

Mr. INGRAM. Did it ever occur to the management of the Intercolonial Railway to issue a notice and have it posted up in the shops?

Mr. EMMERSON. We have changed all that.

Mr. INGRAM. You have changed all that?

Mr. EMMERSON. In former days men who were suspected of any leanings against the government of that day were sent out on trains so that they could not exercise their franchise. That has all been changed. If men who wish to exercise their franchise will, by going out on their regular runs, be deprived of that privilege they have always been notified that if they wish it arrangements will be made whereby they will have the privilege of voting regardless of whether they are Liberal or Conservative.

Mr. HAGGART. The hon. gentleman makes a pretty bold statement as to what the state of affairs was before he and his friends were in power.

Mr. EMMERSON. Yes.

Mr. HAGGART. By whose authority does he make any such statement?

Mr. EMMERSON. I will answer the hon. gentleman.

Mr. HAGGART. I would like to know because when I was in power—

Mr. EMMERSON. This was when you were in power.

Mr. HAGGART. When I managed the affairs of the Intercolonial Railway as minister, if the officials did anything of that kind, they did it without my authority.

An hon. MEMBER. They did it all the same.

Mr. HAGGART. If it were done they had no hint or direction from me to do it. The hon. Minister of Railways tells us that there is a change; that there is purity of administration on the Intercolonial Railway now, and that there is no coercion on the employees. It is refreshing to hear these gentlemen opposite talk about purity of administration after the experience we have had of their tactics in every province of this Dominion. It reminds me of the statement of a friend of mine, once a member of this House, that the chances were that those persons who are always talking of purity are themselves the most corrupt, and that one should beware of them. The present officials managing the Intercolonial Railway were managing the Intercolonial Railway when I was in power, and I defy the minister to obtain from them any instructions that I ever gave which would tend to interfere with the exercise of the franchise by any of these employees.

Mr. EMMERSON.

Mr. INGRAM. The Minister of Railways has told us that when he goes to Moncton in a political campaign, he tells the employees of the Intercolonial Railway that they have a perfect right to do as they please in the election. If the hon. gentleman desired to conduct the government railways from a purely non-partisan standpoint, he would take a leaf out of the book of some of the railway companies who post up a notice stating that no foreman, or other petty officer of the company, shall be allowed to interfere, and that every employee is at perfect liberty to cast his ballot as he sees proper. That is the non-partisan method of conducting a railway. The Minister of Railways says that he proposes to investigate these matters, but he has not told us how he will investigate them. If he wants to conduct his investigation in a non-partisan manner he will issue instructions to his general manager to delegate the proper officer, who very likely is the superintendent, to find out whether any of these employees have taken a partisan part in the elections. Let him instruct his general manager that it will be a reason for dismissal whether the employee took an active part on the Liberal or Conservative side, and if the minister does that he will have a non-partisan administration in the Railway Department. The minister has spoken of the applications for positions on the government railways which come in from all quarters. If the general manager of the government railways were sitting in the House now, I would tell him that on account of the interference of members and supporters of the government, he is not allowed to conduct the government railways on business lines, but, by reason of the influence brought to bear on him by government supporters he is forced to employ men who are unnecessary and who are unsuited for the positions they occupy. That is the great fault with the administration of the Intercolonial Railway to-day; that has been the fault with the Intercolonial Railway since I have been a member of this House, and I care not what party be in power. The trouble is that you have a partisan head; that you are administering your railway from a partisan standpoint and that you have done ever since I have been in the House. I make that statement boldly. When political partisans try to use their influence in the administration of the affairs of that railway, no general manager can conduct it on purely business lines. If a politician wants to have a friend employed on the government railways, let him submit his name to the general manager if he chooses, just as any other private citizen would, and if the candidate be competent to fill a vacant and necessary position, let him be appointed upon his merit. Until the day comes that this is done on the government railways, the government railways will never be a success. I shall not discuss the question of government railway ownership now; but I do say that it is idle