

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. There is no objection.

Mr. FOSTER. I cannot help saying that I think the language used by my hon. friend, although strong, is not one whit too strong. I have heard certain statements made across the floor of the House which were said in a moment of anger or during keen debate that had better not have been said, and for which allowance could be made, but when a Minister in cold blood commences an answer with an insinuation of that kind, if that is a sample of what this side of the House is to be subjected to by Ministers, I think it is well that the House should take notice of it. Now, that report, so far as it was read by my hon. friend, was not a grave report against the postmaster.

Mr. LISTER. What is the insinuation?

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order.

Mr. FOSTER. What does my hon. friend (Mr. Lister) say?

Mr. LISTER. I say you said there was an insinuation and I ask you what is it?

Mr. FOSTER. Is my hon. friend (Mr. Lister) the keeper of the Postmaster General?

Mr. LISTER. You are talking to the House.

Mr. FOSTER. With his great love for the Postmaster General, he comes to his rescue.

Mr. LISTER. What is the insinuation?

Mr. FOSTER. The insinuation is well known. The insinuation was intended and every man in the House knows it.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. I cannot allow the hon. gentleman (Mr. Foster) to impute motives to me. I neither intended nor made any insinuation, and I will not allow the hon. gentleman (Mr. Foster) to say so.

Mr. FOSTER. All I can say, Mr. Speaker, is that my hon. friend (Mr. Mulock) was very unfortunate in the choice of his language.

Mr. LISTER. You are misinterpreting him, like you always do.

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, while I have the floor I would like to have a little fair-play from that side of the House, if you can bring them to that pass.

Mr. LANDERKIN. Why do you not tell what the insinuation is?

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order.

Mr. FOSTER. I cannot continue to address the House, Mr. Speaker, unless you keep order.

Mr. SPEAKER. I hope hon. gentlemen will be good enough not to interrupt an hon.

member who has the floor unless by asking him a question which he is willing to answer.

Mr. LISTER. He has not answered the question.

Mr. SPEAKER. It must be distinctly understood that any hon. gentleman who has the floor has the right to refuse to answer any interruption whatever. He has the right to refuse to answer, or to give an answer, just as he chooses. It is a mere matter of courtesy, and if the hon. gentleman addressing the House does not wish to answer he should not be further interrupted.

Mr. LANDERKIN. I presume we have a right to listen or not as we please.

Mr. FOSTER. I hope, Mr. Speaker, to get an opportunity of continuing my remarks. I would not mind if I were not so unused to public speaking in the House, but these interruptions disconcert me. Leaving this incident, which I think I have sufficiently and fairly characterized, I want to ask the attention of the House to what I think is an injustice involved in the dismissal upon the report as it is given even by the official of the department. It appears that in this case, before the woman's husband was dead, there was certain dissatisfaction in the vicinity where this post office is, and that it reached the ears of the Government. As is proper and right, the Government asked for a report from their inspector. The inspector, Mr. Fletcher, visited the locality and made a report. Between that time and this, a great change took place with reference to the condition of the postmistress. At that time her husband was living, but between that and the middle of February her husband died. Now, the post office inspector stated in the report as follows:—

All those who signed the petition were requested to appear and to give evidence under oath. A fair proportion of the witnesses attended, and of these, the evidence of Thos. Webly and Mrs. Margaret Patterson was taken, and is inclosed herewith.

For the postmaster, the evidence of Mr. L. F. Martin and Rev. S. Asquith was taken, and is inclosed herewith. The evidence of the postmaster, Mrs. Isabella Rose McManus, is also inclosed herewith.

The evidence of Mr. Badcock, called by Mr. Cane, was taken. He is not, however, one of the signers of the petition.

Mr. G. F. Cane, barrister, appeared on behalf of the petitioners, Mr. E. M. Yarwood, barrister, on behalf of the postmaster, Mrs. Isabella R. McManus, and Capt. Dillon on behalf of Mr. Robert McManus, the assistant postmaster.

The evidence of Thos. Webly shows some disagreement between the postmaster and Mrs. Webly, as to the origin of certain correspondence addressed to the latter, concerning which the postmaster refused to give any information.

The evidence of Mr. Badcock concerns chiefly his failure to receive certain letter addressed to