

6. Has a successor been appointed to Mr. Fairbrother? If so, who is he, and what is his age?

The Minister of the Interior, for the Postmaster General, replied as follows:—

W. D. Fairbrother was appointed postmaster of Beamsville on the 11th of April, 1895. No Order in Council was passed appointing him. The following charges were made against him:—That, from the time he took possession of his office until the 23rd of June last, every possible means was taken to sell and give away Conservative literature through the office, and that he held back literature that was in the interests of the Liberal party; that, during the last campaign, he repeatedly absented himself from the office in order to attend political caucuses in the interests of the Conservative party; that he endeavoured to utilize the office rather for profit to himself than for the public convenience; that he would keep a lobby full of people waiting for their mails whilst he parleyed over the sale of papers through the wicket; that he changed the general delivery from a convenient arrangement of fifty boxes to that of twenty-one, which made the office so crowded as to occasion nearly double the necessary time for the distribution of papers, circulars, &c., the public being thus kept waiting; that this change in the system of delivery was such as to greatly delay the delivery, involving a handling of from twenty to fifty pieces of mail matter for almost every person calling for mail; that when asked by the assistant why he so inconvenienced himself and the public in keeping them waiting so long, he replied: "I do not care how long they have to wait; let them purchase boxes. If you make it more convenient for them than they have it, they would never rent a box." That the postmaster would stand by the half hour reading the contents of ingoing and outgoing postcards passing through the office; that the assistant cautioned him against this practice without avail; that he took an active political part in the last general election, that, during the whole of the election day, he acted as outside scrutineer and took an active part in bringing voters to the polls, instead of attending to the duties of his office; that satisfactory evidence was furnished as to the postmaster having taken such political part, which rendered any further investigation unnecessary, and he was accordingly removed from the position and Alex. Allan appointed in his stead.

Any single one of those charges that were stated by the Minister would, I presume, be considered sufficient by the members of the Government to dismiss Mr. Fairbrother from his position. The only ground of complaint I have is, that Mr. Fairbrother was not given an opportunity of meeting those charges, notwithstanding the fact that the Prime Minister from his place in this House, at the first session of this Parliament, declared that no officer or civil servant would be dismissed without an inquiry being instituted. There is not one single point of proof adduced.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES (Mr. Davies). I rise to a point of order. I thought the hon. gentleman was merely calling the attention of the Postmaster General to some one fact. I see, however, that the hon. gentleman is open-

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ing up a very wide discussion on a motion on the Order paper connected with this very dismissal, and I submit that the discussion cannot be anticipated.

Mr. SPEAKER. Will the hon. gentleman point out the motion.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. The motion stands in the name of Mr. McCleary, and is for copies of letters and correspondence referring to the dismissal of W. D. Fairbrother, as postmaster at Beamsville, with a copy of the charges, and by whom such were made.

Mr. SPEAKER. I think the hon. member has not the right to anticipate a notice standing on the Order paper in regard to this very matter.

Mr. McCLEARY. I have no intention of bringing on a general discussion. I am now referring to the answer given to me on behalf of the Postmaster General.

Mr. SPEAKER. I think it would be perfectly in order, if the notice of motion were not on the paper in the name of the hon. gentleman, to refer to a past answer given; but as the hon. gentleman has chosen to place the motion on the Order paper, it is impossible for him to anticipate it, because it would be inconvenient and contrary to the rules and practice of the House.

Mr. McCLEARY. I will have to bow to your decision, Mr. Speaker, but I certainly think it is a strange procedure, that I have not the right to reply to an answer given to a question by the Postmaster General.

#### THE RECIPROCAL TARIFF.

Mr. McNEILL. Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day are called, I should like to ask my hon. friend the Controller of Customs, if he has yet determined whether the tariff of Belgium is "on the whole" as favourable to Canada as our schedule "D" is to Belgium?

The CONTROLLER OF CUSTOMS (Mr. Paterson). I have not so determined.

Mr. McNEILL. Might I ask the hon. gentleman (Mr. Paterson), if he has determined yet whether the tariff of Germany is "on the whole" as favourable to Canada as the offer made in schedule "D" of our tariff is to Germany?

The CONTROLLER OF CUSTOMS. I have not so determined.

Mr. McNEILL. Then we must understand, that the Government have placed this resolution upon the paper, in blank ignorance as to whether—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order, order.

Mr. McNEILL. Surely, Mr. Speaker, I am in order—