

the 69.29 per 100, whereas it is now 4,795. Reduction to be made 753.

The total amount paid to employees being \$5,781,250, the French should receive \$1,775,422, which would equal the 30.71 per cent, whereas they receive only \$987,300. Deficiency to be made up \$788,122. The total paid to other employees being \$4,793,950, it should be reduced to \$4,005,828, a decrease of \$788,122.

This report speaks for itself, and it clearly shows how unjustly we are treated. We were then allotted neither our fair proportion of employees, nor an equitable ratio of salaries. Are we any better treated to-day? Any one of my colleagues from the province of Quebec can corroborate what I say.

In this House, from the little page boys up to the highest functionaries, in the distributing office, in the accounts branch, the telegraph offices, we are confronted with all kinds of difficulties.

In the public departments, our position has become intolerable.

A short time ago, I visited an office of the Department of Agriculture, which comprised nine employees, not one of whom understood me when I spoke French, and a similar state of things is to be found everywhere.

The heads of departments, who must necessarily communicate with French people all over Canada, should in all cases be able to speak French.

Why should not all employees drawing a salary of say over a thousand dollars a year, be obliged to speak the two languages?

Moreover, some even have the impertinence to present themselves in the province of Quebec to conduct investigations, or preside in the courts of justice, without understanding a word of French. What would our English-speaking fellow citizens say if they were sent a French Canadian under the same conditions? The English newspapers of the Dominion would be all too few to hold the remonstrances, the protests, and we would be treated to no end of inflammatory harangues on the subject.

Imagine the ridiculous situation of a chief clerk in Ottawa, obliged to settle some question with a Rimouski farmer who has travelled 500 miles to get in touch with the Department of Agriculture. The chief does not speak French, and there are very few French employees in the department. And the same conditions obtain all through the service.

On the Government railway the Intercolonial, half the entire mileage of which is in the province of Quebec, we have not

[Mr. Boulay.]

had a single superintendent with a French name for 45 years, with the exception of one Dubé, who filled that office for a time, but who is not now employed by the Intercolonial.

Of 49 chief clerks in the Intercolonial offices at Moncton we find only three with French names.

On the dining cars there is not one French Canadian, although the ordinary employees, apart from the higher officials, number 78. Even day labourers are not so well paid in the province of Quebec as are those in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Up to last year there was a difference of twenty to thirty cents a day, but I have succeeded in securing an increase in wages of ten cents. There still remains a difference of from ten to twenty cents a day. However, this can be easily remedied.

We are not asking impossibilities. The cost of living is no greater in New Brunswick than in the province of Quebec, and our labourers should be paid the same wages as the others.

I repeat, we are demanding nothing exorbitant, nothing impracticable—simply that English-speaking employees who come in contact with us should speak a little French, as we require our French Canadian compatriots to do.

The hon. Minister of the Interior not long ago informed me that he had received complaints, and these from Quebec, that the employees of his department in Quebec did not speak French. I am not surprised at this, it is the general complaint heard from French centres everywhere and less than a twentieth part of these protests is made public.

In the various public departments here in Ottawa, it is the continual complaint of our compatriots that they are being passed over.

Capable employees work a lifetime for a small salary, while they see English-speaking employees arriving at the eleventh hour to supplant them or receive promotion, etc.

For three years I have heard constant re-primations on this subject, I have inquired into the facts of the case and have found that in the majority of instances, our compatriots have cause for complaint.

There is however an easy remedy, namely, to submit all departmental promotions to a committee made up of an equal number of French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians.

Under such circumstances, it is no wonder that our compatriots complain and finally ask themselves whether they are born to be treated as Pariahs in the country,