

it. When he refuses to do that—quits, or strikes, if that is a proper term to use—and continues to hold on to his office, drawing his salary, he violates his oath of office and thereupon disqualifies himself from further retention in office.

Second: It is absolutely necessary to the public interest that the duties of the office should be discharged by some one, and if the incumbent refuses to discharge such duties it becomes necessary for the public to employ some one who will perform them, and as the same office cannot be filled by two persons at the same time, the abandonment by the striker must be regarded as a resignation.

We all admit that if the incumbent dies, the office becomes vacant.

Well then, what is the practical difference between the death of the incumbent and his refusal to perform the duties of his office? In each case no one is filling the office. It is vacant.

If I am mistaken in saying that the abandonment of a public office creates ipso facto a vacancy; if, under the law as it now exists, a public officer may refuse to perform the duties of the office—abandon the work and go on a strike—and still hold his commission, draw his salary and refuse to allow the Government to fill his place, I repeat, if this alarmingly anomalous defect in the law exists, it cannot, for the safety of the public, be too speedily amended.

It is an unthinkable proposition, that a conspiracy of government officials may create a state of anarchy by simply refusing to perform their respective duties.

And yet, so far as the postal system is concerned, this was precisely what was done in the Capital City of this Province.

It lacked nothing but the co-operation of the other departments of the Government—happily not yet unionized—to create a state of absolute anarchy.

That a brave, intelligent and patriotic people, like those of Canada, should quietly submit to such a conspiracy is one of the wonders of this wonderful age. That they should sit down and quietly admit that their officers, their servants, might refuse to serve them, and at the same time refuse to allow them to employ servants who would serve them, would bankrupt our credulity if we ourselves had not seen this very thing done.

I am, of course, aware that the regulation of the postal system is vested in the Dominion, rather than in the Provincial Government, but, as the recent defection of the postal officials was aimed at the people of this City, I am persuaded