

between the two cases. But then we are all human and fallible and liable to failings.

Mr. LANDERKIN. You should have been in Opposition long ago; it has improved you vastly.

Mr. FOSTER. I was speaking particularly for the benefit of my hon. friend (Mr. Landerkin) who has just interrupted me.

Offices of the Auditor General..... \$27,100

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE (Sir Richard Cartwright). One messenger has been dispensed with and there are two partial statutory increases. These are the only alterations.

Mr. FOSTER. Very well.

Department of Finance..... \$50,460

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. This sum is almost identically the same as it was before.

Mr. FOSTER. I notice that.

Department of Inland Revenue..... \$38,540

Mr. FOSTER. The Controller of Inland Revenue is not here, and the vote had better stand. There seems to be an additional clerk which requires explanation. There is another matter which I want to bring to the attention of the Controller (Sir Henri Joly de Lotbinière) and I would like him to be here. I notice that a distinguished relative of Li Hung Chang is about to be fumigated, and I want to appeal to the sympathy of the Controller of Inland Revenue to prevent such an outrage.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. We will let the vote stand; but I think my hon. friend (Mr. Foster) will find that it is the Minister of Agriculture who has charge of the quarantine.

Post Office..... \$194,962 50

Mr. FOSTER. We want some explanation of this.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Mulock). There is a decrease. There is one first-class clerk less.

Mr. HUGHES. What became of him?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. He died. Mr. Fortier is his name and he is still dead.

Mr. HUGHES. He might come back like Mrs. McManus's husband.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. No. Unfortunately he is dead, and it is not necessary to fill the vacancy. There are two second-class clerks less and that involves a reduction of \$2,200, I think. These vacancies were in existence when the last Estimates were voted and have not happened since I entered the department.

Mr. FOSTER. Are there any vacancies in the second-class clerkships now?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. No. There are two that are dropped are all the vacancies in existence. There are three third-class clerks less, arising from three resignations.

Mr. FOSTER. Forced?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. No. Mr. Scribner was studying medicine and resigned. Miss Barber resigned to get married, and I have forgotten the reasons for Mr. Balderson's resignation, but they were all voluntary. One messenger died; and lastly, there is an error of 50 cents in the amount. That disposes of all the changes, resulting in a reduction of \$3,550.

Mr. FOSTER. There seems to be one new chief clerk.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. Yes. That is a new office. It is what we propose to call the Controller of Railway Mail Service. The railway mail service heretofore has been under the divided control of the various district inspectors, and this appointment involves the transfer of the railway mail service from the local inspectors to a central officer at Ottawa. Temporarily, I am trying in that position, Mr. B. W. Armstrong.

Mr. FOSTER. Who was what?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. He was a first-class clerk in the Toronto post office and a man of very considerable experience. He is, I think, one of the best men in the service for the position. I did not select him on my own responsibility, but I entirely approved of his appointment. I acted on the advice of the chief inspector in the choice. Mr. Armstrong is there for the time being, and I have no doubt will be a success. He has had considerable experience in the service. He was practically in charge of the Toronto general post office, but has spent the best part of thirty years in the service, though comparatively a young man.

Mr. FOSTER. Just what are the duties you propose such a man to do?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. He will, among the other things, have charge of the railway mail service. The mail service on the trains is every day becoming more important from the gradual process of transferring the mail service from stages to railways. Before I took office there were 404 railway mail clerks. The Controller will have the direction of these, arranging their time-tables, seeing that they are in charge of their trains in every part of the Dominion, and generally perfecting the organization. The province of Ontario, for instance, is divided into six inspectors' districts. Formerly the railway mail clerks were supposed to be attached to these districts. They were more or less local officers, their immediate superior being the inspector of the district to which they were attached. My view of the railway mail