

tenders had been withdrawn. The whole affair was manipulated in the county of Charlevoix, not, perhaps, with the knowledge of the Minister, but of another hon. gentleman. The people who sent in their tenders were called upon and threatened with certain consequences, with the result that they were induced to withdraw. By this \$500 had been lost, and the contract given to a partizan. There was still another matter to which he would refer. Formerly the mails from Quebec to the county of Charlevoix went by water, being carried by the St. Lawrence Steam Navigation Company for \$1,500. The service was carried on very regularly during the whole season, and the trips were very numerous. On the 7th May last, the contractors offered to continue the service on the same terms as formerly; but, on the 4th of June,—nearly a month afterwards—the Department replied that they had decided that other arrangements should be made, by sending the mails across from St. Denis to Murray Bay by the Grand Trunk Railway, and Chicoutimi would be served, therefore, by land. This proposal had been effected, and arrangements made for carrying the mails three times a week from Murray Bay to Chicoutimi at the rate of \$12 per round trip. Arrangements had also been made for the carriage of the mails between Murray Bay and the post-office at the rate of 50c. a trip. A special tri-weekly service between Murray Bay and St. Paul's Bay had been undertaken by Mr. Blackburn for \$4 per round trip. Hitherto the service had been very satisfactory to the counties of Charlevoix and Chicoutimi. Why, then, had the changes been made without all who chose being allowed to compete? It was done for the purpose of favouring political partizans. When the Governor-General was there, a special train was chartered to take him his despatches, but, if the steamers had been employed as usual, that would not have been necessary. The whole amount paid for that service in 1876, was \$1,971; in 1877 there was nothing about Chicoutimi wharf, and yet it cost, to bring the mails down to Malbaie by the Grand Trunk, \$2,000—

a larger sum than the whole service of the previous year. At Tadousac the same complaint was made. He did not suppose the Postmaster-General knew the places, or this course would not have been taken. There was a post-office in Quebec East, the revenue of which was \$1,632; the salary was \$742, besides \$200 paid towards rent, fuel and light, making a total of \$942 for that post-office. He complained that that postmaster, instead of being at his business and attending to his work, was allowed to go down to the county of Rimouski, and there make speeches as an election agent. Whilst he was on this subject, he desired to call the attention of the Committee to other names, as well as that of Mr. Gillotte, the postmaster in St. Roch. He did not know if the Minister of Marine and Fisheries had taken action in connection with the complaint he had made about Commander Lavoie.

SIR ALBERT J. SMITH: I have taken action about it.

MR. LANGEVIN said Mr. Labelle, a lighthouse-keeper at Bic, had also been canvassing in Rimouski county. The county was full of those lighthouse-keepers canvassing.

SIR ALBERT J. SMITH: I have information that there are a good many of our lighthouse-keepers actively canvassing on the other side.

MR. LANGEVIN said if the hon. gentleman had the information, he knew what to do. A number of officers of this House were now out of their offices, and had gone down to take part in the Local Elections in the Province of Quebec. Mr. Bienvenu, one of the translators, had left his office for this purpose, and he had been replaced by a young man just out of college, because he bore the same name. Mr. Pitan had been also allowed to leave his office in this House and go down there, and this country was paying him to canvass in Lower Canada, against one political party.

MR. DYMOND rose to a question of order.

MR. HUNTINGTON asked the hon. gentleman to discuss the Post-Office Estimates first, and to go into these other matters afterwards.