

earned \$1 or \$1.25 per day. They were all dismissed with the exception of the supporters of the government then coming into power. Strangely enough, two of these unfortunates along with others were dismissed simply because they bore my name. One of these victims was at the bedside of his dying wife, and what did the Liberal party do? Did they postpone taking action until that man resumed work? No, news of his dismissal was carried to him at home while his wife was lying on her deathbed, and that poor woman was so much taken by surprise that within twenty-four hours she died.

But that is not the whole story. A poor sectionman of St. Flavie, named François Roy—and that case is still vivid in the minds of the people of that locality, so painful an impression did it make—was on his deathbed. Lest they might lose the opportunity of depriving him of the small insurance which would be forthcoming from the Intercolonial, had he died while in their employ notice of his dismissal was forwarded to him two days before he expired, and his family was thus deprived of that amount.

Mr. Speaker, these are a few samples and illustrations of the doings of the Liberal party in 1896. And our opponents to-day protest forsooth when we insist that some of their friends should be discharged. In my own constituency there are still living twenty of the victims of 1896, and not a single one has been reinstated. Will our opponents contend that we have not the right to discharge their friends in order to reinstate those who lost their situations in 1896, though their only fault consisted in their party leanings?

Liberals take the ministers to task for having effected too many dismissals. We are of the contrary opinion, we think they are not discharging as many as they should. I am sincerely of opinion that before adopting the principle laid down by the Liberals, we should first restore things as they were when the Liberals came into power, that is to say set things right by discharging their friends to reinstate ours, and then if there are reforms to be carried out let these gentlemen suggest them, and we shall approve of them if they are right. But first let each one have his due.

Cases of dismissals of that sort are not wanting; there is one recurring just now to my mind. At Moncton, Mr. T. V. Cook was dismissed on the ground of old age—he was forty-six years old—and he was replaced by a Mr. Palmer, who was sixty-one, but who was a friend of the government; he was appointed though by fifteen years the senior of the man he replaced.

I shall not dwell any longer on the subject of dismissals. The matter has been already debated at length in this House,

and I think that public opinion is pretty well posted in this connection, and hon. members of this House as well.

Our opponents have very bad grace to show surprise under the circumstances, for they have exhibited a remarkable lack of decency and fairness in dealing with our friends in 1896.

Mr. W. CHISHOLM (Antigonish). The Minister of Public Works has told us that the denunciation of the sitting member is sufficient for him to dismiss an official, and lest the impression should go abroad that I, the sitting member, denounced the Captain of the dredge 'Cape Breton'. I wish to say that such denunciation did not come from me, nor have I been able to find out whence it came. That is why I put the question in the House, a first time and a second time, as to the manner in which that dismissal was made, and that is why I have moved to-day for the papers. The minister tells us that it will be shown that the department acted with prudence, but I think it will be shown that the department acted with characteristic promptness. I am told that in the matter of these dismissals the Minister of Public Works is the biggest sinner of them all, which is to be wondered at, because in this House, when in opposition, he always pleaded for political purity, and denounced, as we heard him to-day, everything that savoured of unkindness or lack of charity. He was moved very deeply this evening when he told us of the dismissals that took place in 1896 on the Lachine canal, but he forgot to tell us that he denounced the then government for having done what he now tries to excuse himself for doing. It is quite plain that these gentlemen opposite are not honest and sincere. Why don't they stand up manfully and say that they have dismissed these men because they were partisans; why do they not tell us that in the assurances they gave the electors they were trying to fool the people, and that when they were trying to seek their votes they proclaimed they had virtues which they did not possess.

Why do they not say that they are only playing a game—call it hypocrisy if you will—and that they are no better than others? What the country wants to know is where these hon. gentlemen stand; it wants to know what foundation there is for all this pretended virtue. The hon. gentleman refers to the cases of men who were dismissed from the Lachine canal. No doubt everybody sympathizes with any men who have been summarily dismissed; but I submit that it is not as great a hardship for an ordinary labourer to be dismissed as it is for a man say in the position of a sea captain. Captain Decoste depends for his livelihood on the knowledge which he has as a navigator. If he is dismissed without any