

ing, which is largely on the line of what he proposed, to put in the words 'the operation of the Civil Service Act or of this Act.' I therefore move to insert after the word 'upon' in the eighteenth line, the words 'the operation of the Civil Service Act or of this Act and upon.' That puts it in their power to take action upon the operation of the Civil Service Act.

Section as amended agreed to.

Mr. STEWART. There is a matter which was referred to this morning, having reference to a section already adopted, which has given rise to considerable discussion and which I would like to bring to the attention of the committee before the Bill is reported. We have arranged by this Bill that the clerks of the House of Commons shall be subject to the commission on the question of promotion. I do not know how it strikes other hon. members of the House, but it seems to me that the clerks of the committees are splendidly qualified to fill the positions which they have been occupying by reason of their many years of service and experience, and that the clerk, the Speaker and the committee on internal economy are the best judges as to the question of which of these clerks deserve promotion. It should be left in their hands. The amendment which has been suggested is this:

26a. No certificate of qualification from the commission shall be necessary in the case of a promotion to any vacancy in the staff of either House of parliament, when the recommendation of the clerk of the House and the approval of the Speaker have been given.

This is the unanimous desire of the clerks of the House.

Mr. BERGERON. Is the Commission on Internal Economy abolished by this Bill?

Mr. FISHER. No. I think we have pretty well threshed this out. We simply subject the employees of the House of Commons, the Senate and the library to the same requirements that other clerks must submit to of receiving a certificate of qualification from the commission when they are promoted. That certificate may be based on information which the commission can get in any way they see fit, and I think there will be no danger with regard to the promotion of any official. I think it would be unfortunate if we were to change this provision and adopt a rule with regard to the clerks of the Houses of parliament different from that which is applied to the rest of the service.

Amendment (Mr. Stewart) negatived.

Bill reported, read the third time and passed.

SUPPLY—APPOINTMENT OF JUDGES IN QUEBEC.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER moved that the House go into Committee of Supply.

Mr. BERGERON. The right hon. first minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) promised me the other day that he would tell me whether there would be any appointments by the Dominion government of judges in the province of Quebec in accordance with the legislation adopted by the legislature of Quebec.

Rt. Hon. Sir WILFRID LAURIER (Prime Minister). We have come to the conclusion that we will not bring down any legislation this year for the purpose of appointing more judges in Quebec. The legislature has passed one Bill to authorize the appointment of a new judge in the district of Quebec and three new judges in the district of Montreal. We have received a communication from Hon. Lomer Gouin, the Attorney General of the province, who has sent us some statistics, and we think it is our duty rather than pass this legislation to invite the attention of the local legislature not only of Quebec but of other provinces also, with a view to, if possible, so amend their system as to take advantage of the present judicial force and concentrate it in certain districts so as to avoid the necessity of more appointments. The Minister of Justice is of opinion, and that opinion is shared by a good many, that there is at the present time in Quebec a sufficient judicial force to satisfy the wants of the province if they were distributed otherwise than at present, if all the judges, for instance, who have very little to do in the outside districts were called upon by legislation to discharge the duties of their office in Montreal and Quebec, we would thereby avoid the necessity of making new appointments. Therefore we have come to the conclusion to make this representation to the Attorney General and for this session not to bring in legislation such as was contemplated.

Mr. BERGERON. I believe that my hon. friend is right, but I would remind him that such a reform was tried before by a Bill known as the Casgrain Bill, but it did not carry. Of course we have here practically to follow the dicta of those legislatures in this matter. I have heard my right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) under other circumstances say that we could not discuss it but that we had to act. There is no doubt that something might be done along the lines suggested by the Prime Minister. I believe there are enough judges in the province of Quebec, if the system was changed, but if the local legislature does not desire to change the system what position are we in? Suppose they pass a law, as they have authority to do, we here can only act and appoint judges.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The present system under the British North America Act is absolutely unsatisfactory and it cannot continue much longer, we shall have to do something in that respect. In the meantime