold \$300 worth of butter with a smaller number of cows. He has altogether about 120 cattle and 20 horses. If his wheat should be slightly frosted he does not sell it cheap, for he claims that, by frosting it out in the fall, he gets frosted wheat as much per bushel as the price of good wheat. For this reason he has never sold a bushel of No. 2 grain since he has gone west. The farm employs Mr. Perley and his sons and four or five hired hands. Mrs. Perley has been a member of the society, and is now leaving to spend the remaining part of the time with her friends in New Brunswick.

Ottawa, May 7.—The finance minister has struck off. His office was filled yesterday with a delegation of leading oil men from the Petrolia district, supported by public persons from Sarnia, London, and other important cities and towns in the district. They were mostly political supporters of the government and include Charles Mackenzie, brother of the former premier of Canada; Mr. Fairbanks, a member of one of the Lambton ridings in days gone by, and several other leading reformers. They were backed up by Mr. Lister and Mr. Fraser, who now represent the Lambton riding and support the government, and have the active sympathy of the government member for Essex and of three or four other members of parliament from the vicinity. These oil men are not very well pleased with what has happened. They were here before the new tariff was brought down, and thought they understood that there would be no further change except a reduction of one cent a gallon in the oil duty. They went home concluding to make the best of that, much as they were opposed to it. Whether they had any assurances from the minister that this change would be the extent of the reduction cannot with positiveness be said. Mr. Fielding in the house denied making announcements to any other persons except the coal men, but it is certain that the Petrolia delegation went home convinced that the duty on oil would be reduced from 6 cents to 5 cents, and satisfied that no more duty would be taken off. When the tariff was brought down they found incorporated in it the provision that oil might be imported in tank vessels. This change, they believe, hurts them a good deal more than the loss of duty, and they are supported by the statement made by the minister that it would reduce the price some two cents.

The oil men say that the result of the changes will not be a permanent reduction in the price, but on the contrary, may have the contrary effect. If the Standard Oil people, who control the whole trade in the United States, are able to crowd out their Ontario competitors they will do, as they have done in their own country, advance the prices in all points where

they are not met by rivals. The Standard Oil Co. have already plenty of tank steamers of their own, and will not be obliged to build another vessel. They will take away from the shipping of Canada the work of transporting oil by water, and by using the canals and other waterways they will deprive the Canadian railways of their traffic. This aspect of the case is presented by the oil men with some effect, and is supported by representatives of the Canadian railways. The Grand Trunk people have a representative here supporting the Petrolia lobby, and the Canadian Pacific Co. is about to send one.

The Petrolia men say further that at the present prices there is not much money for the owners of oil wells in that region, nor yet very much for the dealer and refiner. The wells are owned very largely by men in moderate circumstances, farmers and others who happened to have oil on their property, who put in a small plant and sell their product to the refining companies. These men cannot as a rule produce oil very much below the present price of about \$1.40 per barrel of the crude article. When prices go up 20 to 30 cents, new wells are opened and exploration is carried on. When prices go down very low the work of opening new wells ceases and the smallest producers are gradually closed up. It is said that the present changes proposed will crowd out the Petrolia product and close the other wells. This is the statement from the producer's point of view. These men, of course, are speaking for their own industry and the interest of the locality in which they live.

The Standard Oil people are reported to be very active. I cannot speak from my own knowledge, but am told by a respectable and responsible member of the delegation from the west that a representative of that great corporation has been here during the whole session, and that he is a man well skilled in all the arts and graces of legislative lobbying. It is also stated that the company, which counts its wealth by hundreds of millions, and its net profits by millions of dollars a month, has secured the services, or at least the kindly co-operation of one or more members of the house of commons. A member, said to be active in their interests, represents a district several hundred miles east of the Canadian oil country.

It is perhaps not generally known that the Standard Oil Co. under another name, has secured from the government the contract for lubricating oil for the whole intercolonial system. The statement is that the new contract will be a profitable one for the company, though it may also be not improvident for the government. So far as can be learned the company has agreed to supply the whole system with oil at a cost guaranteed to be less by \$4,000 to \$5,000 on the same mileage than was paid last year. The bills for 1896 were about \$500,000. A contract like this in the hands of a company which is in a position to put agents on the railway and instruct the oilers and others how to economize in the use of the material, should be paying one for it. It is well known that on the railway service a large quantity of the oil used for lubricating is wasted. The chances are that the company producing the oil will get a larger price per gallon than has been paid for years, and, in fact, it is believed that the price quoted is higher, subject to the above guarantee.

