

Civil Service Act

survey, or something of that kind not in the ordinary course of administration. He mentioned the appointment of a postmaster at Vancouver. I do not think anyone, no matter how he might disport his imagination, would try to argue that Vancouver is in a remote district of Canada.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): Not at all. The minister's definition does that.

Mr. CHEVRIER: No one could argue that Vancouver, Edmonton or Halifax is a remote point from Ottawa in the administration of the civil service. "In a remote district" means in a district which is far removed from the ordinary administration of the Civil Service Commission. This section covers only the cases that are presently under the Civil Service Act. Probably what my hon. friend from Comox-Alberni (Mr. Neill) has in mind is a minor position which is not under the act and is not at all affected by this provision. It gives to the chief of the party the right to suspend, subject to the Civil Service Commission subsequently passing on that suspension after he has reported it to the deputy head. The section is not complicated at all.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): Not after the senior member for Ottawa (Mr. Chevrier) has cleared up the meaning of "any remote district." It seems that this is to apply to employees on such business as surveys, expeditions, and the like.

Mr. CHEVRIER: Certainly.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): In that case it will not be as vicious as if applied, as the minister's definition would lead me to believe it might be applied, to such remote places as Vancouver.

Section agreed to.

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

Mr. GAGNON: As a difficulty arises on the interpretation of this section, I would ask the Secretary of State (Mr. Cahan) to consent to its standing over until after luncheon.

Mr. HEENAN: Some of us may not be here after luncheon. I thought we might have an explanation at least as to what procedure will be followed in filling these offices with less than \$3,000 revenue. How will the returned soldier preference be maintained under these conditions?

Mr. CAHAN: This bill is simply an enactment of the various material paragraphs of the report of the select committee of this

[Mr. Chevrier.]

house which reported upon the administration of the Civil Service Act. I am not in a position to answer the question of the hon. gentleman in detail. Under 57a no particular line of conduct or policy has been discussed or even considered by the government when I have been present. It was suggested that the report might be carried into effect by order in council, but the view of the officers of the Department of Justice, confirmed by the Minister of Justice, was that it should be carried into effect, if at all, by express enactment. This section 10 is the proposed enactment.

Mr. HEENAN: I am not complaining about the section. I want to know how we are going to carry it out and at the same time protect the returned soldier. Surely the government must have some idea whether or not they are going to protect the returned soldier, and how. Hitherto these positions have been advertised in the different centres where the vacancies occur. Will this practice be followed, and by whom?

Mr. CAHAN: This section 10 provides that "the preference provided by section twenty-nine of this act, in favour of the persons mentioned therein, shall be applied in respect of appointments to such positions." This includes returned soldiers. I presume the government, when this bill is passed, will adopt such a line of policy as will maintain for the returned soldier the preference which he at present enjoys under the Civil Service Act. I cannot go further than that.

Mr. BROWN: How is it possible to apply the provisions of section 29 when those positions are taken from under the Civil Service Act? Under present conditions an examination of the candidates has to be held. Whether that examination is perfect or imperfect is not the point. There is an examination held, and under the act a returned soldier having sixty per cent of the qualifications takes the lead over the man who has one hundred per cent.

Mr. BOWMAN: They are all treated on the same basis so long as they come within the disability.

Mr. BROWN: He certainly has a percentage of preference under the act, and that is determined by the examination. He is given so much credit for his educational qualifications, his personality, and so on all down the line. Then an estimate is made as to whether the returned soldier in view of all the circumstances takes precedence over the man who is not a returned soldier. When all these positions are taken from under the act, how