

through the acting board appointed four others in their places. I say to the leader of the opposition that I was opposed to the immediate removal of men without cause, and to-day my colleague from Halifax and I have the great satisfaction of knowing that of the 140 employees of the Halifax harbour commission only four have gone out of their own volition, their resignations being handed to Mr. Cornell, who was not our appointee but who is still retained and associated with the Department of Marine. So, when my right hon. friend pointed to the port of Halifax somebody must have told him something more than he told us to-day. I said something in the house yesterday; perhaps the right hon. gentleman as he was dropping off to sleep dreamed of it until it reached proportions of greater magnitude than it was, and in so doing he made a mistake. I hope that that was the explanation and that with that manliness which I know he possesses he will be more careful in the future in making statements which cannot be substantiated, at least in reference to the constituency of Halifax which is to-day represented in this house by my colleague (Mr. Isnor) and myself.

Sir GEORGE PERLEY: I should be sorry if this discussion degenerated into a partisan one. That is certainly not our intention at all. I told the committee yesterday that I certainly would not undertake to assess the blame for the state of affairs that existed in the different harbours through the years. Hon. gentlemen opposite might probably say that we dismissed more for political reasons than they did, and we could retort in kind. But that is not the question at all to-day. The minister has brought in a bill which I personally approve, and I congratulate him upon his courage in introducing it. It is for the purpose of bringing about an improvement in the administration of our harbours. We all want that, whether we are Liberals or Conservatives, and I think we can well leave out the question which party dismissed most for partisanship in the years gone by. That is beside the question to-day. The minister has it in mind to improve this service, and for that purpose he has brought down this legislation. All I can say is that the minister to-day has gone a long way towards meeting the views which we on this side of the house have in regard to these appointments. I say again to him, as I said yesterday, that surely there must be some way in which he could alter or amend section 4 to satisfy everybody that political motives will not govern in the dismissal or appointment

of the classes of staff which ought to be permanent if efficient administration is to be maintained. I ask him again to consider this a little further to see if there is not some amendment he can suggest to try to meet his own and our views. If that is done, we could go on with the rest of the bill and see if we cannot make some headway.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Johnston, Lake Centre): Shall the subsection carry?

Sir GEORGE PERLEY: Does the minister prefer not to consider it?

Mr. HOWE: We might as well settle it now. I may say that this has been considered and Sir Alexander Gibb also considered it. The accounting staff has been put under the civil service and the heads of departments have not been disturbed. I prefer to see how this works out before we take any further steps.

Sir GEORGE PERLEY: In what way has the accounting staff been put under the civil service?

Mr. HOWE: The accounting is to be done by officials of the comptroller of the treasury and that office is under the civil service. These men will be civil servants.

Sir GEORGE PERLEY: What about the technical staff?

Subsection 1 agreed to.

On section 4, subsection 2—Government Employees' Compensation Act to apply.

Mr. CAHAN: This subsection simply provides that should the employees of this board meet with an accident their damages will be assessed as if they were government employees.

Mr. HOWE: That is correct.

Subsection agreed to.

Section agreed to.

Section 5, subsection 1, agreed to.

On section 5, subsection 2—Civil Service Act benefits preserved.

Mr. ILSLEY: I move that subsection 2 of section 5 of the said bill be amended: (a) by striking out the quotation marks where they appear in lines 3 and 4 of the subsection before and after the words "civil service" and "employee," and, (b) by inserting the word "that" after the word "servant" in the sixth line of the said subsection.

Sir GEORGE PERLEY: There are no quotation marks in the bill I have.