

Minister of the Interior, were really the whole company, and while nominally acting as government officials respecting this contract, were in reality conducting their own business, namely, that of the North Atlantic Trading Company. He read this cable from Mr. Smart to Mr. Preston, then he proceeds :

This telegram of July 17 was followed by a letter, for we find on the files a letter from Mr. Smart to Mr. Preston of that date. I shall not read the whole of it, but will merely call the attention to this clause.

I am quoting the hon. member for East Hastings. He proceeds to quote the clause:

You will observe that the government has rearranged the bonus so that there will be a decided advantage reaped by your company in connection with all except Galicians.

The hon. gentleman read that extract from a letter, he stated to the House that it was an extract from a letter written by Mr. Smart to Mr. Preston. Now, Mr. Speaker, will you believe me when I say that there is no such letter upon the files? I do not wish to say that the hon. gentleman would deliberately and with malice make a misstatement in that connection. But I have searched carefully the files and I say there is no such letter; but there is a letter from Mr. Smart to the North Atlantic Trading Company, containing the words I have just quoted, and stated to be contained in a letter from Mr. Smart to Mr. Preston. Now this was the criticism the hon. gentleman made :

Here, Sir, were these two gentlemen, who were supposed to be safeguarding the interests of the people of this country—the deputy minister, Mr. Smart, acting for the government on the one hand, and Mr. Preston on the other—

Now listen to this :

—and we find Mr. Smart gratuitously increasing the bonus to be paid this company, and then notifying by cable, not the company whose headquarters were in Amsterdam, but Mr. Preston, whose headquarters are in London.

Now, hon. gentlemen can understand how deceptive a presentation of the case like that would be to this House. Hon. gentlemen can readily understand how easily the people of this country could be deceived in reference to this particular contract when an hon. gentleman undertakes, on the floor of this House, to say that the deputy minister writes a letter to Mr. Preston, of London, in which he uses the words 'your company' and then insinuating that the words 'your company' meant Mr. Preston's company. Now, as I said, I do not believe the hon. member for East Hastings would purposely make a misstatement of that kind, a misrepresentation of that kind. Instead of the letter being to Mr. Preston, it was to the North Atlantic Trading Company, as the hon. gentleman said it should have been. Of course, if the hon. gentleman were here he probably would

say to me that he was in error, and he would withdraw that statement. But I submit, Mr. Speaker, that when hon. gentlemen are attacking a contract, they owe it to themselves, they owe it to this parliament, they owe it to this country, not to exhibit such gross carelessness in making extracts from letters and presenting them to this House. A mistake of that kind, surely, morally at least, is as reprehensible almost as if it were made with malice.

Now, there is another feature of the discussion which has taken place to which I wish to refer before taking up the contract in detail. My hon. friend who preceded me in discussing this matter deprecated the remarks that were made by some hon. gentlemen supporting the administration, upon this amendment, and he made the statement that an effort was being made to slander the holy and righteous gentlemen who sit on your left, Mr. Speaker. Everything that was right was being done here; everything that was wrong was being done upon the other side of the House. In discussing this amendment on Friday night last the hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) made an attack upon the hon. ex-Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton) which I think was unfair, unbecoming to the hon. gentleman himself and was not in keeping with the dignity of parliament. The hon. member for North Toronto practically charged the hon. ex-Minister of the Interior with malfeasance of office, he charged him with the commission of some high official wrongs, and he saw fit to denominate this particular contract and many other transactions that have taken place in that department as being 'Siftonian'. Hon gentlemen behind him smiled. Every time my hon. friend used the word 'Siftonian' it seemed to please himself as well as his friends. Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not propose making any defence for the hon. member for Brandon. It is not necessary for me to do so, but I do say that before an hon. gentleman undertakes to make sweeping charges against a fellow member and an ex-Minister of the Crown as did the hon. member for North Toronto the other evening, he should be prepared to make the charges in the regular form and invoke the machinery of this parliament, so as to make an endeavour at least to prove them. My hon. friend insinuated that the ex-Minister of the Interior, Mr. Smart, the deputy minister of the Interior, and Mr. Preston, in charge of the immigration office in London, were all leagued together to rob the treasury of this country. He did not say so in so many words but that was the fair meaning of his words and that practically is the motive behind hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House who are to-day attacking this contract. It is the talk in the corridor, it is the talk on the street as far as our friends upon your left, Mr. Speaker, are concerned. It is a very easy matter for any gentleman to say that Mr. So and