

Mr. OLIVER. One hundred and forty-six.

Mr. FIELDING. If my hon. friend will look at page 13 of the estimates he will find that information.

Mr. HAGGART. What was the necessity urged by the department for two more chief clerks?

Mr. OLIVER. It was thought that in the interest of the administration of the department Mr. Roberts, the gentleman who has charge of the registration and who has conducted his branch with very great satisfaction, should have the rank of a chief clerk, as he had charge of a very important branch of the work and was doing it very well. The other gentlemen, Mr. Marchand, was assistant to the chief accountant and it was thought reasonable that, on account of length of service and ability, he should also receive that promotion.

Mr. HAGGART. Ability or qualifications on the part of the officials is not sufficient reason; what is the necessity for two more chief clerkships for the department?

Mr. OLIVER. It is our belief that it was in the interest of the service that these gentlemen should be given the chief clerkships for the reasons I have given.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I understand my hon. friend (Mr. Haggart) is asking about the observance of some provision of law in connection with these appointments?

Mr. HAGGART. Yes, it is not a question of the qualification of the individual; it is the reason assigned by the department for the necessity of two additional people of this rank.

Mr. OLIVER. I have tried to give reasons, and will try again. The reason for the promotion of Mr. Roberts to a chief clerkship was that he was in charge of an important branch of the department, a branch of such importance, and he being of such qualifications, it seemed to me, warranted his appointment to a chief clerkship in order that he might have that authority, standing and prestige necessary for the best working of the department. Mr. Marchand has been assistant accountant. It is, in the nature of things, necessary that our chief accountant should, from time to time, be absent from the office here to attend to the work of the department in other places, leaving some other person in charge of the accounts branch for considerable periods of time. It seemed to us that it was a right and proper thing that Mr. Marchand, being qualified and having the proper length of service, should have this rank of chief clerk.

Mr. HAGGART. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Oliver) had to assign a reason for these changes in the order in council which gave

the consent of the Governor General for this increase.

Mr. OLIVER. I have not the terms of that order in mind, but the order was passed and there will be no objection, of course, to laying it on the table.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. It seems to me these orders in council should always be brought down when a new position is created as in this case. The Minister of the Interior (Mr. Oliver) seems to be under an entire misapprehension in this matter. As I understand the law and the practice, when a new position such as a chief clerkship is to be created, it must be because the public service demands it. When that office has been created, you select a suitable person to fill it. I can understand that; but I cannot understand the establishment of a new position merely for the purpose of appointing a certain person to it, which is the ground assigned by the Minister of the Interior. That is not a ground within the law, and if the order in council sets it forth as a ground, I do not think the order in council is within the law. Therefore, I would suggest to the minister that we should have the order in council before the item passes, so that we may understand the position exactly. I am not suggesting that this gentleman is not eminently qualified to fill the position. But that is not the point—the point for the committee to consider is whether the establishment of a new position of that kind is necessary in the public interest.

Mr. FIELDING. A case may arise where an officer who has been in the service a long time and has rendered particularly faithful service is at the maximum of his class. Would not the hon. gentleman (Mr. R. L. Borden) think that, in order to retain the services of such an officer, the minister would be justified—I am not speaking of the legal phase of the case—in promoting him to a higher rank by creating an additional chief clerkship? I think that would be a proper thing. Of course, the guiding principle in these matters is that the number of officials and their several grades shall be such as will best promote the interests of the public service.

Mr. FOSTER. What is the maximum of the first-class?

Mr. FIELDING. It is \$1,900.

Mr. FOSTER. This officer has not reached that.

Mr. FIELDING. I am speaking of the general principle to which the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) referred, and not as to this particular case. I do not know this man at all. But I know that if you adhere rigidly to the rule that before you appoint a man to a higher rank you must consider only the question whether the work would not go on as well if he were