

unrestrained than that they should be restrained by such a system as that which we now have or that which it will become if the present Bill be adopted.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. One would almost suppose from the remarks of the hon. gentleman who has just sat down that he expects very shortly to take a place on this side of the House, and therefore does not want the Civil Service Act in any way to interfere with the independent action of a responsible Minister; that he does not want the present difficulties which are thrown in the way of a responsible Minister, to be allowed any longer to exist. We all remember when Charles Fox had his celebrated interview with the great Napoleon. Napoleon said he objected to the trial by jury because of the difficulties it threw in the way of Government. Mr. Fox said: In England these difficulties are just the reason why we like trial by jury. So it is with the Civil Service Act, the difficulties which the hon. gentleman says it puts in the way of a responsible Minister is just the reason I am strongly in favor of the Civil Service system. The responsible Minister is liable to pressure, he is a human man, and there are political exigencies, and it is of very great importance that, as in England so here, the Government should be saved from that as much as possible; it is important that here, as in England, an officer should be appointed after an examination which shall show he will not be a discredit to the service. The permanent heads who are responsible to every Administration, to the incoming and outgoing Administration, the political Administration, are responsible for the working of the machine. In England that is so well understood that the Ministry of the day take but little interest in the machinery of carrying on the ordinary administration of affairs: the permanent officers are responsible to the Ministry of the day, they are true to that Ministry, but when that Ministry vanishes, as Ministries will vanish, they are equally true to their successors, and they know the character of the men who are appointed; they know who ought to be appointed, they take the responsibility of promotions, and the political Minister casts the responsibility upon them. So much is that the case that Mr. Gladstone said he could not even appoint his own secretary—he did not of course mean his private secretary—so completely was the whole machinery, as it ought to be for the efficiency, the purity of the Administration, under the control of the heads of the Departments. That these difficulties should be thrown in the way of political favoritism is to my mind undoubtedly necessary. The Government of the day always help their own friends, and before the Civil Service Act passed they did so very often.

Mr. MITCHELL. They do it now.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I have been frequently importuned and menaced, and I daresay my hon. friend has had sometimes, when he had control of a Department, to submit to political exigencies. In order to put an end to that system, in order to remove from the Ministry the temptation to exercise patronage and from their supporters the temptation of trying to place unsuitable men in the Civil Service, the Civil Service Act was introduced. In England this system has produced a most marvelous effect. There is no Civil Service in the world so remarkable for efficiency, purity and zeal as that to be found in England to-day through the operation of the Civil Service Bill. We all know what effect the old system has had upon the United States, and I felt proud of Canadians to think that we had here a system in advance of that in the United States. It is the crying evil of the American system which has occasioned the change in the Administration of that country; it is that more than anything else which has caused the election of a Democratic Administration; the crying evil of the patronage in the control of the political

Mr. MILLS.

Government of the day was so great that the moral sense of the whole nation revolted against it; and if Mr. Cleveland is to-day the President, it is because, in response to the cry of the honest people of the United States, he said, we must do away with this log rolling, we must put a stop to this system of making patronage a political engine, and we must have only one consideration in view, that is to place efficient men in the service and retain them there so long as they keep their characters clear and do not interfere offensively and ostentatiously, by action or by contribution, to the political struggles of the day. The hon. gentleman says that our present system of examination encourages too many young men to be hangers-on to office. That is the necessary consequence of any system. If you have the principle laid down that no person is to hold an office unless by competition or standard examination, the young men who desire to go into the public service will enter the competition, if there is to be a competitive struggle for office, or will work up to the standard if a certain standard be required for applicants; and if a considerable number of young men present themselves for examination, it only shows they consider the service a respectable profession, a desirable one. We know that in England there are many more on the lists than can possibly be utilised, but in England it has been found out, and it will be found out in this country, that if you have a respectable standard, the young man who gets his certificate that he is equal to that standard and is eligible for the public service, will look at it as equal to a diploma of an university in good standing. In England, if a young man applies for a situation in a bank or mercantile house or on a railway, and has passed the Civil Service test, the first thing he sends in with his application is the certificate that shows him to be a well educated man fit for any employment. The time he spends in preparing to pass that examination is not a loss of time at all. These young men are in no way prejudiced, if they have passed a good examination, by not getting the situation any more than it can be considered a disadvantage for a boy to get prizes at a college or for a young man to carry off honors in the university. It gives him a standing, it gives him a status, and it will be of use to him in every walk of life; and I should deeply regret that we should take such a retrograde step, that we should be so false to the principle of trying to relieve the Government and to relieve the supporters of the Government from the nuisance of patronage, as to go back to the old system. It means favoritism, it must mean favoritism, it means promotion without merit, it means appointment without merit. Everybody knows that. This will be all avoided by the maintenance of this system, and I should deeply regret that we should make such a backward step, when we see that England has had this system for years, that it is now adopted and rigidly carried out in the United States, to the joy and exultation of every honest man, of every lover of his country in the United States, as to go back and fall into that old slough from which we have just emerged. But the consequence of the motion of the hon. gentleman will not, I am happy to say, be that the system will be altered; it will be that this Bill will not pass, and that the law will remain as it is on the statute book. I will not be a party, for one, to agree to our returning to the old slough and having people appointed to office without any guarantee to the public that they are fit for office, and to the responsibility being thrown on the Government of appointing men without any such guarantee of qualification by education or ability.

Mr. BLAKE. I have seldom heard a finer display of virtuous indignation or a choicer collection of noble sentiments than those which have fallen from the hon. gentleman, and I have seldom heard him say more things in the