

hardships which has ever been inflicted on the Civil Service. I have therefore much pleasure, with all deference to the Government, in seconding the resolution of my hon. friend from Northumberland.

Mr. CASEY. The hon. gentleman who has proposed this motion appears to object not only to this Bill, but to any Act respecting the Civil Service as tending to create a professional class. In that respect I am compelled to differ from him. I think there should be a Civil Service Act, and it should be as minute as possible; and the aim of the Act should be to make the Civil Service a profession in every sense of the word, to which young men would come in the hope of reaching the top. I would point out that the postponement of this Bill for three months would not leave us without a Civil Service Act. We should still have the Act which is now in force. But as I do not consider some of the changes proposed by this Bill to be improvements, notably the provision regarding the Civil Service Examiners, I shall be compelled to vote for the amendment if it comes to a vote; but in so doing I do not wish to be understood as expressing full concurrence in the views of the hon. gentleman, or as voting against a Civil Service Act.

Mr. CHAPLEAU. I know that we should be making a great mistake if after all the work we have done, we went back to the Act which existed before the introduction of this Bill.

Mr. CHARLTON. There certainly exists a feeling in the country that we are building up a privileged class here composed of Civil Service employés, and the placing of men on the superannuation list who might have done many years of good service,—and many other abuses of the same kind for which the Government are responsible, have served to increase that feeling. I do not believe our Civil Service system is equal to that of the United States, so far as the efficiency of the officers is concerned. I believe that if the American system were adopted here, with competitive examinations, it would be an improvement. In view of the discontent that exists with regard to our Civil Service system, I shall support the amendment of my hon. friend from Northumberland.

Mr. MULOCK. I had occasion at several stages of this Bill to raise my voice against certain clauses in it, and now that this motion has come up, I shall briefly give my reasons for supporting it.

Mr. IVES. Very briefly.

Mr. MULOCK. My hon. friend from Richmond and Wolfe requests me to be very brief. No doubt his request is of paramount importance in this House.

Mr. IVES. Rather important.

Mr. MULOCK. Well, I dare say that he will find, judging by the opinion recently expressed in a newspaper published in his own riding, that his voice is not as important there as it was. This Bill proposes to establish a number of new offices in the pay of this Government. It proposes to establish a very expensive system of examination, which, while expensive, is without merit, and is not going to promote, in my opinion, the welfare of the service. During the past three years this system has been on its trial, and has not given satisfaction. It is a system that has not the confidence of the public, as it tends to disturb the minds of many young men, and to divert their thoughts from other callings and lead them to look to the Civil Service as a haven of rest for the remainder of their days. It is on its own account, on account of its expensiveness, on account of the difficulty of working it out, and on account of the disastrous effects it is likely to have on the public that I am glad this motion has come up, and glad to have the opportunity of recording my vote against the Bill. Moreover, in the discussion on the second reading of the Bill and in the Com-

mittee of the Whole, the hon. Secretary of State expressed his approval of certain propositions that were made, but he did not go so far as to give his statutory approval of those suggestions, but has persistently adhered to his original views. The system of examinations adopted is not only not economical, but it is not convenient for those who are to be examined; it is a centralising system; there can be very few centres for examinations under this Act, while, if it is necessary to have a system of examinations, I think, for reasons stated at an earlier stage of this Bill, that it is possible to select a better system than that adopted. For these reasons I intend to vote in favor of the amendment.

Mr. MILLS. Without entering into the merits of the system of Civil Service examination, it does seem to me that the changes which the hon. gentleman now proposes by the Bill before the House will not improve the Civil Service. I dare say that many members of this House who are in favor of Civil Service examination, and who would like to see the English competitive system introduced into this country, are not satisfied that the service has been improved by the changes which have been made in the law in recent years. My own opinion is that a Minister of the Crown, giving attention to the duties of his office and being responsible to Parliament for the proper discharge of those duties, is competent to make a better selection than he can possibly do under the limitations of this Bill. No one can look at the examinations required for the Civil Service without seeing that they go a very little way towards determining the qualifications of those appointed by the Government; yet they impose restraints on the Minister and confine his choice within those limits where it is not at all certain that he will find the most competent person for the appointment that he wishes to fill. At present, the powers of the permanent heads of the Departments, whose advice it may be well for the Minister to take in many cases, but whose advice ought not to be obligatory on the responsible head of the Department, are increased, and difficulties are put in the way of the removal of incompetent men. Under the course pursued by the Government the Civil Service has been crammed to repletion, and the effect of the present arrangements has not been so much to provide a competent staff of officials as to prevent the removal of incompetency of any who once succeed in finding their way into a public Department. Now, I think that is a very unsatisfactory condition of things. In my opinion, the law must undergo a radical change; the examinations must be altogether different from what they are; they must wholly be disassociated from every Department of the Government, if they are to place civil servants in a better position than they would be were the whole system swept away. As between the present system and no system at all, I prefer no system at all. As between no system at all and a thorough and complete system of examination, I would prefer the latter. I think that we are in a worse position than that in which we were before. What is the effect of those examinations? The hon. the Minister informs us that 1,200 young men come up every year for the purpose of being examined. The Government have not anything like that number of positions to offer, and what is the consequence? They call away the attention of a large number of young men from the ordinary pursuits of life, who might be profitably engaged in those pursuits, and make them hangers-on of the Government for the time being; looking for places, importuning their friends to secure for them positions. That is a most unsatisfactory and unhealthy state of things; it is the condition produced by the present Civil Service examination, and it will not be remedied by the Bill now before the House. That being the case, I am disposed to support the amendment, not because I am opposed to a system of Civil Service examination, but because I believe it is better the Government should be