

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. I think that that was very summary treatment. Of course all I know of Mr. Forrest is the reputation he has had for many years in that county, which is a county where farming is pretty well understood. He is a man of more than ordinary intelligence and who has held very responsible positions, and even if he had not occupied in times past these responsible positions, it seems to me that even the humblest man in the service is entitled to a fair hearing or to be called on to show such cause as could be shown for the state of things which the hon. Minister says existed. There is no case that one may put that is not open to some explanation. It occurs to me, taking the Minister's own statement, which I do very frankly, that Mr. Forrest was dealt with very summarily indeed. He was asked for no explanation and given no opportunity to remove the bad impressions which the Minister had formed. I speak of this simply for this reason. Mr. Forrest has never communicated with me, directly or indirectly, and I was at a loss to know why his services were dispensed with, because I know the man. I know him to be a man of good practical ability, who has filled very important positions, parliamentary and otherwise, and who stood well with the department. He is a man who was well liked and well thought of, and whose character is above reproach. Under these circumstances, I am surprised that the hon. Minister has no other statement to make than that he formed a bad impression and summarily called upon the officer for his resignation.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. I have no reproach to make against Mr. Forrest's character or position or anything of that kind. I believe that these are just what the hon. member has said. I was dealing with him simply as a man in charge of a farm. I went there and examined the affairs along with Professor Saunders, and the condition was such as required certainly an explanation. I talked over it all with Mr. Forrest at the time. I spent a whole day discussing everything with him in connection with the stock and the barns and everything else. I pointed out that what I considered to be the condition of affairs, and if he had any explanation to make he had there an ample opportunity of making it. I did not act hastily but came back to Ottawa and discussed the whole situation very seriously with Professor Saunders, the director. I gave Mr. Forrest certain directions to carry out, and he carried those out as I told him. I have no fault to find with the manner in which he carried out my directions as regards the sale of the stock, but at the same time it appeared to me, on the face of it, that he was not competent to carry out the work that I wished in connection with the stock. From what he said himself and from what occurred at the

time, I felt justified in asking for his resignation. In asking for it, I explained that that was the reason. He offered no explanation in his reply, but merely said that he was satisfied. He could do as well as anybody else, and declined to resign. Under these circumstances, there was nothing for me to do but to put a man in charge who could carry out the work satisfactorily. I do not wish in any way to reflect on Mr. Forrest's character or conduct in any other position he occupied. My own belief is that he was quite competent to carry on the farming which had been carried on at his own farm, but that was not the kind of farming I wish to have carried on. I am still of opinion that a change was necessary in the public interest and the interests of the farmers of the maritime provinces who may wish to visit that farm and see the operations going on.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. Did any one make a complaint before the Minister went to the farm? Did he hear any dissatisfaction from any quarter?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. I cannot say that I did, except from Professor Saunders. He was not satisfied with Mr. Forrest's conduct before I took charge, and I fully discussed the matter with him. When I took office, I discussed the different branch farms with Professor Saunders, and the only farm on which he made adverse criticism was that at Nappan.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. Did the hon. member for Cumberland (Mr. Logan) discuss Mr. Forrest's case before that action was taken?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. Not a word. He was present when I went to the farm, but until then I never had communication of any kind with him about Mr. Forrest or the farm at Nappan. It was my own opinion entirely on which I acted, without any prompting from the member for Cumberland (Mr. Logan) whatever.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. Who was put in his place?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. Mr. Robert Robertson. He came from the county represented by the hon. member for Compton (Mr. Pope).

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. Is he a brother of Professor Robertson?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. No, nor any connection of his in any way whatever. He is a young man, who was born, I think, in the county of Huntingdown, or in that neighbourhood. The first time I came in contact with him was a good many years ago, when I was acting as judge in a provincial farmers competition in the province of Quebec. I visited his farm and was struck with admiration of the way in which it was managed and the condition in