

*Civil Service Act*

there counted as though they were served on the bench. I think it would be a mistake now to put a civil servant on the commission and ask him to contribute to the pension fund on the basis of his salary as a civil service commissioner unless the other commissioners were placed in the same position.

Mr. CAHAN: The proposed amendment provides that he shall be eligible, notwithstanding the provisions of the Civil Service Superannuation Act, to continue to be a contributor under the said act. So that the superannuation act would apply if he continued to contribute as he had done in previous years.

Mr. VENIOT: It is clear enough, do you think?

Mr. CAHAN: It seemed to me so.

Amendment agreed to.

Section as amended agreed to.

On section 10—Act not to apply to postmasters of certain revenue post offices.

Mr. SPEAKMAN: In regard to section 10, I have not been on the special committee nor have I given to the subject the special attention which the members of that committee have devoted to it. At the same time, with the little knowledge I have of the situation, I am very strongly opposed to this provision. I think it was stated by the Secretary of State that the report itself had been accepted unanimously. That is true so far as the committee goes, but it is not true with respect to the house itself. I fancy the Secretary of State, when he spoke of unanimity, was referring to the committee and not to the house, one section of which is very definitely opposed to the clause now before us, and which registered its objections in an amendment which was moved to this provision as it appeared in the report itself.

I am not going to speak at any length on this occasion; in fact I will not do more than make one or two comments on one phase of the matter. From our experience in the past and from what we have seen in respect of similar post offices and similar positions, there is no question in my mind that these appointments will be made very largely upon the recommendation of the sitting member from the constituency concerned, if that sitting member is a supporter of the government, but not necessarily otherwise. Now it has been argued by members of this house who support this clause that one of the definite duties of a representative is to represent his district with respect to appointments such as these, as well as in all other matters; that

[Mr. Marcell.]

the member elected by the people representing a riding is possibly the best qualified man in the country to suggest the most suitable person to fill a position of this kind; and further, that being an elected member and being responsible to his constituents it would be to his interest to see that the very best men were appointed to fill such positions as came in contact with the general public. There may be something in that. But the experience of the past has also taught us that when such appointments are made on the recommendation of the member that member is understood to be a follower of the government in power. In a constituency represented by a member who is not a follower of the government, whether a member of the opposition or of any independent group, then the power of recommendation lies not in the hands of the member but in the hands of the defeated candidate or of the committee that supported him during the election. This, while not recognized in law, is so thoroughly recognized in practice that it has been taken for granted. There might possibly be some excuse for placing on the statutes this provision, that, as a member and as part of his duties, the elected representative should have some responsibility in regard to appointments. That would place it upon a certain basis of principle, and though I think the principle would still be wrong, nevertheless there would exist some basis of principle. But when that is not done, when the appointments are made as they have been made in the past and as undoubtedly they will be made in the future, then it is based upon no principle whatever but is simply a reversion to the most blatant form of political patronage. For my part, I cannot understand any member being anxious to secure political patronage. I remember that when the Right Hon. Arthur Meighen was leader of the opposition, speaking to me on this very point, he made the observation that he could not understand any member of the house or of the government being desirous in any way of extending the field of patronage or of securing for himself greater responsibilities than he already had, inasmuch as every position which he filled meant that he created nineteen enemies and one ingrate. That may be so, but there are a great many who are perfectly willing to accept that responsibility and face that danger. I am not going to take up the time of the house on this question. Nothing I can say will alter in any way the opinion of the house, but for my own sake and in order to make my position clear I say not only that I am definitely opposed to this clause but that in its actual working-out, what