

silly as those mentioned in the classification book, has to be filled up, three copies of it made, or 4,200 sheets in all, to which must be added the carbons. Instead of the deputy minister signing a report, as he did in the old days, he O.K.'s one of those sheets, and the other 4,199 are marked with a rubber stamp. These 4,200 sheets are then sent to the auditor general and the treasury board, where they are again manipulated. Thereupon 1,400 of those sheets are returned to the Civil Service Commission, 1,400 files are taken out of their respective places, those sheets are attached, and then those 1,400 files are replaced. You will see, Sir, the immense amount of work involved. I am not blaming the Civil Service Commission, for that is the heritage they have succeeded to under this law. That is one of the many instances I could produce to hon. members to show that there is something unwieldy and cumbersome under the Civil Service Act which ought to be weeded out. That cannot be accomplished by simply arguing the matter on the floor of this House. I am confident that if hon. members who have sat in this House for two sessions would investigate the operations of the Civil Service Commission,—not with any idea of turning things upside down, not with any idea of hostility, they would immediately say that there is something wrong.

Another instance will suffice for the present. Last year the auditor general's report showed that there were 280 odd clerks in the Civil Service Commission drawing salaries amounting to \$291,000. For 1921-22 the temporary employees of the commission received \$77,391 in salaries. Did hon. members of the Progressive wing ever sit down and realize how much it costs to run the Civil Service Commission? Last year it cost a total of \$342,000. The year before it cost \$524,000. In all these remarks I have endeavoured to be frank, and I will at once explain that that total includes about \$130,000 for the machinery used on the reorganization of the Printing Bureau. But last year it cost this country \$342,000 for the administration of the Civil Service Commission. Hon. members would be well advised to look into the Auditor General's report. The setting of examination papers by outsiders has cost \$1,000. That amount has been paid to outsiders. We cannot blame the Civil Service Commission for that expenditure because they did not have these men in the office. Why not have on their staff examiners composed of college professors, technical and professional men, and pay them reasonable salaries to act as an examining board which would be responsible to this parliament? Last year the stationery

[Mr. Chevrier.]

and printing account runs to \$26,700, telegrams \$2,200; the corresponding items for the previous year were \$44,000 and \$4,000 respectively. There is evidently something wrong, and hon. members who are interested in economy would be well advised to investigate and see whether or not the brakes should be applied.

Now, Sir, in closing let me say that I cannot subscribe to the abolition of the Civil Service Commission. I am not an extremist, I do not believe in radical measures. I stand for everything that will promote and maintain efficiency in the Civil Service at the least possible cost to this country. Therefore I think we ought to set aside any preconceived ideas and agree on the principle enunciated by the right hon. Prime Minister in asking that this House appoint a committee to look into the workings of the Civil Service Commission.

Mr. W. G. McQUARRIE (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, I am beginning to think that hon. members for the city of Ottawa are not in love with the Civil Service Commission.

Mr. CHEVRIER: May I ask the hon. gentleman if he was in his seat with his ears open when I said what my feelings were towards the Civil Service Commission?

Mr. McQUARRIE: I know the hon. gentleman is something of a joker. He has told us that himself. I do not have to prove it; he admits it. The predecessors of my hon. friends took the same stand in regard to the Civil Service Commission. I can only suppose that by reason of living so close to the commission they must think they know better than we do whether or not its usefulness has been outlived.

Now I cannot agree with hon. gentlemen on the government side who think that we should displace the Civil Service Commission. It has been my privilege on a number of occasions to adopt this attitude. I was elected on a promise that I would stand for the abolition of patronage, and I have maintained that stand ever since. I shall do so to-night. The hon. member who has preceded me (Mr. Chevrier) called the classification a joke book. Well, I think he will admit that those who were responsible for preparing the classification had a very difficult task indeed to perform. For many years there was no classification of any kind and the civil service was not in a very satisfactory condition. It became imperative that there should be some kind of classification. I am not going to say that I am satisfied with that classification, or that I have not myself made com-