

Q. I do not mean to make the examination a reason for the promotion, but simply as a preliminary?—Then it would be useful.

Q. You think that for some of those positions, it might be useful in order to select a man?—Yes.

Q. In regard to superannuation, I wish to ask if the rules of the Act have been strictly enforced in your Department?—Yes; I know of no instance to the contrary.

Q. Has superannuation, to your knowledge, been improperly delayed?—No.

Q. Are there any persons in the Service who have long been unfit for duty that have not been dismissed or superannuated?—No; I think there are one or two that possibly might be superannuated for those reasons.

Q. But there are none at present in the Service who have been for a considerable time unfit for duty who have not been superannuated?—No. Of course it takes some time to come to a decided opinion on a point of that kind in many cases.

Q. Then you prefer not to express an opinion on that point?—Yes; as to present condition of particular men in this respect. But I know of no man who has been improperly superannuated, or whose superannuation has been improperly delayed.

Q. You cannot say, on the spur of the moment, whether such is or is not the fact?—No.

Q. To come back to the general subject of appointment: have you considered the question of competitive examination?—Yes, I have.

Q. Please give, in a connected form, your opinion of the system.—I have looked upon the English competitive examination as an advantageous system, its chief virtue being that it removes appointments from the sphere of political influences.

*By Mr. Paterson:—*

Q. Does it altogether remove them from that sphere?—At all events it limits the choice.

*By the Chairman:—*

Q. Do you think it would also secure a better class of recruits for the Service?—Yes; I think it would, if the Service were made sufficiently attractive. But the two things must go together.

Q. You think that competitive examination as a means of selection, and making the Service more attractive, are both requisite to the improvement of the class of recruits?—Yes; neither, of course, will work any great improvement unless accompanied by the other.

Q. In regard to the competitive system, have you considered whether it would be possible to make an examination suited to the wants of the country?—I have; you must not make the examination too strict, and follow the English plan too closely, as the general tone of education here is different.

Q. You could easily conceive of an examination suited to our circumstances?—Yes.

Q. And you consider such a scheme as applicable to Canada?—Yes. The examinations hitherto have, if I may use the term, been rather exclusive than inclusive—they have been rather to keep out incompetent persons than to test accurately the competency of persons who pass.

Q. If I have got your idea you think that reforms in the Service would be these: competitive examinations, increased pay in the lower ranks of the Service, and improved prospects of advancements, and the total abolition of political influence?—Yes, with regard to the promotion to higher grades; but I think the good effect would be felt in the future rather than immediately.

Q. I asked you the other day about grading the Service into mechanical and professional grades, and you seemed to express a partially favourable opinion?—It would not go very far.

Q. But do you think it could be introduced?—You would lose your means of training if it were carried too far. To a certain extent the post office service is a profession; there is a great deal to learn.