

Mr. Mackenzie, with the sense of right and love of justice which mark his character, unhesitatingly acceded to my request, that he would be good enough to state to you the terms of the agreement he made with me, and he wrote you a letter clearly setting forth its conditions. He has been pleased to give me a copy of that letter, and likewise your reply to it, in which you state that you "will respect any engagement" Mr. Mackenzie may have made with regard to myself.

For upwards of two weeks my letter remained without the slightest notice, and on my calling the attention of the Secretary to the fact, I was informed that my claim had been submitted to the Minister of Justice, and since this date, no communication has been received by me.

To my mind, very little law was required to determine the merits of the claim I have preferred. It was and is one to be dealt with by the principles of common sense, common honesty, and every day justice, unless the pledged faith of a Minister of the Crown is to be held of no force or account.

What are the facts?

Having an annual engagement—the fact of which I have clearly established—on the last day of the year, I am officially notified that the services I have rendered for the past eight years as Engineer in charge of Harbours, Quebec and Ontario—services I affirm to have been efficiently, creditably and honourably given, were no longer required; a dismissal, I repeat, as unjust and causeless as it is unprecedented under British rule. It cannot be said that the office I held has been abolished, for whereas my staff consisted of one Assistant Engineer and ten Juniors, this season there has been detailed to what hitherto has been my work eight Assistant Engineers and forty Junior Assistants.

My dismissal was to take effect on the completion of the Annual Reports of the two Departments of Railways and Canals and Public Works, a duty which was completed only in the last days of February. On the 1st of March I informed you by letter that my services were given on the basis of an Annual Engagement, and I stated my willingness to complete a year's service, otherwise that I claimed a year's pay. My letter literally remained without the slightest notice until I protested against the unjust treatment I was receiving. It was only on the 16th September, seven months after its date, that any steps were taken when the Secretary informed me that as nothing could be found in the Department to establish my annual engagement, my claim could not be allowed.

This was the reward of eight years honourable and devoted service.

Even if no proof of such engagement existed, the course you have taken is at variance with the principle which has been observed with regard to the public servants of the Dominion. It has hitherto been the rule to make acknowledgment for long and honest performance of duty, when circumstances have led to the discontinuance of meritorious services by a gratuity graduated according to the merit of the recipient. I can adduce many instances from my personal knowledge, at least two have occurred during the last twelve months; a fact easy to establish.

But my claim is not founded merely on usage. It is stronger. It is based on a positive engagement, as Mr. Mackenzie's letter and the documents in the Department establish: yet seven months were allowed to elapse without any practical notice being taken of my first letter. When I do receive a reply, I am called upon to suffer from the failure of the Deputy Minister to make an efficient search, and because whoever was responsible neglected the duty of making the necessary enquiries which my letter itself suggested. I then furnish you with the information required, Mr. Mackenzie writes the letter establishing my claim, which you personally undertake to respect as an engagement of a Minister of the Crown. In spite of these proofs and your own