

remind the House that these men who work in the canals are only employed seven months in the year, so that hon. gentlemen will see that the wages on which they have to support their families for the whole year is very small indeed. I hope the minister will increase the wages of the canal employees at once.

Mr. D. FARQUHARSON (West Queen's, P.E.I.) This is a question in which I take a good deal of interest. A good many men employed on the government railway in Prince Edward Island are not, in my opinion, sufficiently paid. It is a big question, however. The civil service list is an immense list to rearrange and readjust as it should be, and in my opinion it would be a big contract to undertake. The hon. gentleman who just resumed his seat and the previous speaker as well, in my opinion, touched a chord with which I sympathise deeply and that is that while some are getting too much others are getting too little. The remedy is perhaps far to seek. From what I have observed since I came to Ottawa and from what I had previously known, I would have thought that there would be many offices where there were too many men employed. I am satisfied that as a rule a great many men are receiving high salaries who do not do very much for them. But we must not complain too much. We find the world over that the men who work the least are paid the most. While that is the rule, I think the discrepancy is too great in this country as it is in any other country. Why should one man sit behind a counter in an office and get \$2,000 or \$3,000 a year while another man gets \$300 or \$400 a year under almost similar conditions? I do not think that is right. I am perhaps too democratic in this respect, but my sympathies run in that direction. Let there be a commission appointed to investigate and make such a rearrangement as will give every man what he deserves, I sympathise with the poor man. He gets too little return for his labour. He has to pay out all he earns to support his family, with nothing for the future, and this is the man whose family is often large. I think we should look into this question, and endeavour to do what is fair to the men employed in this government.

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. I have been very nearly six years in the Department of Public Works, I am paying salaries that seem to be high, and I am paying salaries that are not always high. Now, I am free to say that perhaps we do not pay enough to our employees. It is a peculiar statement, but any business man who handles large business will agree with me that you cannot pay too much to a good employee. If you give \$2,000 or \$3,000 to a man who has only moderate ability and give \$10,000, or \$15,000 to a man who has superior ability, the

man whom you pay \$10,000, or \$15,000 will be cheaper than the man to whom you pay \$2,000 or \$3,000. Look at the large corporations, look at the great railway corporations; I venture to say that in the Canadian Pacific Railway offices in Montreal there are about ten employees who get over \$20,000 a year each. These are very large salaries; still, the men who are at the head of the Canadian Pacific Railway and at the head of the Grand Trunk Railway are men who earn them. They would not pay these high salaries unless they were earned. I believe it would pay this country better if we would make up our minds to get the best possible labour that money can secure. I do not hesitate to say that here. I have increased the salaries in my department. I feel that I am employing a number of men, who, if they were outside of the Public Works, if they had not started life in the public service, would be able to earn \$10,000 and perhaps \$15,000 in a large city. Take Montreal or Toronto; it is easy to see architects in Montreal who earn \$10,000 or \$15,000, and engineers who earn \$10,000 or \$15,000 a year. These men are in the public service to-day and they are very able employees indeed. We cannot all earn the same salaries as we cannot all of us be members of parliament. It is out of the question to believe that every person can earn the same salary. Our hon. friends who have stated that employees are not paid enough who get \$1.50 a day must not forget one thing; I believe I am not wrong in saying that the ordinary labouring man in Montreal or Toronto does not earn, averaging the year, more than \$400. The man who gets into the public service is, as a rule, sure of being employed every day of the year and I can assure my hon. friends that ministers of the Crown have no trouble at all in finding people at the rate of salaries paid now. I have no trouble whatever. The trouble is that I cannot employ all the men who are anxious to sacrifice themselves on the altar of their country at these low salaries. They are employed every day. Railway employees, I fully grant, have perhaps harder labour, but all the same, they are very glad to work at such employment. I am receiving letters every day in the week by dozens and hundreds from people who are anxious to go into the public service even on a railway and at the low salaries that are paid now. At the same time I grant that some of the salaries are not high enough, but I take this opportunity of saying that if we have good employees we should not hesitate to pay them. We are not paying enough to-day to some of our high officials.

Hon. WM. ROSS (Victoria, N.S.) The reason the Minister of Public Works (Hon. Mr. Tarte) is troubled with too many applications is because he is generous to his workmen. He pays them according to their value and therefore he gets the best class of people to work for him. My idea is