

Mr. CLANCY. I did not need any prompting.

Mr. PATERSON. He does not say no one did prompt him.

Mr. CLANCY. I say no one did prompt me.

Mr. PATERSON. The hon. gentleman has alluded to the fact that I passed over the heads of men who had been longer in the service—I do not know whether he said more worthy or not; but I think that was his inference. I deny that. According to my judgment, I did not do so. None of the other officers in the department have spoken to me or intimated to me that they thought an injustice had been done to them by the promotion of Mr. Bain. If there are any such—and perhaps the hon. gentleman knows whether or not any such have made complaint to him—

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. That is a cowardly insinuation.

Mr. PATERSON. I say if he makes that statement—perhaps he does—and if he shows me that injustice has been done to any one, I will endeavour to rectify it. But I do not believe that an injustice has been done to any one. Mr. Bain was promoted on his merits. He is there now earning his money. Do not think any of the public money went into the publication of this pamphlet. Mr. Bain has given hours and hours more than his official hours to the discharge of his strictly official duties. I challenge any one to say that there has been any negligence on his part in attending to the duties of his office. Now, I have stated openly and squarely what has been my course. I was not prepared to see gentlemen rise and make insinuations, or bold statements that did not charge anything, without having an opportunity to ask Mr. Bain what the particulars were, allowing him to make an explanation for himself which I could give to the House. Hon. gentlemen opposite admitted that commissioners had been appointed by this government to inquire into the cases of some officers who had been relieved from the public service; but they were not willing to wait even till the minister could ask Mr. Bain for his explanation, or to say whether what was alleged here was true or not; but they demanded that he be summarily dismissed and that his salary be cut down by \$1,800, which was as far as they could go. The hon. gentleman lays stress upon the fact that Mr. Bain is assistant commissioner. What has that to do with the question? He was appointed private secretary, was for a time a second-class clerk, then a first-class clerk, and then promoted, all the time continuing to be my private secretary. In the case of every minister, a salary of \$600 is provided for a private secretary; but do hon. gentlemen presume to say that under the late government or under any government the private secretary of a minister has re-

ceived \$600 and no more? Do they suppose that there was ever a private secretary who did not hold another office in the department, for which he received a salary? Why, where could you get a man with the abilities required of a private secretary for \$600? And, as far as my recollection goes, away back through the years since I have been in parliament, the usual standing vote for private secretaries has been \$600.

Mr. SPROULE. Does the hon. gentleman think he is strictly complying with the Act in taking the \$600 voted for a private secretary, who must be appointed by Order in Council, and then dividing that amongst other members of the civil service?

Mr. PATERSON. That is leading to another branch of the question.

Mr. SPROULE. Is it a strict compliance with the law?

Mr. PATERSON. That is another point. If the hon. gentleman is right in the position he now takes, then the practice I have been following is wrong and I am to blame; but what we are discussing now is whether or not my private secretary did wrong. I am quite prepared to discuss the question when it arises, and whether the course I am now following is right or wrong. I suppose it has been the course in the department in days gone by. The accounts, of course, have to pass the Auditor General, and we all know that he criticises them very closely, yet he has raised no objection and the same practice has been followed in other departments. Of course, the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) may be right and the departments and the Auditor General may be wrong. To hear the arguments of hon. gentlemen opposite you would think that the private secretary of a minister should receive the \$600 and no more; that he must not occupy a position of a first, second or third-class clerk, or of assistant commissioner.

Mr. SPROULE. Not at all.

Mr. PATERSON. Not at all? Then what is the objection? If it was right for him to prepare these statements for me when he was a first-class clerk, would it not also be right for him to prepare them after being appointed assistant commissioner? Do hon. gentlemen take the position that he must not occupy the position of civil servant and draw a salary as an officer of the service, and at the same time act as private secretary? The statute says distinctly that any officer may be appointed to that position. Mr. Bain was appointed to that position in days gone by, by Order in Council, and has continued to act for me in that capacity to the present time. As I said before, the private secretary to the minister stands in a different relation to the public and to the minister than do others in the service, and he must necessarily be con-

Mr. PATERSON.