Mr. Fairbrother of Beamsville took up most of the time of the house yesterday, but an hour or two was saved for the discussion of the Hudson Bay expedition. It will be remembered that \$30,000 is appropriated for the dispatch of a boat to explore this water and telegrams have already announced the details of the expedition. There is a good deal of doubt as to the value of such an expedition as is proposed. Commander Wakeham has a small ship, well and strongly built, but slow of speed and of relatively small horse power. Admiral Markham and all the experienced ice explorers are quoted by Mr. Davies as having advised him that this is the kind of ship best calculated to make the survey. She is less likely to be caught in the ice, being able to turn quickly and to resist reasonable pressure.

But the question arises whether it is necessary to explore Hudson Bay in this way. Ten years ago or more the Alert was sent there and performed the work of exploring, leaving observation parties and gathering such data as were then considered necessary. What it now wanted, so the western men contend, is information concerning the possibility of developing an export trade through this water. Mr. Foster, Mr. Bell of Picton, and other members took the ground that the way to ascertain whether Hudson Bay was safe for merchant vessels was to send a merchant vessel of the class that would be required for the traffic. Mr. Foster observed that while a short vessel calculated to make quick turns might be suitable for arctic expeditions, if wheat traffic was developed in that region it must be done in vessels that were not short and did not make quick turns. It seems that a 3,000 ton vessel of iron was offered for this service, and many members thought that she should have been engaged instead of the Diana. It would have cost more and would have entailed somewhat larger risk, but the expedition would then have procured information bearing directly upon the question to be ascertained. As Mr. Bell pointed out, it is not a question whether Hudson Bay can be navigated. That point was determined by private expeditions more than a century ago, and the bay has been continuously navigated for 100 years. It is proved that ships can go there by the fact that ships do go there every year. The question is whether ships of the class required for merchant service can go and at what times in the year they can carry on business.

Mr. Macdonald of Prince Edward Island is quite convinced that Hudson Straits are navigable for a much longer time in the year than is generally supposed. The success of the Stanley navigating Northumberland

Straits showed that ice navigation was much easier than had been thought. He believed that not only were the Straits of Northumberland navigable all winter, but that the River St. Lawrence might also be used by properly equipped vessels during the greater part of the season. This latter point was dwelt upon later in the debate by Mr. Casgrain, who thought that since the government was investigating these matters they might safely collect information in regard to the navigation of the St. Lawrence in winter. The speaker thought that the Diana was hardly a strong enough ship for the purpose required. His own neighbors were in the habit of going to Labrador and the far North on the coast for summer fishing. Hudson Straits could hardly be entered in a private vessel in the month of July, and he was of the opinion that a vessel with greater speed could have been sent, in order that she might have time to do some exploration worth while before it is necessary to come out. As the discussion proceeded it was discovered that Captain Burke of the Royal Navy, who had been the principal promoter of a railway project connecting Hudson Bay with the Pacific coast by a line north of the C. P. R. This led to the suggestion that the Hudson Bay railway people, whose project is to some extent a rival one, should be represented on the expedition, lest the experiment should be used too much for the benefit of the other route. Mr. Davin presented a claim to the North-west for distinct representation. A gentleman had been selected from Manitoba, who had accepted the post as representing the whole West. Mr. Davin resolutely sets his face against the inclusion of the territories as a sort of an appendage to Manitoba.

