

instead of an honest attempt being made by the civil servant to retrieve his lost ground, he goes deeper into debt, for he changes his merchant, and goes on from bad to worse. My hon. friend (Mr. Monk) who has just taken his seat, said that the civil servant had to keep up a certain position. I claim that no man is obliged to keep up a position beyond his income, and I think every civil servant in this country is well enough paid to keep out of debt at all events, and this Parliament should be the last body to give encouragement to anything of that kind. My hon. friend from East York (Mr. Maclean) is afraid of members of Parliament having their indemnity attached. I, for one, should be very glad if this measure were sweeping enough to take in members of Parliament as well.

Mr. MACLEAN. Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman has perverted what I said. I asked if the Bill covered that point and said if it did not I wish that it could be made to apply to the indemnity of members. And, now for the sake of a little political capital he puts this speech in my mouth.

Mr. GIBSON. I am glad that the hon. gentleman takes that view, for on that point I am quite in accord with him.

Mr. MACLEAN. And yet by this Bill, the Cabinet Ministers and lawyers who serve the Government will have their money exempt from seizure.

Mr. GIBSON. But I was rather amused when my hon. friend from East York said that nobody had any right to give credit. I would ask my hon. friend where many of us would have been in business if we had not been able to get credit in the earlier portion of our careers. The credit system is good enough so long as the men who sell their goods have confidence in those to whom they sell them and believe that they will be repaid the amount that is due them. So far as the civil servants who are in the habit of paying their just debts and who are free from debt are concerned, this law would not affect them at all. But what Parliament should do, is, as some speaker on this side has said, is to remove this standing disgrace from the name of the civil service of Canada, that their salaries cannot be attached. Why should any exception be made of one class or of a certain number of individuals? The law should apply to all. As Dominion officials are not employed in any particular province, this is the proper place as I think, and as I submit to the consideration of the House, to deal with the matter. We should not be legislating outside of our sphere. I think it is within the power of Parliament, and Parliament should take speedy measures to see that those civil servants who disobey the law in this regard and who have been in the habit in the past of wilfully getting into debt, even in carrying out the views of my hon. friend from Jacques Cartier (Mr.

Mr GIBSON.

Monk) that they must keep up appearance for appearance sake, should be compelled to change their course. I think it is far more to the credit of a civil servant to have a seedy coat and be free from debt than to come up here with a gold-headed cane and owing every second man he meets. For one, I am heartily in accord with the principles of the Bill. There may be features in it that can be improved when the matter is threshed out in committee, but I earnestly hope that members on both sides, irrespective of political feeling, will assist the hon. gentleman who has this measure in charge and set at rest for all time to come this pernicious system, the survival of a past age, of allowing one class or body of men to be exempt from the general law.

Mr. CASEY. When my attention was first called to this Bill, I understood it was entirely for the purpose of subjecting the salaries of civil servants and other employees of the Government to be garnisheed in the ordinary way. I was quite in accord with that principle and therefore declared my unqualified support of the Bill. My attention has since been called to the fact that the wording of the Bill seems to give it a larger range and to make it apply to all moneys owing by the Crown, as under contract or in any other way whatever. It has been urged, and, I think with some force, that this might be going too far. It has been urged that the prerogative right of the Crown to refuse to be sued in certain cases should not be encroached upon by this Act at all events, and that other than the summary proceeding necessary to a garnishee order should be taken to tie up moneys owing in the way I have mentioned. I fancy that statement of the case has a great deal of force, and it is probable that if we adopt the Bill, its language must be amended in committee so as to mean only what most of us supposed it meant. Coming to the real meaning of the Bill, the placing of the salaries of civil servants under the ordinary law in regard to garnishee orders, I am quite in favour of it. My hon. friend from Lincoln (Mr. Gibson) has given a very strong illustration of the usefulness of such an Act from his knowledge of railway matters. There is no doubt that the facility of getting pay from a railway employee by garnishee order has led to greater economy on the part of the men, and to a better system altogether. There is no doubt that the same good results would follow in the case of the civil servants.

I say this as a friend of the civil servant. I think I have shown during all the years I have been in this House that I have a friendly feeling toward the civil service of this country.

I do not think that the civil service are any more inclined, as a body, to get into debt than any other class. I do not think that they are more extravagant than other