

offices. I wrote to the Postmaster General before the House met calling his attention to the effect of this change, and the minister replied that he would see that one of the offices, Sylvester, was opened. This has not been done, and I have been unable to get the matter dealt with in accordance with the Postmaster General's assurance. We have had a great many rural mail routes established in my county, and I think that in quite a few instances there has been a disregard for the convenience of the public. This is only one of about half a dozen cases in which people have been deprived absolutely of mail convenience as the result of the establishment of rural mail routes. Just now when we are economizing, it would be well for the Postmaster General to balance the question of cost with the question of convenience. When the establishment of a rural mail route compels half a dozen families, or even three or four families, to go very long distances to get their mail, it is doubtful whether such a service should be established. The rural mail service in my county involves an annual increased expense of \$4,600, and in some cases there seems to be no justification for the establishment of the routes except to give some person holding a mail contract a larger payment of money. I do not want to indulge in any controversy, but merely to put on record the facts in this case so that the Postmaster General may remedy the grievance of these people, which in the winter months is a serious one. These families live on the crossroads and have to go a long distance to get their mail. I hope that the minister will be able to fulfil his promise to me at an early date.

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: I regret that the Postmaster General is confined to his bed by illness. I am, of course, not familiar with the matters to which my hon. friend has directed the attention of the House, but I will direct the attention of the Postmaster General to the observations of my hon. friend and ask him to take the matter into his best consideration.

SUPPLY.

The House in Committee of Supply, Mr. Rhodes in the Chair.

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: Before the Committee proceeds with Estimates I would like to give an answer to a question with regard to the Royal Northwest Mounted Police

[Mr. Macdonald.]

which was asked by my hon. friend from Assiniboia (Mr. Turriff) during the discussion of an item in the Estimates to which it did not appertain. The item to which it properly referred, has been passed, but there is no objection whatever to giving the information. Upon an item relating to the Government of the Northwest Territories, my hon. friend made these observations:

Mr. Turriff: As this is probably the last item on which I can bring this subject up, I should like to ask the minister why Inspector Heffernan of the Northwest Mounted Police was not given his ordinary promotion, and why two junior officers were put over his head, practically compelling him to resign? I do not ask the minister to reply now, but he might have this information for me when his estimates come up again.

Mr. Roche: I would point out that the Royal Northwest Mounted Police are not in my department, but in the Prime Minister's. I will direct his attention to the hon. gentleman's question.

The report made to me by Mr. Fortescue reads:

In October, 1914, owing to the increase of the force to 1,200 non-commissioned officers and constables, two additional superintendents were required, and the appointments were filled by the promotion of Inspectors G. S. Worsley and R. S. Knight, Inspector Heffernan, who was senior to Inspector Knight, being passed over on account of his being lame and unable to ride, and therefore not in a position to perform his duties.

Inspector Heffernan having been passed over for promotion, requested to appear before a medical board with the view of taking his pension. This was done, and the board found that owing to the loss of power in his left leg, he was incapacitated for the performance of his duty; that the incapacity was likely to be permanent, and recommended that he be invalided and granted a pension. Inspector Heffernan was therefore, by Order in Council of the 4th December, 1914, retired from the service with a pension of \$1,068 per annum.

Everything that was done in the matter was done on the recommendation of the Commissioner and Comptroller. I had no personal knowledge of the circumstances, and no knowledge of any of the persons involved, except that I had acquaintance with Inspector Worsley who, as I am informed, was the senior of Inspector Heffernan.

Mr. TURRIFF: I do not know very much about the matter either; I was asked to bring it up by a member who was unable to be present. But it would appear on the face of it rather peculiar that Inspector Heffernan should be considered as unable to perform the duties of Superintendent on account of lameness when apparently he was able for years to perform the duties of