

comparisons and market value of labour that our work has a value in itself which the outside market cannot determine.

That is the point of this petition.

Mr. HEYD. But the sick-pay is the principal one.

Mr. CLARKE. I presume that they understand that, in their own interest, they should not take advantage of the provisions of the hon. gentleman's Act of 1902. They think it would be unreasonable to accept its provisions, because the acceptance would detract materially from any financial benefits accruing to them therefrom. Their pay is \$650, I believe—

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. It is \$600.

Mr. CLARKE. Less whatever small sum is deducted on account of the superannuation fund—say \$10, \$15 or \$20 per annum. When they become incapacitated or retire from service they receive superannuation for the remainder of their lives.

Mr. COCHRANE. How much?

Mr. CLARKE. If a man served for thirty years, as I understand it his superannuation would be \$360.

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. If he had served thirty-five years he would be entitled to 70 per cent of his salary or \$420 a year.

Mr. CLARKE. Now, that is secured to him as a result of his compliance with the conditions on which he entered the service. He commenced at a very low salary—\$25 or \$30 a month—and it took him seven or eight years to reach the maximum.

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. Nearly nine years.

Mr. CLARKE. Then, that makes his position all the stronger. It would take him nine years to work up from the minimum salary to the maximum of \$600 a year. But, as he understood it, a part of the contract was that, in consideration of his beginning at a low wage and working up, he would establish and make good his right to superannuation when the department did not require his services any longer. The contention of the men who came in under that law is that if they take advantage of the Act of the hon. gentleman they lose their superannuation, and the sum to be paid them would be only the total of their payments into the superannuation fund, with interest added. They would continue to pay a certain sum annually into the fund; and when they retire, what they receive is whatever is at their credit in the superannuation fund—it may be \$200, \$300 or \$400. But they absolutely deprive themselves of the right to superannuation. Now, that is the difference between the two schemes, as I understand it from the men.

Mr. CLARKE.

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. Of course, that is entirely erroneous.

Mr. CLARKE. Then, the hon. gentleman (Sir William Mulock) will please explain how it is.

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. I have read the statute twice; I will send it to him.

Mr. CLARKE. I will read it, because I do not wish to misunderstand the law. This is the Act of 1902:

Such election shall not affect his rights or position under the Civil Service Superannuation Act or the Civil Service Retirement Act of 1898.

Does that mean that the carriers will still continue to pay in annually as they did up to the passage of the Act of 1897, and that when they retire from the service they will receive an annual allowance, if they have served 35 years, of seventy per cent of their wages? Is that the explanation?

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. I do not wish the hon. gentleman's remarks to go abroad unchallenged. The hon. gentleman is quite aware that when the retirement Act was passed an option was given to all persons who were then on the superannuation list, either to continue under the old superannuation list or to come in under the Retirement Act; and if a letter-carrier was entitled to superannuation under the old Act and did not desire to be transferred to the provisions of the new law, he remained entitled to all the benefits of the old law. A letter-carrier who was entitled to superannuation then is entitled to superannuation to-day; and if to-day a letter-carrier chooses to change his mode of payment, and instead of being paid by the year to be paid on another basis, he is still entitled to his rights under the Superannuation Act.

Mr. CLARKE. Of 1882-83?

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. Whatever the date of the Superannuation Act is. Whether the hon. gentleman is arguing, or supporting the contention of others, or whatever view he is advancing, it would be a great pity if if letter-carriers were misled, and by the suggestion that they are losing the benefit of the Superannuation Act, were to fail to avail themselves of the great pecuniary advantages that the Act of 1902 conferred upon them. A number of them have been badly advised, prejudiced, and have failed to avail themselves of the opportunity of having a salary of \$725 a year, which is waiting for them if they choose to accept it. A number, more wise, have availed themselves of it. It would be incorrect to state that all the old letter-carriers had refused to accept the new law; a considerable number of them have. I gave some figures when I was asked that question some time ago. I do not remember the number now, but the number that have already accepted the new Act and those