Then came Major Hughes, who reminded the government that Ontario also bordered on Hudson Bay and was as much entitled to a representative as the Western provinces. Quebec and the maritime provinces had not been heard from on this point, when Davies rose in contestation and stated that the Diana had a limited capacity and it was impossible for him to rival the Jubilee expedition by taking in representatives everywhere. The minister of marine defended himself at every point as well as he could, but in the end, in his approval of the Diana by Newfoundland captains and by English Arctic navigators, but, as mentioned above, this support seems to have been given rather with the idea that this is a purely academic expedition than that it is a pioneer trip to ascertain the capacity of Hudson Bay as a commercial route. Mr. Davies points out that the expedition has various objects. The Diana idea is to go north to the bay frequented by American whalers, who, it is said, have set up a small community of their own, but which is not amenable to British law. Commander Wakeham is instructed to cruise around this region, to warn the Yankee whaler that he is in foreign waters, to see that customs regulations are enforced, to investigate the extent of the settlement, and to take in appropriate localities, and to impress it upon the minds of such Eskimo as seem to have minds that they are subjects of the British Queen.

From Hudson Bay to Beamsville is a considerable journey, but a quiet one performed, as Beamsville is becoming a familiar locality. The house of commons reached Beamsville at 5 o'clock and remained there till midnight. There was a general discussion of the question of dismissals by the government, and by previous governments. The speaker pointed out that back one in a while to the point of the dismissal of Mr. Fairbrother. Mr. Gibson, who represents the county, was considerably embarrassed by the proceedings. He had begun in the early part of the debate by disclaiming any responsibility for the dismissal. The statement there was that he had promised Mr. Fairbrother to protect him, and did so until representations were made that Mr. Fairbrother had not made suitable business arrangements with his assistant. Even then, he said, he did not interfere, but after listening to the complaints he sent them forward to the minister and allowed the department to act on its own judgment.

But Mr. Mulock defended himself in another way. He declared that he had acted upon the personal statement of Mr. Gibson that he had seen Fairbrother actively engaged at the polls. Mr. Mulock's statement was in direct conflict with that of Mr. Gibson, who declared he had taken no part in the transaction. This feature of the case was presented very ably, and by an opposition speaker, who also reminded Mr. Gibson that he himself admitted having assured Fairbrother some time after the election that he would not disturb him. The election of Hughes therefore must have been of the kind which Mr. Gibson did not regard as deserving dismissal, and it was after promising to overlook them that he had caused the government to punish them with a severe penalty. As this was pressed, Mr. Gibson became annoyed. He suffered his genial spirits to decay, but he was not able to get out of the fix.

Later Mr. Mulock had occasion to speak two or three times and got himself involved in a contradiction. He declared that various charges had been made against Mr. Fairbrother, who had not denied them. Why, he asked, did the young man not prove the charges false? If he had done so he would not have been dismissed. That was Mr. McCleary's opportunity. He showed the postmaster general that a chance to prove the charges false was all that the postmaster wanted, and that had been denied him. Later he produced a petition about 10 feet long, signed by nearly every man in Beamsville, beginning with two clergymen, both grits, urging that Mr. Fairbrother be reinstated. Finally Mr. Mulock backed down and offered an investigation.

Mr. Bell of Picton took advantage of some remarks made during the discussion to pin Mr. Mulock down to his own record. Mulock had stated

that he would enforce strict neutrality in the service, from the highest official to the lowest. Now Mr. Bennett, an opposition member, recently returned in a by-election in East Simcoe, stated that the postmaster had stamped the county against him. Mr. Bell wanted to know whether Mr. Mulock proposed to dismiss them or investigate their case. The postmaster general tried to evade the issue by stating that he would investigate their case if the opposition members desired to have them investigated. All the other 900 postmasters in the dominion. But he failed to show what was his basis of discrimination between Mr. Gibson's postmasters and those of Mr. Bennett. It does not appear that Mr. Mulock is quite as anxious as he pretends to secure neutrality of the service, what he chiefly seems to want is the neutrality of the conservatives in the service.

The government was exposed to some ridicule for appointing in the place of Mr. Fairbrother a venerable gentleman of 80, who could not see, could hardly hear and could not write. The change was not defended in the interest of efficiency. Sir Charles remarked that there was some confusion in the speeches, since the old postmaster was frequently described as the one to be dismissed, while the new one was the one to be retained. Mr. Allen might be an offensive partisan he was not likely to be an active one. As it was, the most was made of Mr. Allen's good qualities, and he was described as very accommodating and good natured. He is allowed to have character as good as that which Wordsworth gives to Betty Foy's pony:

For of this pony there's a rumor That should he lose his eyes and ears, And should he live a thousand years, He never will be out of humor. S. D. S.

