

Mr. MONTAGUE. The hon. Minister admits that he never had any experience in immigration matters ?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. Yes.

Mr. MONTAGUE. It is rather strange to pick up a man without experience at all, and make him inspector of all the other men who have been for years engaged in that work. So far as his work as political organizer is concerned, I doubt very much whether the House will consider that that fitted him to be an inspector of immigration agencies. No impartial tribunal would decide that a man, absolutely without experience, absolutely inattentive for years to the question of immigration, would be the best man to place over a lot of agents who have been engaged in that work for years, and give him a larger salary than any of them. Had he ever been in England before?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I do not know.

Mr. MONTAGUE. That is extraordinary. The hon. gentleman appoints a man to superintend European immigration who knows nothing about Europe or the work. Does the hon. gentleman know whether Preston is acquainted with any other language than his own ?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I do not think he is.

Mr. MONTAGUE. Here is a man put in charge of European work who knows no other language than English.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. He has an interpreter.

Mr. MONTAGUE. Necessarily, he must have one ; but there is a difference always in getting what a man says through an interpreter and understanding it yourself. There is no excuse. There is no use in the Minister trying to say that Mr. Preston was the man of all others fitted for this work. It was a political appointment. The place was needed for Mr. Preston, and I suppose he was recommended by politicians, and the Minister, in the generosity of his heart, found the place and gave him a good salary. I, for my part, should much prefer that he should say so than that he should say that Preston's eminent qualifications fitted him for that appointment.

Mr. DAVIN. Not only that, but what possible object could there be in having these agencies inspected ? He knows very well that in his own department he has an illustration of the utter uselessness of these inspectors. He knows that in the Lands Department he has, as I believe, abolished the position of inspector—

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Davin) is quite mis-

Mr. SIFTON.

taken. I have not abolished the inspector's office at all.

Mr. DAVIN. Who inspects now ?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. Mr. Stevens.

Mr. DAVIN. I have never seen anything of him ; I used to see something of the other inspectors as they went around. I say here that the position, Inspector of Immigration Agencies in Europe, when given to a man like Preston who knows nothing of Germany, who knows nothing of France, has never been in England, speaks no other language than English—it is palpably a contrived position just to fit a man that, for the time being, wanted a nice, soft thing, and he, probably, wanted to be taken out of Canada. Sir, it seems to me, I confess, that appointing Preston at such a time with the scandals of West Elgin ringing in our ears, scandals in which he was the principal figure—why if the truth were known about his conduct in West Elgin—

Mr. BRITTON. What was his conduct in West Elgin ? What do you know about it ? State now, if you please, what you know.

Mr. DAVIN. I will tell what I know. Are we going to have at the hands of my hon. and learned friend—

Mr. BRITTON. State what you know about Preston's conduct in West Elgin.

Mr. DAVIN. I hope the Chairman will protect me from the interruption of the hon. gentleman.

Mr. BRITTON. Why do not you state it ?

Mr. DAVIN. I will tell you what his conduct was, Sir. The conduct of Preston in West Elgin was hugging the machine. And before he went to meet his acolytes and heelers, to contrive the villanies that were perpetrated in West Elgin, with the hypocrisy that belong to a man, he went to a Sunday school and asked the Sunday school children to sing his favourite hymn : "My soul is full of sunshine to-day." And with his soul full of sunshine, he went to meet his brother hypocrites to contrive the hugging of the machine. Why, the hon. gentleman (Mr. Britton) wants to know what he did ?

Mr. BRITTON. So I do ; you have not told us yet. You have told us about his singing a hymn ; but you have not told us what he did in West Elgin.

Mr. DAVIN. He has revealed to us what he did, because there is a letter of his own record.

Mr. BRITTON. Is that all.

Mr. DAVIN. Is not that enough ?

Mr. BRITTON. I do not see anything wrong in that letter.