

Hon. gentlemen on both sides must feel that it would be desirable that the House should come to some understanding with respect to the limitation of discussion on mere questions. The practice was introduced in 1877, of calling attention to a subject, and then asking a question, and it was always understood, if an hon. gentleman gave a notice of that sort, that he proposed to have a general discussion on the subject, but when there is a simple inquiry we ought to come to an understanding that at any rate there shall be nothing but the speech of the hon. gentleman who asks the question, and the speech of the minister who replies. There is another thing, too; we are lax as to our rules—lax as to all rules. The hon. gentleman from Marshfield gave notice of a question on the 24th September which was taken up on the 28th, that he would ask the leader of the House whether certain language used by the hon. Minister of Railways, in another place, expressed the opinion of the government. That was understood to be preliminary to a discussion that was to arise on another notice which the hon. gentleman from Marshfield had given, that he would call attention to the extraordinary announcement of policy by the government. On that first notice, that he would ask the question the hon. gentleman made a speech, which covered a great deal of ground. Other hon. gentlemen took part in the discussion, and a great deal of time was consumed, and hon. gentlemen who might have been prepared, perhaps, to have dealt with the speech which he might have made under the first notice—that is the one with respect to the extraordinary announcement of policy—were not prepared, and did not expect, to make a speech on the second question. Then, yesterday the hon. leader of the opposition asked a very simple question with reference to a gentleman in Toronto who had held a license to vend postage stamps, which license had been withdrawn and given to another gentleman in Toronto. Under that, the whole matter of dismissals, and of the government policy with respect to tenure of office, and things of that general character, were discussed. To-day we have the hon. gentleman from Marshfield telling us that he does not propose to have any discussion on the old notice under which the discussion should properly have taken place, and the result has been that gentlemen, like the hon. gen-

tleman from Victoria and myself, who had proposed to say something on the general question, were, under the strict rule, shut out. It is very good of the House to indulge us and to allow us to make a few observations on the general questions, even though we may be slightly out of order. I do not propose to undertake to answer the statements made by the hon. gentleman from Victoria. One might as well undertake to answer the adventures of Baron Munchausen or the lamentations of Jeremiah. The hon. gentleman's speech was not an argumentative speech; it was a speech made up of very fine sentiments, the connection of those sentiments with the matter before the House not being very clear.

Hon. Mr. MACDONALD (B.C.)—The matter before the House related to events which occurred fifteen years ago.

Hon. Mr. POWER—I think the better way to look at this question is not to regard it as a matter of sentiment, but to look at it as men of business. We have not to deal with Bulgarian atrocities, or Armenian atrocities; we have to deal with the fact that the government do not keep in their employ a certain number of persons, nearly all of whom were employed as labourers, and paid so much a day, on certain portions of the government railways in this country. What is the use of comparing these things with Bulgarian atrocities and Armenian atrocities? I did not know that the hon. gentleman from Victoria posed as a humourist, but he certainly did appear in that character this afternoon.

Hon. Mr. MACDONALD (B.C.)—I meant it seriously. It was the deprivation of life in both cases.

Hon. Mr. POWER—Now, to show that the hon. gentleman was playing with the House, and was not serious, I wish to draw attention to the fact that some three or four years ago a minister, whom the hon. gentleman followed, whose supporter he was, in a most summary way dismissed some seventy employes of the Department of Railways and Canals, with almost no notice. The hon. gentleman, who was the first to shed tears over these men dismissed in Prince Edward Island, had not a tear for all those poor men who were thrown out of their