

Mr. BELL. I make the statement that he went to the Forks with a gentleman named Mr. Robert Kirk of Antigonish who was supposed to take certain supplies to the polling place and that he remained the whole day at the Forks polling place. What was he doing there? I would like my hon. friend (Mr. Sinclair) to account for his presence. Mr. Kirk has not taken the trouble to tell me what he was doing, but if we get the commission which we suggest we will make it interesting for him. I make the statement that this gentleman spent the whole day at the poll. It being a winter day he did not stay there for pleasure.

Mr. SINCLAIR. I suppose the hon. gentleman is aware of the fact that the Forks polling district is Mr. Kirk's native place.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. BELL. I am quite aware of it.

Mr. SINCLAIR. And that it is not an extraordinary thing for Mr. Kirk to spend one day in his native place, which as a matter of fact he frequently visits.

Mr. BELL. I am perfectly aware that Mr. Kirk had his residence in the Forks and was a very influential man in that section, and that is the reason he was there.

Mr. SINCLAIR. I wish to know if the hon. gentleman is going to make a definite charge. If he has a definite charge to make against Mr. Kirk let it be made.

Mr. BELL. I make the statement that he was there in company with Mr. Robert Kirk, of Antigonish, who I believe had no vote there and had not ostensible reason for being there. He was there and spent the whole day in the vicinity of the polling place. I see the premier is in his seat now, and I may recall to his recollection the language which he used in this House with reference to officials who are not satisfied with voting, but who take an active part in political work either in canvassing or in any other way. In 1897 the Prime Minister laid down the principle, that when an official went outside his duties to take any part in political work, he would be allowed to devote his whole attention to politics; meaning that such an official would be dismissed from the service. That is the principle which has been acted upon pretty thoroughly by this administration.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. As against Conservatives.

Mr. BELL. Yes, of course. If that be the policy of the government, it should be applied to officials of both political parties. I assert that the Minister of Railways should make inquiry into this matter, and if it can be shown that these men have done more than simply deposited their ballot, then I ask in the interests of fair-play and good government, that these officials should be

dismissed in accordance with the rule which the minister has laid down. The Minister of Railways can no longer say that he takes this matter merely as a rumour or a joke. The conduct of Mr. LeBlanc was notorious; he was delighted with the position he occupied; he boasted about it on the train; he grew exhilarated about it and on his way out of the county on the Intercolonial Railway train after the election, he was inclined to take a great deal of credit to himself for the result. A man who flaunts his insubordination in the face of the government should not go unpunished; a man who deliberately boasts that he has defied the rule laid down by the Prime Minister in such matters, ought not be able to rely for security on the fact that he belongs to the same political party as the government in power. The same measure of justice should be meted out to all.

Mr. EMMERSON. I can now say that the matter has been definitely brought to my notice with respect to certain officials of the Intercolonial Railway. I do not understand my hon. friend (Mr. Bell) to read any sworn declaration, but would rather gather that he is indulging in rumour.

Mr. BELL. I have declarations with respect to LeBlanc's conduct.

Mr. EMMERSON. And with respect to all the others?

Mr. BELL. No.

Mr. EMMERSON. I think my hon. friend will admit that around election times there are always a good many rumours about men indulging in political partisanship, and especially are these rumours rife among those who have been unfortunate enough to lose the election.

Mr. BENNETT. In St. John.

Mr. EMMERSON. Yes, I was about to refer to the election in St. John. Just after that election and since that time I have had not merely rumours but stated charges against gentlemen in the railway service, that they took a very active part in the election against the government candidate. Only this morning I received a letter making a distinct charge against one of the officials, and indeed against a number of officials in the railway service in Moncton, who are charged with writing political editorials against the government and against the management of the Intercolonial Railway. I will say to my hon. friend that I shall go into all these matters, I trust in a judicial way, and consider not merely what he has said, but also what my correspondents have stated with respect to others in the employ of the Intercolonial Railway. After the session is over I hope to have an opportunity of inquiring into what is alleged with respect to the St. John election as well as the Guysborough election, and I trust that I