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account of that leave of absence?—A. There is a risk of getting less service. The trouble is that a rule of that kind, if you attempt to lay down definite rules as to the amount of leave of absence that may be given, that leave of absence will be given.

Q. As a matter of right?—A. Yes, and since that rule has been put in our leave of absence has increased.

Q. You are referring to rules 36 and 37 of the regulations?—A. Yes.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. That would mean, would it not, that the employees are taking advantage of the privileges given under the regulations?—A. Well, I would not like to say that.

Mr. REDMAN: I suppose anybody would?

WITNESS: If an employee feels that his absence is going to lessen his pay, as was generally the case before these rules were put in, he might not be very well, and still come to the office. If under these rules he gets a certificate from a doctor that he is not well, he may stay away, and it certainly leads to absence that might be avoided.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. Would not their doing that make them less interested in their work and put a sort of slackness into them?—A. I have not been troubled with that in the office, but there is a tendency undoubtedly to it.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. I think that must be right because I cannot understand why in a department or in a branch with normally healthy employees there should be so much absence as reported in this statement; in some of the branches practically every employee has been absent more or less in the year?—A. Well, if you have a large number of women employees you will have a large number of absentees.

Q. The Civil Service must be destructive to the health of women in such case—A. You will always have a certain amount of illness from which you cannot get away.

Q. There will be a certain amount from which you cannot get away, but the question is how much of that is necessary? No person will object to any employee being allowed leave on account of illness, or on account of the regular holidays, but it is the absence which results from other causes to which I am referring.—A. It is very difficult to say what is the cause sometimes.

Q. But the point is what efforts are made in the department to try and limit that?—A. Leaves of absence are always closely scrutinized.

Q. But an employee is allowed to be absent for six days without any reason being given, I understand.—A. That is the regulation, but it is not the practice. It is not without any reason being given.

Q. Without a medical certificate?—A. Without a medical certificate, but any employee that is absent more than two days with us must give a certificate.

*By Mr. Redman:*

Q. You lay the blame for that on the regulation, don't you?—A. No.

Q. But largely?—A. No, I am not disposed to do that. I think our department has special reasons—

Q. But I mean in a general way would you recommend any changes in these regulations that are now in force?—A. Well, I am not prepared to; I have not looked into it. Before the regulations it went the other way; they were not necessarily hard, but resulted possibly in running a little too far the other way.

Q. Supposing there were no regulations at all, and you left it to the Deputy Minister to deal with absence?—A. The trouble of that is the inequality of treatment you would get in the different departments. That is what happened before. Some departments were notoriously slack and some people were allowed off on some slight reason.

[Mr. George J. Desbarats.]