

'The operation and management of our Government railways by an independent commission free from partisan control or influence'.

Mr. COCHRANE: The operation and management of the Government railways are free from partisan control and influence now.

QUEBEC AND SAGUENAY RAILWAY.

*Mr. LEMIEUX:

1. Has the officer of the Department of Railways and Canals been recently appointed to investigate and report on the Quebec and Saguenay railway?

2. If so, what is his name?

3. What is the object of such an investigation and report?

Mr. COCHRANE:

1. No.

2. Answered by No. 1.

3. Answered by No. 1.

MAIL BAG LOCKS.

*Mr. MACDONALD:

1. Is the new padlock for mail bags superior to the old one, as improved by the disc pattern metal bar contracted for with Edouard Lapointe on the 23rd September, 1912?

2. What is the price of the new padlock?

3. What is the price of the disc metal bar per hundred?

Mr. PELLETIER:

1. No new locks and no acceptable new bars have as yet been supplied.

2. Although the new lock will be a great improvement, the department will not pay for same any more than the price of 80 cents, which was fixed by a former Postmaster General in 1907.

3. Five and one-third cents a bar was offered, but no acceptable bars were supplied.

*Mr. EMMERSON:

1. How many disc pattern metal bars were required to improve the old padlocks in use by the Post Office Department?

2. Were not said metal bars sanctioned and adopted by the Post Office Department on the 23rd September, 1912?

Mr. PELLETIER:

1. No accurate answer can be given to this question. The controller of postal stores estimated that the quantities mentioned in his letter of September 23 would be needed.

2. The letter of September 23, together with the answer given to-day about it, speak for themselves.

*Mr. BUREAU:

1. Has any postal delivery of disc metal bars been made to the Post Office Department by Edouard Lapointe between the 23rd September, 1912, and the 2nd April, 1913?

Mr. MACDONALD.

2. Did said metal bars fit the lock then used by the Post Office Department?

3. Was any test made of the old locks as improved by the addition of said metal bars?

Mr. PELLETIER:

1. Yes. Four hundred and eighty-four were offered on March 6, 1913, but they were all returned because the controller of postal stores did not find them to be in accordance with the specifications.

2 and 3. No bars having been delivered which could be accepted, such a test was not practicable.

*Mr. CARVELL:

Has the following letter been sent to Edouard Lapointe, under the instructions of the Postmaster General:—

1092—A.

Post Office Department, Ottawa.

Postal Stores Branch,

Ottawa, April 2, 1913.

Sir,—

I am, by direction of the Postmaster General, to notify you that owing to the unreasonable prolonged delay on your part in filling the order of the 23rd September, 1912, for 90,000 metal disc bars for letter mail bags, notwithstanding you were requested some time ago by the department by letter and telegram, to hasten delivery, he has cancelled such order, which accordingly has absolutely ceased and determined, and on which the department must decline to accept any deliveries whatever.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Sydney Smith,

Controller of Postal Stores.

Mr. Edouard Lapointe,

9-11 Desjardins Street,

Quebec.

2. Have any other letters been sent by the Post Office Department to said Edouard Lapointe since September 23, 1912, urging him to hasten delivery of the 99,000 metal disc bars ordered?

3. Has Edouard Lapointe filed any claim against the Post Office Department?

Mr. PELLETIER:

1. The Postmaster General did not dictate this letter, but the controller of postal stores had conferred with him in a general way before writing same. Moreover, the letter as it reads in the question is not accurately reproduced. It will be brought down with the other papers.

2 and 3. Yes. Moreover, Mr. Lapointe had been told in the letter of September 23 that those bars should be brought into use with the least possible delay. He came several times to the office of the controller of postal stores, and was urged to act promptly. However, at the end of March last he was still asking other people to make those bars for him. Finally he wrote raising a racial cry and asking for the dismissal of the controller of postal stores, who, he said, was persecuting him. The papers which will be brought down will further explain the whole thing.