Ottawa, May 8.—The second day in supply disposed of the vote for civil government salaries, that is for the salaries of the permanent employes at Ottawa. The first item introduced by Sir Henry Joly, who did not figure to very great advantage. Sir Henry is a knight and a most excellent drawing room minister, who knows a good deal about tree planting and has a pretty fair collection of ancestors. But as the head of a department he has failings. In his courtly way he displays a large and varied assortment of different degrees of ignorance of the matters he has in charge. The worst of it is that his one distinguished grace of politeness deserted him at a critical moment, and his dignity went off with the procession.

It was all about Mr. Hughes, a temporary employe, who has been four years in the service and is a man of good ability. He has been in the enjoyment of a salary of \$500, which seems to be rather small for a man of his capacity. Sir Henry went to the other extreme when he proposed to make him a second class clerk with a salary of \$1,100, an increase of \$600 at a jump. Seeing that the ministry refuses most of the men even the statutory increase of \$50, this appeared to be a rather hasty step. Mr. Foster's criticism was not very severe and need not have caused the controller to lose his self-possession. He pointed out that this departure ought to be explained, as there were some twenty clerks in the department who had been there a good many years, many of them receiving a much lower salary than was proposed to give Mr. Hughes. Mr. Foster did not object to a reasonable increase, but thought some explanation should be given when it was proposed to more than double a clerk's salary.

Sir Henry said that he did not propose to show any favors. He did not mean the young man when he saw him, and since the question had arisen he would cause the item to be struck out and ask for no increase in Mr. Hughes' salary.

To this position he held, though Mr. Foster cringed, but there were no objections to a reasonable increase. Mr. McMullen, who learned that Mr. Hughes was a friend of some of the conservatives, was quite jubilant. He almost ordered the controller to let the item stand without an increase, and gave notice to Mr. Hughes and everybody else that if the clerk suffered he might blame the ex-finance minister. Mr. McMullen's movable jaw was operated to immense advantage in this controversy, and the controller since he could not without criticism give Mr. Hughes a feast gave him a famine.

Mr. Lister and Cameron of Huron took the opportunity to inform Sir Henry that he had too many clerks and was extremely too expensive an officer. They wanted to know if he did not reduce his expenditure in this time next year they would move to have his appropriation cut down. Mr. McMullen added that he intended to insist upon a reduction of \$300 this year in the salary of Sir Henry's deputy, who gets that allowance from another department that has not yet been reached in the estimates. Sir Henry, though he abandoned Mr. Hughes, has no disposition to desert Mr. Mill. He says he will defend him when the time comes and will stand by him even as he undertook last year to stand by Li Hung Chang. Mrs. Macawber's devotion to her husband is exceeded by that which Sir Henry professes for his associates—excepting Mr. Hughes.

The financial position of Sir Henry Joly's department is this. The amount voted last summer for the current year was \$38,250. The amount now asked for next year is \$38,540, an increase of \$290. The proper comparison, however, is not with the amount voted last August, but with the amount expended in the year ending last June by the late government. That expenditure was \$36,830, so that Sir Henry Joly is asking for \$1,710 more than was required by his predecessor.

Sir Richard Cartwright as acting minister of militia got his salary estimate through without a hitch. The absence of Sir Richard is making the department in addition to his own gave him some consideration. The department of militia in this

job year is a hard one to work, and Sir Richard appears to be making an honest effort to do the best he can with it. Besides there are very few changes, and these are made in the interests of economy. The salaries in this department last year amounted to \$44,164. The present government took a vote of \$45,050. If there are no supplementaries the saving as compared with the current year will be \$4,465, and as compared with last year \$3,114. From this must be taken the allowances paid to clerks superannuated, which will still leave a small reduction.

The secretary of state, also represented by Sir Richard, the minister being in the senate, asks for a vote of \$34,950, a decrease of \$3,462 from the current year, or \$2,138 from last year. This reduction appears to be offset nearly altogether by superannuations.

