

continuance in the public service. I am strongly of the view that advertising for new men, as is done by the Civil Service Commission when a position falls vacant, when there are hundreds of qualified clerks already in the service, is not a good system. We are continually publishing advertisements for new clerks. I venture to say, Sir, that if you go into the public service here you will find many temporary clerks who are well able to fill such positions. Why should they be turned off and new men taken in? I never could understand that. It is not in the interests of the public service. Those interests would be best served by appointing the men who are already in the service and understand the nature of the work. I have had many heads of departments come to me and voice that opinion. They say: "Why should we have to train John Brown to do this work when we have had William Smith for three years? We are supposed to inform the Civil Service Commission that we need a new appointment when a vacancy occurs. Why should William Smith have to go when he is a temporary clerk, and has been doing the work for some time and is best qualified to do it"? It seems to me the Civil Service Commission should ascertain the qualification of the temporary clerks at the present time, and before they advertise for any new clerkships to be filled they should first see if they have not enough qualified men in the temporary ranks to fill these positions. If upon an examination of the duties of office these men should prove to be qualified, they should be permanently appointed. Otherwise, you have an organization that is always being changed. No business can be run upon principles of that kind. If a man has been a junior clerk in business and can qualify for a senior clerkship he gets the position; he is not asked to retire and somebody else brought in to go over the same ground again. It seems to me that this Bill is very crude in many of its details. I do not know whether it has been prepared by the Civil Service Commission or by the committee, or by both, but I do know from practical experience that a most efficient Civil Service can be gained in this city by keeping in the service men who already are there and who show their qualifications by their knowledge of their duties. I am strongly of the view that men who are temporarily employed should be ipso facto made permanent employees by being tried out in an examination in the duties of the office that they have filled without any further examination. I

repeat that I would like to see clause 45 amended in such a way that those temporary clerks who are now in the service may be promoted and made permanent upon qualifying in the duties of the office in which they are engaged.

Mr. McQUARRIE: While under normal conditions I would be inclined to agree with a great deal of what the hon. gentleman (Mr. Fripp) has said, I think, under the conditions prevailing at the present time such an arrangement as he suggests might work a hardship upon the men who have returned lately from the front. As far as I see it the soldiers who stayed overseas until the very last, and who perhaps were over there for from four to five years, have got no chance at all to get positions at the present time—they are all filled. It is the duty of this country to see if something cannot be done to assist particularly men who have stayed at the front until the finish; but if the proposition of the hon. gentleman were followed these men could not possibly get any appointment.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: I know of no better way of destroying the Civil Service and the public service, and inflicting a great wrong on the national interests, than by legislating temporary employees into the Civil Service. That matter was before the committee and they unanimously decided that we must adhere to the principle of appointment by examination. Under sub-section 2, section 10, of the Bill, power is given to the commission, with the approval of the Governor in Council, to make some temporaries permanent.

If we attempted to-day to legislate, as suggested, the temporary employees into the public service at Ottawa permanently, we would have to pay them accordingly whether their services were required or not.

Mr. FRIPP: Why should they not be if they are qualified?

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: A great number of temporary employees have been already relieved of service since the Armistice, and there will be many yet to go. Many became temporary employees while those whose places they filled were overseas, and if we adopted the hon. member's suggestion it would close the door to our returned soldiers.

Mr. FRIPP: Are you not now advertising for new men?

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: Only for special positions.