

a promotion can be made. A person holding a position, before he can be promoted, must be considered competent and his competency can only be determined by examination. In some cases it is very obvious that he is competent. If an official has seniority along with competency he will get the promotion.

Mr. COPP: I understand that if an official is competent and has the seniority, having been in an office for a longer number of years than other officers, he will get the appointment on examination?

Mr. BLAKE: The provision that promotion shall be made on the recommendation of the deputy head seems to conflict with the provision made for promotion by section 45.

Mr. FRIPP: Under the clause now before the committee, I would like to ask the minister what provision has been made by way of promotion for the large body of men who were employed in the Civil Service during the period of the war. When the war broke out a great many young civil servants were taken into the army either by the draft or by voluntary enlistment. The result was that a large number of persons ranging all the way from 300 to 1,000, who were qualified for office work were employed in the several departments. These men were only temporary employees, but it does seem to me that there should be some provision under this Act whereby the services of these men might be retained. Surely a man who has occupied an office and done his work well for a period of three or four years is better qualified to continue in that office than some stranger. Provision, I submit, should be made whereby the Civil Service Commission may appoint, on examination in the duties of the office, those men who gave four or five years of service at a time when the Government needed expert office men.

Now I cannot find any clause in this Bill which continues the appointments which these men hold, and I think the Government ought to make some explanation in regard to their cases. Surely it is not intended to lay off a large body of men such as I have mentioned and fill their places by younger men who have had no office experience whatever. I would like to urge upon the minister having charge of this Bill that clause 45 should be amended so that these men who are now in the service may be promoted and made permanent by passing an examination on office duties. My experience with the Civil Service is

[Mr. A. K. Maclean.]

that the examination should be entirely of that nature. I cannot find any interpretation clause as to the meaning of the word "examination". That apparently is left to the discretion of the Civil Service Commission. I do not think it ought to be so left. I think the examination and the form of examination should be determined by this Committee. The old idea that a man had to pass an academic examination in order to get a position in the Civil Service is obsolete, and has not been found to work satisfactorily in the public interest—that is my experience. I submit there ought to be some clause added to the Bill stating just what the nature of the examination is to be, especially, say, in the case of these employees who have been in the service for a number of years. First, the kind of examination and the nature of the required fitness should be determined, particularly in the case of the men who are referred to. Secondly I would urge that the large body of clerks now employed, especially in the Militia Department, and who have been so employed for three, four, or five years, should be provided for and not turned out now simply because their special work in the department may be drawing to a close. A man who has been a clerk in any department is qualified to be a clerk in another department, generally speaking. Of course a number of technical men are needed sometimes; but take a man who has done office work in the Assigned Pay or Records Branch of the Militia Department, he is an excellent clerk for the Customs Department or the Post Office Department; and it seems to me that a gross injustice will be done to the class of men I speak of, in the city of Ottawa, numbering nearly eight hundred, who have been doing this work during the period of the war, if they are laid off without giving them an opportunity to qualify or to show their fitness for other positions in the public service. They are entitled to special consideration, in my judgment. A great many of them are over the age limit for permanent employment, which as I understand it, is still thirty-five years. I am not in favour of that age limit. I think there are many men well qualified to hold positions in the Civil Service who are over the age of thirty-five years and they ought to be given an opportunity to fill such positions. The large bulk of the class of men that I have been speaking of, namely, those who are temporarily employed in the Militia Department, are over that age, and I would like very much to see some provision made for their