

positions, and deprived of the means of livelihood by his own friends.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—But their places were not filled by others. They were dismissed because there was not work enough for them.

Hon. Mr. POWER—That is just the sort of interruption one might expect. The hon. gentleman from Victoria, with whom I was dealing just now, did not say anything about people being put in their places. His tears were for the families of the people who had lost their employment. Now those clerks in the other case had lost employment; many of them had been ten or fifteen or twenty years in the public service, and had come to depend on that for a livelihood altogether, and, as the hon. member from Marshfield said about civil servants, had come to be unfitted for any other occupation; but the hon. gentleman from Victoria had no tears for those poor people. It just shows, after all, that the question is not whose ox is gored, but who does the goring.

Hon. Mr. MACDONALD (B.C.)—What part did the hon. gentleman take in those dismissals?

Hon. Mr. POWER—I do not remember that I took any part at all. I thought it was rather a summary thing.

Hon. Mr. MACDONALD (B.C.)—I think so. I quite agree with you.

Hon. Mr. POWER—I thought it was a summary proceeding.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—I think they had notice.

Hon. Mr. POWER—They had notice of a few days. We have an instance where the hon. member from Victoria and myself agreed in condemning the action of the late government. In 1895 a number of clerks were dismissed, and in that instance the first notice a man who was years in the public service received that his means of livelihood were cut off, was when he received his cheque. That was the first intimation he got that he was not required.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—No such thing.

Hon. Mr. POWER—It was shown to be so.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—That man was superannuated.

Hon. Mr. POWER—There may have been some superannuated, but those gentlemen were cut off in a very summary way. Now, coming down to business and looking at the thing from a more appropriate standpoint than that from which it has been dealt with by some hon. gentlemen during the past few days, I think it is a proper thing for this House to consider what system should be adopted in dealing with the civil service—that is, the civil service looked at from the party point of view. Hon. gentlemen, there are two systems, or there were two systems. One was the universal system in the United States from the time of President Jackson until the days, I think, of President Hayes, under which almost every government employé throughout the whole union lost his place when the president of a new party came in. Under that system the first duty of a civil servant was not to the country, but to the party who put him there, and if he did not energetically and vigorously work for the party, he was put out by his own friends at the expiration of the four years. The better class of people in the United States, the higher type of men, after a while came to the conclusion that that was a highly objectionable system and that, in the interests of the country, that system should be altered and that they should as far as practicable, follow the example of England. Since 1878 very great progress has been made in the United States in the way of bringing public servants under what is known as the civil service law, and I trust that before long the great bulk of those men, whose duties are of a permanent character at any rate, will be under that system. The doctrine that “to the victors belong the spoils,” nearly all thinking people in Canada reprobate. No one in this House has been more emphatic in his reprobation of that system than the hon. gentleman who leads this House; and as far as I can learn, the hon. gentleman, during the many years he has been premier of his own province, has lived up to what he has preached, that the spoils system is highly objectionable. The English system is generally recognized as the best system. Now, hon.