

an objectionable character, to which I called the hon. Minister's attention a while ago, and to which I will take the liberty of calling the attention of the Committee, when we go into Committee; and I think that when we go out of Committee, and it is proposed to read the Bill the third time, then will be the proper time to propose in future, and with reference to existing Civil servants, who may avail themselves of it, perhaps with reference to those who have very recently come into the service, and under any circumstances, certainly with reference to those who have yet to come into the service, some modification of a policy which was experimental at the start, and the expectations connected with which have not, I think, been answered. Speaking generally, the observations of the hon. Minister I concur in. I have always said that the condition on which we are to expect efficient service is the giving of a fair reward to those who are placed in office. I believe that a fair reward to those placed in office ought to co-exist with a determination on the part of the Administration to exact a performance of their duties from these persons; and I believe that a liberal, cheerful spirit in the performance of duty, is best to be obtained by affording that fair play which the hon. Minister advocates, and which I am always prepared to support. I agree further with the proposition of the hon. Minister, that some proposition of some kind or other in this relation is of practical consequence to the State in regard to these servants. It is an unfortunate thing that it should be so, because one of the most important things in the making up of people's characters is that they should learn for themselves that part of prudence which consists in economy, in, whatever your income may be, confining your expenditure within the margin of that income, and in saving something for a rainy day for yourself, and still more for those near and dear to you, dependent upon you; and anything which recognizes the proposition that there is to be a State aid for the period of infirmity, and that there is to be a compulsory saving, is a thing which, to that extent, takes away from the nerve, fibre and stamina of the character of those in whose favor, so to speak, such a provision was made. No doubt experience has demonstrated that, where the State is master, those feelings of compassion which we all entertain in reference to persons who may not be saving money—and who find themselves incapable of longer discharging their duty, are very strong—they are so strong as to prevail over the stern discharge of the duty to the State, which is involved, in seeing that a man is retired the moment he ceases to be able to efficiently discharge the duties to which he has been appointed. In private life, persons at any rate who have not accumulated vast means, and who are employés of others, are obliged with deep regret, but still obliged, no longer to continue the services of those who have become incapable of serving them, because they cannot afford to keep them for nothing and make them pensioners; and they are obliged to revert to the principles to which I alluded a while ago—to pay them the worth of their services they from time to time receive from them, and that it is their duty out of the moneys they have received to have accumulated what might be necessary for the period of ill-health or old age. But the State does not do so, and the Administrators of the State do not do so; and there is this additional point which is not without force: That the Administrators of the State, when they continue an officer in the service after he is unfit for, or less fit for it, are not paying out their own money. They are not themselves suffering any inconvenience—the State suffers. Somebody else is appointed; some other provision is made to do the work that has been done less efficiently; and after all it is not the individual who is called upon to make the decision that suffers personally, but the State at large. Now, these are considerations which have resulted in this way. As a matter of fact, the State does not, through its Ministers, turn

Mr. BLAKE.

people out of doors if they have not saved money, and are not able to support themselves when they have become inefficient; and you ought to put the Ministers of the State in a position in which those feelings of compassion to which I have referred shall not over-bear the sense of duty to the State, so that they will be able to say: "Now we can discharge our duty." Well, that is all very well; but once again, in all other walks of life, if those persons were professional men, or bankers, or clerks, or merchants, they would have been called upon—out of the reward for their labors received day after day, month after month, year after year—themselves to make that fund. My hon. friend has given some figures which show that taking it by the large, taking it all around—with some exceptions, I dare say—the fund is there. But it is not so applied. Now the question is whether the true mode of dealing with these cases now—not as the hon. gentleman said in 1871, when he wanted to relieve the service of a number of persons then old and infirm, and then presently to take the benefit of the Act—is to provide that in future as you are going to put in none but excellent men who have passed admirable examinations, young and vigorous men—physically and mentally fit for the service, you should provide something of the kind which my hon. friend has described—a compulsory saving graduated according to their emolument, which shall go to the credit of these gentlemen with interest accumulating, and which shall take the shape of a fund, so that when the time arrives when a particular individual leaves the service, whether by voluntary retirement from infirmity, or because he has left the world, this fund shall be available for himself or his family. This would be the adoption of a compulsory saving on the part of the service for that voluntarily which individuals are obliged to make at the risk of being driven to the wall and exposed to poverty in their old age, or when they become infirm. The making of that saving would result in the hon. Minister being able to say to a Civil servant when the time arrived when the efficiency of the service required his retirement, where is that sum which could be converted into an annuity and paid to his family afterwards because it is composed of his own savings with interest during the time he has been in service. I take occasion to make these remarks because I think that even on the second reading of this Bill when it is proposed to re-enact, not a system of superannuation, but this system of superannuation which I think has proved in many cases expensive, faulty, and defective, we should express our views upon the subject.

Mr. CASEY. The hon. Minister himself pointed out that when the system was first introduced, it was not introduced as being the mature expression of what was thought most advisable for all time to come, but was introduced as an experiment for the time being. The hon. Minister's words when the Bill was introduced in about 1870 or 1871 were that it had been found that there were a number of old men in the service of the Government who were inefficient on account of their age, and finding himself unable to dismiss them with compensation this plan was adopted to enable him to get rid of them. If that statement was correct, as I have no doubt it was, it shows that the whole principle of the scheme of superannuation, as well as the details, are quite open to our consideration, for there is nothing in it which may be considered as having been settled by the wisdom of previous Parliaments, or settled by precedents. As the hon. leader of the Opposition has pointed out, things have changed very much. There is now a Civil Service Act providing that no man who is too old to expect a moderately long term of useful service shall enter the Department; that no man who is not in sound health shall enter the service. There is no reason why a different arrangement should not be made with regard to those who now enter the service under the Act, for we do not propose at all to interfere with those who are already