

3. If the post offices have been closed on Sundays, what are the reasons for such action of the government or the department?

4. Is the action of the government or department only an experiment, or is it the final determination of the government to close the post offices on Sundays for all time to come?

5. Why should the department receive on Sunday a letter for transmission and prevent its delivery at its destination on that day?

6. Does the Post Office Department know that in Winnipeg for over thirty years box holders have had access to their post office boxes on Sunday, and that the present action of the department, it is alleged, will cause serious inconvenience to a large number of citizens?

7. Is it known to the Post Office Department that a large number of commercial men are said to so arrange to pass Sundays in Winnipeg with their families, to receive and answer their mail on that day?

8. What good purpose will be served by the recent action of the government in closing the outer doors of post offices on Sunday?

9. How many post office officials in Winnipeg, by reason of the closing of the outer doors of the post office to box holders, will be relieved from work on Sundays?

10. If the present action is only an experiment, then why did the government or department not make full and complete inquiries, and obtain sufficient information before taking any action?

11. What orders were given by the Postmaster General or his department to the postmasters in reference to this Sunday closing?

Hon. RODOLPHE LEMIEUX:

1. Numerous communications and petitions have been addressed to the department from the local branches of the Lord's Day Alliance, and also from the citizens and business men throughout the west, asking that the lobbies of the post offices in that section of the country should not be opened for the convenience of box holders on Sunday.

2. At the following post offices, viz: Battleford, Saskatchewan; Brandon, Manitoba; Calgary, Alberta; Dauphin, Manitoba; Edmonton, Alberta; Emerson, Manitoba; Esquimalt, British Columbia; Fernie, British Columbia; Lethbridge, Alberta; Macleod, Alberta; Maple Creek, Saskatchewan; Medicine Hat, Alberta; Moosejaw, Saskatchewan; Nanaimo, British Columbia; Nelson, British Columbia; New Westminster, British Columbia; Portage la Prairie, Manitoba; Prince Albert, Saskatchewan; Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan; Regina, Saskatchewan; Revelstoke, British Columbia; Rossland, British Columbia; St. Boniface, Manitoba; Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; Vancouver, British Columbia; Victoria, British Columbia; Winnipeg, Manitoba.

3. The post offices have been closed on Sundays in the west in accordance with what is believed to be the spirit of the people of Canada—that Sunday should be ob-

served as a day of rest and cessation from business. The privilege of keeping the post offices open in the west was given or rather taken in the early days when the train service was scarce and irregular and the arrival of mails uncertain. When great numbers of the people coming into the country as settlers, or prospective settlers, had their mail directed to certain points where they expected to be at certain dates, and when it was important that they should obtain their mail so that their progress in travelling should not be obstructed. Moreover, the offices were a great distance apart, and settlers only went for their mails on the days when they were least busy and when the exigencies of their business permitted them. This usually occurred on Sunday as even then the settlers, moved by the spirit of their early training, did not usually devote themselves to business and labour for financial gain, and a great majority of them went into the towns where the post offices were situated for the purposes of public worship. Now, the situation is entirely different. The country is becoming settled, is intersected in all directions by lines of railway, and mails are received as regularly and frequently in all centres of the west as in the other and older parts of Canada, and the necessity which existed for keeping the offices open in the large towns and cities of western Canada, has entirely disappeared. Furthermore, it has been reported to the department by its officers, by many leading citizens, and men in religious and commercial life, that the result of business men obtaining their mails freely on Sunday has led to the transaction of business at these western points and the forcing of employees to labour on Sunday almost as much as on week days, at all events to a sufficient extent to interfere with their enjoying any advantage which might accrue by Sunday being granted a day of rest. The statement that conditions in the west differ from those in the east is due to the fact that, not the mass of western people, but great numbers of business men have imported into Canada the practice of carrying on business on Sundays the same as any other day, notwithstanding that it is absolutely opposed to the best interests of labour and the laws and spirit of the Canadian people, viz: That every man may enjoy where possible the benefit of Sunday as a day of rest.

4. The action of the government is not an experiment, nor is there any necessity for such an experiment. This has been tried in the cities of the east for many years, and it has been found that not only is no inconvenience caused to business, or to the travelling public, but that it has received the unanimous support of all classes of the community, who have found it to