

factory and an experience of mine would seem to confirm this. On December 15, I wrote from here to Montreal asking for a reservation for the 18th but at Montreal on the 18th I was informed that there was no reservation, that no letter had been received, and that there was no berth available. After some argument during which I stated that I was a member of parliament and would bring the matter up in the House I was told to go on the car and provision would be made and in fact I secured a lower berth. I afterwards received a letter from the agent stating that my letter was not received until the 19th. I cannot imagine that a letter would take four days to get to Montreal. It would look as if the system was a bad one and needed revision.

Mr. GRAHAM. This is the first complaint I have ever heard. We have all had similar experiences on other railways and as to getting a berth after going on the car that has been my experience three times out of four between here and Toronto; some one who had reserved a berth would not turn up. The reserving of berths has been more abused by the people than by the railways and I am afraid that members of parliament have not been the least guilty as they would reserve berths on the chance that they might travel. The railways agreed among themselves that if they did not receive the money with the reservation, the reservation would be cancelled at 5 o'clock. My hon. friend's whole complaint is that the man in charge at Montreal told him an untruth in a letter.

Mr. JAMESON. I did not make that charge at all.

Mr. GRAHAM. The man said the letter did not arrive until the 19th and my hon. friend says he cannot believe that is true. If the man's statement was correct the whole complaint of my hon. friend falls. I have had a letter take four days going from the House of Commons to Brockville. If my hon. friend has any further complaint and will let me have it I shall investigate it.

Mr. JAMESON. I am not making a complaint of my own, but I think if the travelling public have any rights on the Intercolonial railway the minister should not treat this matter so flippantly. The position of the matter is that application was made to the Intercolonial railway for a reservation. I was informed that the application had to be transferred to the Grand Trunk office, and that the delay occurred or was liable to occur in that way. It may be that the letter did not reach there until the 19th, although it was written and mailed on the 15th. But, that is not the cause of com-

Mr. JAMESON.

plaint; the cause of complaint is simply this, that there appears to be a certain amount of red tape which causes delay in the receipt of applications and which, of course, results in inconvenience to the people who make application ahead. It is all very well for the minister to say that railways are not obliged to reserve berths, but so long as that system is in vogue we might as well recognize it as the condition. If the Intercolonial railway does not reserve berths that is the end of it, nobody is hurt and everybody should know it. But, when we know there is a practice of that sort it does not seem to me that it is right to have any delay in the securing of these berths. I was informed that it was not an infrequent thing to have difficulty of that sort. I know as well as the minister does that frequently a man will get on a train without knowing that he is going to get a berth, and get one afterwards, but I have never had the experience of going to an office, applying for a berth, being told that there was absolutely none and that it was not worth my while to get on the train and then being afterwards told that if I got on the train I would be provided for. I would like the minister to see if there is any hitch in the arrangements down there and let me know at a later date.

Mr. HENDERSON. I must confess that my experience of the post office of the House of Commons is a little different from that of the Minister of Railways and Canals. I rather think that the minister is hardly fair to the officers of the House of Commons post office. I have always found them very obliging and very prompt. Even if a letter was handed in at the very last minute, perhaps almost at the close of the mail, in fact, after the mail has been made up, they have been obliging enough to send a special messenger down in order to see that it would go. My experience of the House of Commons post office has been very satisfactory with regard to the sending out of letters. I think the minister is labouring under some mistake.

Mr. GRAHAM. Very probably.

Civil Government—Department of Customs
—Contingencies—Clerical and other assistance
—Further amount required, \$1,500.

Mr. PATERSON. This additional amount is required to meet the salaries of the extra clerks who have been engaged during the past year.

Mr. BLAIN. Is that all the explanation?

Mr. PATERSON. That is all the explanation except you want me to give the names of the officers who have been employed. We found we had to have some