

up the matter. At a meeting of the Board of Trade, the members from Victoria in the Commons were present and stated that they did not at all blame the clerks and the letter carriers for the position that they had taken. However, they advised them to go back to their duties. They were only on strike a few hours, but a few hours after they had returned to work a telegram was received from the Postmaster General ordering them all to be discharged. The consequence was that for several days the Victoria Post Office service was in a thoroughly demoralized condition, and citizens, especially business men, greatly inconvenienced. The people of Victoria felt so much sympathy with these poor men that a large meeting was held in the city hall, which was addressed by the clergy of all denominations (with the exception, I think, of the Roman Catholic Church) and by other public men, and they urged, in the strongest possible way that the government immediately reinstate those clerks and letter carriers and pay their back salaries—at least this provisional allowance of \$10 which had accumulated to the amount of \$50 for each. I believe that the resolutions passed at the public meeting were forwarded to the Postmaster General, and a copy was also sent to the present Premier, who was then acting Premier in the absence of the late Sir John Thompson. Nothing was done, I understand, to rectify the gross injustice done these people, until, through the kind intercession of His Excellency with the present Prime Minister and the Postmaster General, those people were placed back in their former positions and received their back pay. As far as I have been able to learn there is no provisional allowance made for similar employees of the government other than in the province of Manitoba, the Territories and British Columbia. I see no good reason why this provisional allowance should be made. I am strongly of opinion that it would be much better—certainly better for those letter carriers and post office clerks—if they had a fixed salary, the same as they have in other provinces of the Dominion. Even with the provisional allowance of \$10 added to their salary of \$31, and deducting their superannuation fee, it only amounts to \$29.10 a month, a salary altogether inadequate to the positions they occupy and services rendered, because I need not remind the House that those

officials have to be educated and responsible men and ought to live in keeping with their positions. It is certainly in the interest of those people, and I believe in the interest of the service and the public, that a fixed salary should be allowed each of those employees and that it should not be less than \$50 a month. Taking into consideration how expensive it is to live in the western provinces, especially British Columbia and the Territories, \$50 a month would not go as far towards supporting those people and their wives and families as \$35 would in the older provinces. From looking over the report of the Postmaster General I think that in nearly all the cities of the eastern portion of Canada they receive between \$45 and \$50 a month. I hope that the Government will at once increase their salaries to not less than the figures I have mentioned.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—It is not the intention of the government at the present moment to do away with the provisional allowance to post office clerks and letter carriers in Victoria, B.C. When they do come to a decision to do away with that extra provisional allowance, they will then adopt a scale of salary commensurate with the positions they hold.

BRITISH COLUMBIA MILITIA RIFLE RANGE

INQUIRY.

Hon. Mr. McINNES (B.C.) inquired :

Is it the intention of the Government to provide a convenient and suitable rifle range for the use of the large body of Militia in Victoria, British Columbia?

If so, when will the range be ready for use?

He said: I may inform the House that in Victoria alone we have something in the neighbourhood of 400 volunteers or militia men, and we have no rifle range worthy of the name within 14 miles of the city. We have one at Gold Stream, which is away out on the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway, 14 miles from the city of Victoria. One-half of the year there is only one passenger train going each way over that road, and it is utterly impossible for the majority of the volunteers to spare the time and bear the very considerable expense of going out to that range to practise rifle shooting as they should. We have an old range that has been used in the city of Victoria known