

Mr. J. M. Courtney.

Mr. John Mortimer Courtney, Deputy Minister of Finance, was born at Penzance, Cornwall, England, 22nd July, 1838. He entered the service of the Agra where he learned much that has since been of use to him in his official capacity, and spent many years in India and Australia in their service. He entered the Civil Service of Canada, and was appointed a chief clerk on 2nd June, 1869. He was appointed Deputy Minister of Finance on the 1st August, 1878, and has since become Deputy Receiver-General, and Secretary of the Treasury Board. He married on the 5th October, 1870, Mary Elizabeth Sophia, second daughter of the late Fennings Taylor, clerk assistant of the Senate of Canada. His elder brother, Leonard Courtney, was for many years M.P. for the Bodmin, Liskeard division of the Duchy of Cornwall, England, and during a former Gladstone administration held office as Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, and Financial Secretary to the Treasury. Mr. Courtney is a director of the Civil Service Building and Savings Society, and enjoys a wide repute as being a capable permanent head, whilst he is popular both inside and outside the service.

The Bill Withdrawn.

On Wednesday, March 23rd, Hon John Costigan, Secretary of State, moved the second reading of the "Civil Service Act," at the same time intimating that he desired to make many and radical changes in the bill as printed. The powers of the Supervisor were to be limited, the fixing of the hours of attendance left to the various departments of the inside service only, and a clause was to be introduced to meet the cases of old and valued servants who could not be promoted without passing the technical examination. A long discussion ensued.

MR. LAURIER. This bill was introduced on the 3rd of February without any word of explanation at all. The Bill provides for the creation of a Civil Service Board. Certain powers are given that board, and more extensive powers are given to the new officer who is to be appointed and called the Supervisor of the Civil Service. Neither on that occasion, when he introduced the Bill, nor on this occasion, has the hon. gentleman given to the House a single word of explanation which would render necessary the creation of this board. He has not stated directly, or indirectly, or given the slightest intimation as to what is the present condition of things in the service which would render necessary the creation of such a board as this. I submit that under such circumstances the House cannot, with justice to itself and in the proper discharge of its duties, agree in any shape at all to the creation of this new board until some reason is given to show that the present service is ineffective, that more supervision is necessary, and that more officers require to be created who will keep our present staff up to the discharge of their duties. If I understand the Bill rightly, what the hon. gentleman proposes, under the name of the Civil Service Board, is simply a detective agency to look after the Civil Service. Look at section 4 of the Bill, and see what are the duties it is proposed to place upon the supervisor of civil servants.

"9A. The Supervisor of the Civil Service, hereinafter called the Supervisor, shall be under the direction and control of the Governor in Council, and his duties shall be as follows:—

"(a.) He shall, as heretofore stated, be secretary of the board;

"(b.) He shall have general supervision of the inside division of the service, with constant and ready access to all rooms and buildings in which clerks are employed;

"(c.) He shall report, at such times and in such

manner and form as the Governor in Council directs, upon the said division generally, and specially upon its condition, requirements, and practical working;

"(d.) He shall, whenever directed to do so by the Governor in Council, examine into and report upon the practical working of any part of the outside division of the service;

"(e.) He shall perform such other duties of a like nature as are assigned to him by the Governor in Council.

Now, the duties detailed here are simply those of a chief of police. He is to go whenever he chooses into the offices; he is to go into the cabinet of the Minister, into the room occupied by the Deputy Minister; he may visit the rooms occupied by the clerks, and may remain one second, or a minute, or an hour, at his own discretion. At all events, his duty is to see whether or not the clerks are properly discharging their work. I submit, in all conscience, that the Minister, under whom the department may be, or the Deputy Minister, or the chief clerk of the department, are quite competent to do that. I cannot see what reason can be urged to have an outside officer to see whether the clerks of the Minister of Finance or the Secretary of State or of any other Minister are properly discharging their duties. It seems to me to be absolutely childish that there should be a police officer—because he will be nothing else—going the rounds of the departments of the Civil Service to see whether or not the clerks there are discharging their duties. If the Deputy Minister, who is responsible to the Minister for the proper discharge of the duties which belong to the department, is not able to know whether those duties are properly discharged or not, if he cannot look after fifty or sixty clerks under him, he is not fit to discharge the responsibility and duties of his office. Can the hon. gentleman point to any such system where you have to bring an outsider, for I am justified in calling him so, to see how the work is performed? There are subsidiary duties given to this officer, but they are all subsidiary to this one idea, that the duties of the supervisor are to consist simply of police work within the departments. I look upon this Bill as a new device to put pensioners upon the Civil List, and there is no other reason for it; and I, therefore, move that the Bill be not now read the second time, but be read the second time this day six months.