Mr. Blair had a harder time with his vote. He came before the house claiming a reduction of \$4,332 and asking for \$99,230. But Mr. Blair, while stating that the amount voted for the current year was \$44,534, omitted to observe that his predecessor in the last year of the late government managed to pull through with \$40,534, so that the reduction is only \$1,504. From that must be taken the sum of \$70, which is the allowance made to Mr. Balderson, who has been retired, leaving a saving of \$700 instead of seven times that much.

It was the retirement of this Mr. Balderson that caused the greater part of yesterday's discussion. He was secretary for the department and had a salary of \$2,325. Mr. Balderson is spoken of both by ministers and ex-ministers as one of the cleverest men in the service. Eighteen years ago, when he was a young man just at the head of his class and with a gold medal for mathematics in Toronto university, Mr. McDougall, the auditor general, got his eye on him. The auditor was then perfecting his organization and was trying to gather in the brightest young men available. He always had a weakness for Toronto university men, being one himself, and assured Mr. Balderson that for a man of his gifts there were fine opportunities in the service. On this pressing invitation Balderson gathered his career and came to Ottawa. For a time his success justified the course. He was taken from the auditor's department and made private secretary to the postmaster general. Then he was promoted again to the railway department, and steadily worked his way up until he came within one step of the deputy minister. Then Mr. Blair appeared on the scene, and now Mr. Balderson finds himself in middle life turned loose with the retiring allowance of \$70 a year to begin life anew. Eighteen years in the civil service counts for little in the way of training for other employment, and he is fessing sent out to start afresh, with the stigma of having been dismissed by his previous employers.

Mr. Blair says he has no occasion for a new department. He can get another clerk to do the secretary's work, and is getting it done by Mr. Jones. But it seems a little remarkable that with some 1,400 persons in the service it is impossible to find a man who can do the work of services can be utilized. Several hundred men of very moderate ability are retained, and a number have been appointed from outside within a few months. One would therefore suppose that there was work in the department for Mr. Balderson to do. It was suggested by Sir Henry, possibly Mr. Blair preferred to have men about him of a different character from Mr. Balderson, but even then he might have been transferred to some other department where the ministers had different ideas.

Mr. Hagar claims that the case is one which calls for a larger retiring allowance than is given. He is supported by Sir Charles Tupper in the contention that the provision which enables the government to increase the retiring allowance in special cases is particularly applicable to this one. Mr. Hagar even says that the law commands the payment of a larger allowance by the addition of a certain number of years to the time which the official has served. Mr. Blair construes the law differently. The discussion on this point was somewhat technical, but Mr. Balderson asks the privilege of going into the courts to sustain his claim. He cannot go in without permission because the crown cannot be sued like an individual. It would be necessary for him to secure the privilege of suing and after that the proceedings would be the same as in another civil case. Mr. Blair did not refuse the request, nor did he consent.

The minister said that he was dismissing Mr. Balderson on the recommendation of Mr. Schreiber. Sir Charles Tupper seems to have some doubts on this point, for he immediately asked that the report of Mr. Schreiber should be laid on the table. Mr. Blair did not offer it. He said he would not affirm that he had a written report, neither would he deny it. It was quite possible that Mr. Schreiber had given him a verbal report. Anyway he would make no admissions. This goes to show that Mr. Blair has not entirely abandoned the policy of bluff, which characterized him at Fredericton.

Mr. Laurier came next with his private council estimates. He wants \$29,700, which is \$2,185 less than the amount voted for the current year. Some men have been retired from the private council, their allowance amounting to little more than the saving in salaries. Mr. Paterson came in with his customs estimates, asking for \$38,600, as against \$39,987 voted last August for the current year. This is a pretended saving of \$1,387, but Mr. Paterson did not explain that the total amount spent last year by Clarke Wallace was only \$34,632 or \$3,968 less than Mr. Paterson requires.

The trade and commerce vote was also passed. It shows an increase of \$38 over the vote of the current year, but an increase of \$1,874 over the amount used by the late government

in the last year of their administration.

There was an interesting discussion between Mr. Foster and Mr. Tarte in the afternoon over the dismissal of one Mr. McCallum, who has been a lock-master at the Lievre River and was dismissed a fortnight ago. Mr. McCallum, according to Mr. Tarte, was dismissed for disobeying orders. He had some work to do and was instructed to consult one Duncan McMillan, a local man, as to the hiring of the men and the purchase of provisions. These instructions were given last winter and seemed to have been carried out. At least the minister and Mr. McCallum agree on that point.

