

he says, that he changed the system of book-keeping and he could not get Mr. O'Meara to change his system. Well, that is no reason, for the Minister lays down the rule in his department and the officers have got to comply with it. This new accountant may not be an untried man in so far as his professional qualifications are concerned, but he is untried in so far as the Department of Militia is concerned and yet the Minister gives him \$2,400 a year.

The hon. Minister of Militia, giving his reason, says: "I gave him \$2,400 because he wanted \$2,400, and he would not accept anything less." Under such a system, the Government will be helpless to resist pressure for increases of salary from gentlemen who are allowed to judge of their own qualifications. The cutting off of \$50 a year to the poor civil servant is not considered. But the pressure which the hon. gentleman will have to resist under the system he has introduced will leave him powerless to carry out the Civil Service Act. When selecting a new accountant, he sent for this gentleman, and he said that \$1,600 was paid to the late accountant. "Oh, but," says this gentleman, "you do not half know me; I am a far superior man to the other man, and you must give me \$2,000." The hon. gentleman says that he could not secure the services of this eminent expert without conceding to him the salary he considers himself entitled to. Sir, it is no use any longer to have Estimates; it is no use discussing them in council to decide what is right and what is not right, if the gentlemen who are appointed to the service are going to settle for themselves the salary they are to receive. I was unfortunately not here during the discussion which was taking place in regard to the \$50 statutory increases. As I read the law, especially the Post Office Act, with which I am more familiar, a man is appointed at \$500 or \$600, with an annual increase of \$50 or \$40 according to his grade. That means that the salary is fixed at \$600 and the additional amount forms part and parcel of that salary, unless in the judgment of the Minister, supported by his Deputy Minister, who is supposed to know more about the civil servants than the Minister himself, the increase is withheld. That is my reading of the Post Office Act, and I think it is impossible to controvert that opinion. I think it is conceded that Canada, whether under one Administration or the other, has been blessed with one of the best civil services that any country has ever employed to carry on the work of the different departments of the Government, and if the system which the hon. gentleman wishes to introduce now is followed, it will be impossible to secure in the future as efficient a civil service as we have to-day, because without giving any reason, the hon. gentlemen who are administering the different departments can say, "I give an in-

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crease to this man, and I will not give an increase to the other man." Who is going to stand between the civil servant who does not receive an increase, while his comrade in the same department, probably in the same branch, receives it, and the Minister who chooses to make a difference between the two. It is introducing a system which I think will be injurious to the country and will interfere greatly with the efficiency of the civil service. But coming back again to the new accountant of the hon. Minister of Militia, I say that no new man, however proficient he may be, should be taken into a department at the same salary as a man receives who has been there for thirty years. That is the principle I acted upon in the department, and I am prepared to stand by that principle.

Mr. SPROULE. Last session, in answer to a question which I put upon the paper, we were given a return showing that in nine months hon. gentlemen opposite had superannuated or dismissed no less than fifty-two employees of the civil service. That was about one out of every twenty-four or twenty-seven in the whole service. In justification of that course, they explained to this House that it would result in a great saving of money to the country, because, while they had dismissed these men, some owing to age and others owing to incompetency, they were filling their places with better men at much smaller salaries. By that one act, these hon. gentlemen saddled on this country an additional expenditure of \$18,229 annually under the superannuation law, which is a permanent addition to the expenditure until these men die. In addition to that, \$3,179.79 was paid in gratuities to some of the men they dismissed. In looking over that list, I find that of those dismissed two were twenty-eight years of age, two or three others thirty years, two or three others thirty-one years, others thirty-three, thirty-four, thirty-eight, forty, forty-one, and I think the highest was seventy-one or seventy-two years of age. It was claimed that in all these cases there was a great saving to the country, because in many instances it was not necessary to fill the places of these men. But in looking over the Estimates before us, I find that there are about the same number in the civil service at the present time as there were before these dismissals were made; and it cannot be successfully claimed, if they filled the places of these men with new men who are drawing as large salaries as their predecessors, that any saving was effected. In looking over the Estimates before us, we find that the aggregate salaries paid to them are quite as large as those that were paid before. There is another feature of the matter which I think is very reprehensible. I have always had strong views on the subject of nepotism on the part of members of a government or a