

Mr. McCLEARY. I am not so sure about the brevity. But if I cannot go on and discuss the question as pertaining to the administration of the Postmaster General's Department, I will sit down and bring it up at another time.

Mr. SPEAKER. The hon. gentleman stated that he proposed to go into some specific case under the administration of the department, other than this one. I do not think that would be in order. The hon. gentleman can bring it up at the proper time.

Mr. DAVIN. Would the hon. gentleman lay the evidence of this case before the House?

Mr. LOUNT. I desire to draw attention for a moment to some facts that appear in the report of the investigation, and to show that they do not warrant many of the statements made by hon. gentlemen opposite. I apprehend that it is the duty of the Postmaster General to see that every office of this kind is properly conducted, that those who discharge the functions of public offices should do so in a courteous and obliging manner, that their manner should be of such a character that the people who have to resort to their places should be satisfied with the conduct of the civil servants who have to discharge those duties. When charges come before the Postmaster General, or any other member of the Government, in relation to the duties appertaining to their departments and to officials under their charge and when, upon investigation by such member of the Government, by the Postmaster General in this particular case, it is found that the person discharging the duties of the office in question has not been discharging them satisfactorily, or to the benefit of the community, to the satisfaction of the community, then I apprehend it is the duty of the Postmaster General to see that a change is made in that office. Now, hon. gentlemen on the other side have condemned the Postmaster General, and especially is this the case with the hon. member for West Assiniboia (Mr. Davin) who always, I won't say improperly, but who always flaunts his loyalty, flaunts his great admiration for British institutions, and who on this occasion took opportunity to state to the House that Mr. McManus was dead at the time of the dismissal, and therefore he accused the Postmaster General of acting unfairly towards his widow in discharging her, in view of the fact that her husband had been in the service of the country, and has discharged his duty in that service in an honourable and in a proper manner. Now, according to this report, there was no evidence before the Postmaster General at the time this report came to him—and I suppose that he acted upon the report, and upon nothing else—there was no evidence before him whatever that Mr. McManus was deceased. The evidence before him was to the contrary, the evidence was

that Mr. McManus was in the living flesh, that he was represented at the investigation by counsel, and that therefore Mrs. McManus was not then a widow. Now, to sustain what I am saying, and to show that there was great reason for the inquiry, that there was great reason for the action of the Postmaster General, and that the public in that locality were not satisfied, I will read to the House a few extracts from that report which I think will convince the House and will convince the country that the Postmaster General has done his duty, and that all the charges from the other side of the House to the effect that the conduct of the Postmaster General was merciless, was unkind or severe, are without foundation. Let me draw attention to some statements in the report of the investigation:

Mr. G. F. Cane, barrister, appeared on behalf of the petitioners, Mr. E. M. Yarwood, barrister, on behalf of the postmaster, Mrs. Isabella R. McManus, and Capt. Dillon on behalf of Mr. Robert McManus, the assistant postmaster.

There is the evidence of this report that Mr. McManus was in the flesh at the time of the investigation, and therefore Mrs. McManus was not a widow, as the member for West Assiniboia has told the House, and therefore she was not a person for whom sympathy could be claimed on that ground.

Mr. DAVIN. I am sure that my hon. friend does not wish to misrepresent me. I did not say that at the time the report was made, or the investigation was held, Mr. McManus was dead; I said that he died on the 12th of February, and that so late as the 11th of March, Mrs. McManus was still occupying the office, although she had been notified that she would be dismissed.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. She was dismissed in January.

Mr. LOUNT. The dismissal took place in January. I understand the hon. member for West Assiniboia to say that the dismissal took place before the death of the man. But the facts are plain before the House that the dismissal was not made upon any ground that would give the hon. gentleman reason for saying that the conduct of the Postmaster General was merciless in any respect. I submit that the evidence shows the contrary. I observe that upon occasions like this every opportunity is seized upon by hon. gentlemen opposite to make capital against the Government, and to make it appear to the press and to the country that this Government are acting in a merciless manner, especially in regard to dismissals; therefore, I take this opportunity of saying that so far as my observation has gone, and I have endeavoured to observe the conduct of the Government in this respect, their conduct has been, on all occasions, prudent, wise and courteous, and the charges to the contrary which have been so furiously hurled against the Government, are without foundation. Now, I have drawn