But the case was one something like that mentioned a few days ago in connection with the Saskatchewan election. There are two brothers named McMillan at Buckingham. Duncan is a Tory. Angus is a grit. Mr. Tarte intended that the lock-maker should consult Angus. But Mr. Tarte got his babies mixed and ordered his subordinate to consult Duncan. The lock-maker observed a strict neutrality, refused to know anything about politics, and carried out his orders to the letter. Apparently Mr. Tarte considers that the lockmaster saw the point of the joke, for he repeatedly declared in the house yesterday that McCallum "laughed at us." However, somebody came down from Buckingham and told the department that the patronage was there was in the hands of the Tories, so he sent word to McCallum to drop Duncan and take up Angus.

On the 17th March McCallum wrote that Angus had declined to assist unless he were paid for it. Mr. Tarte, however, from the department immediately wired back to push on the work without delay, to engage the men and purchase the material himself. This he proceeded to do. On the 13th April the department wrote informing McCallum that his services were no longer required; that one Gorman would be there to take his place in two days, and that he was to hand everything over to him. Mr. McCallum replied, suggesting that one day's notice was rather short, and asking the department if it would kindly explain why he was turned out. As he got no answer and was dismissed, he handed the correspondence above quoted to Mr. Foster, who put the questions to Mr. Tarte.

Mr. Tarte was not well pleased with the turn affairs had taken. He returned rather vigorously at Mr. McCallum, and made a number of allusions to his failure to give the government a tip as to the character of the two McMullans. He intimated that when McCallum went to Angus he made Angus think that the work of advising would take more time than was really required, and said that was the reason that Angus refused. But earlier in the debate Mr. Tarte, not knowing that Foster had the correspondence, had emphatically stated that McCallum had refused to consult Angus; that he had refused to consult the Tories, and had not even informed Angus that his advice was required.

It was plain that the minister of public works was caught, as several of his colleagues have been, in a straight falsehood. There is a provincial election in Queens and Mr. Bourassa, a member for Ottawa county, had a man that he wanted to provide for. The dismissal of McCallum and the appointment of Gorman was simply a political job.

Mr. Tarte professes great indignation because the correspondence between his department and Mr. Balderson was produced. He talked fiercely about betrayals and treason, and intimated that the betrayers now in his department would have to be turned out. Mr. Davin raised a laugh at the minister's expense by enquiring what crime had been committed in the department, or what dark conspiracies were going on there which could be betrayed. He did not understand how an honest, straight-forward administration could very well be betrayed, and remarked that the expression was very suggestive of hidden iniquities.

Mr. McNeill reminding Mr. Tarte of Laurier's promise that every man should have a chance to defend himself, asked whether Mr. McCallum had been given a chance to reply. Mr. Tarte said it was too committed to him. There was no reply possible. He did not propose to be laughed at by his employees and would show that the man who laughs last would laugh best. So as Mr. Tarte is the head of the department, he has punished Mr. McCallum for his own blunder, by making the McMullans, and apparently for the possession of a sense of humor. Hereafter if any employee observes a blunder of this kind, he must treat it with becoming gravity.

During the controversy Mr. Lister chouted to Foster as the latter was producing his letters the word "stolen." Foster turned on him at once stating that he would not allow any member to say that he was using stolen correspondence. The speaker ordered Mr. Lister to withdraw the expression at once, but Mr. Lister related to the extent of stating that he did not consider Mr. Foster had used papers knowing them to be stolen. The speaker took the ground that this was a withdrawal of the expression and the matter dropped. The fact is there was no stealing about the letters, as they were Mr. McCallum's own property, and he had a perfect right to give them to Mr. Foster, and it was Mr. Foster's duty to use them as he did.

S. D. S.

Ottawa, May 10.—Beginning today all the days but one in the week belong to the government. Hitherto, private members have had three days out of the five, but they are now losing two at once, so that if the session lasts four weeks more, there will remain only four days for private business. This change will give the government opportunity to get the tariff and estimates through, but make it impossible to pass any important bills of a public character in charge of

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