MR. COSTIGAN. I have only this to say, that the amendments I have explained are not yet printed, and that my intention in moving the second reading was not to have any discussion, but simply to allow the measure to pass that stage, and then, when these amendments were printed and the whole Bill before the House, we might discuss all the details on the motion to go into committee.

MR. LAURIER. But I object to the principle of the Bill.

MR. COSTIGAN. That is a different thing.

MR. CASEY. I am astonished that the hon. gentleman should ask us to go on with this Bill today. I asked the hon. gentleman who is leading the House if he intended doing so, and he said not. I agree with my leader in his objection to the Bill passing this stage, as I think we should have a discussion on the principle of the Bill before giving it a second reading. As to the official proposed to be created, to be called the supervisor of the civil servants, my leader has aptly expressed all the objections to such an appointment, and I will not add anything to what he has said. As to the creation of a Civil Service Board to examine candidates for admission, promotion and so on, so far I can go with the Government. But, sir, I intend, at a later stage, to propose an amendment carrying out more efficiently what one would understand to be implied by the appointment of an impartial and non-partisan board to manage the affairs of the Civil Service. I believe

that the conduct of the Civil Service should not be on partisan lines. but that appointments and promotions and other proceedings should be directed by a board appointed as judges are appointed and as the Civil Service Board in England are appointed, during good behaviour, and not responsible to any political Minister of the day. I believe the service should be conducted on business principles, that appointments, promotions and all other matters connected with the service should be carried on as in a bank or insurance company or any other institution of that kind, and apart from political considerations. On a subsequent occasion, I shall propose an amendment to that effect, but I am not ready to propose it now. I am sorry the hon. gentleman has brought the Bill up to-day, when it was stated that it would not be brought up.

MR. FOSTER. I desire to explain. My hon. friend asked me if it was the intention to bring the Bill up to-day. I said it was not, and at that time I did not think it was coming up. I understood only the resolution was to be taken up. But as I passed my colleague's desk, he explained that he simply wished, as the Bill was to have a great many additions and amendments, to ask the House to read it the second time 'pro forma,' and he would have the proposed amendments printed before we went into committee, so that the House would have the proposition before them. That is all the hon. gentleman asked. I think he had a perfect right to ask that, in courtesy, and I think the Opposition have been rather curt in reference to a measure which the Government has been considering, and which is not perfected, and which the hon. gentleman who has it in charge simply asked to advance one stage, in order that it might get into committee. I think my hon. friend, in courtesy, should allow the second reading. The hon. gentleman shakes his head and, I understand, says he will not allow it. Then of course, it will be necessary to have a vote upon it. I must say, sir, without going into the discussion of the Bill, which it was not the intention of the House to do, I think the hon. gentleman ought to have the courtesy to allow the gentleman who has charge of the Bill, what he has asked, as a matter of information to the House and of justice to the Bill.

MR. LAURIER. The hon. gentleman's demand is not logical. If I agreed to the principle of the Bill I would give every facility to perfect it. But we object to the Bill in toto and object that it should go any further.

MR. FOSTER. Then, will my hon. friend allow me a suggestion. If the House wishes to reject the Bill, is it not right to wait, before doing so, until it is in the shape in which it is intended to be placed before the House? The Bill is now imperfect, and the intention is to present a number of amendments. Should the hon. gentleman ask to be allowed to withdraw his motion, he could have the Bill reprinted and have the vote on the reprinted Bill. My hon. friend shakes his head again and says: "No." He is not fair. He does not wish to give the Government an opportunity to present the measure.

SIR HECTOR LANGEVIN. The suggestion I make would be, that, instead of taking up the Bill now, the mover should have the Bill reprinted, with all the amendments, so that we will know exactly what is proposed.

MR. DAVIES (P.E.I.) But they insist upon the second reading.

SIR HECTOR LANGEVIN. I think not.

MR. DAVIES (P.E.I.) Yes, that is what they are asking.

SIR HECTOR LANGEVIN. I think it would be better to have the whole legislation before us. The amendment could be withdrawn; the Bill could be reprinted a the government intend to bring it forward and submit it to the House. If that meets