

waited on Messrs. Belcourt and Hutchison, the members for Ottawa, and presented to them the protest of about a thousand French Canadian Liberals against the way the government patronage is distributed in Ottawa. Messrs. Belcourt and Hutchison said that they would bring the matter to the attention of the proper authorities. Whether they have done so or not I do not know, but the government is anxious, apparently, to put through this Bill; and if the passing of this Bill will relieve my hon. friends, the junior and senior members for Ottawa, from the pressure of these 1,000 Liberals, then, I say for heaven's sake let us pass it.

Mr. McNEILL. I would like to have a little information about this matter on one point that I have not been able to understand as yet. Why is it that the government are pursuing the course that they have pursued in regard to this measure? I presume that they are going to carry this clause. As I understood the Minister of Finance, his object is to secure men to do technical work at a lower rate than the government are now compelled to pay.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. Not necessarily technical work, but good work.

Mr. McNEILL. What has been called technical work in the course of this debate, second-class work. I presume they are going to carry this clause. But I have not yet been able to understand why it is that they introduced this new clause, and why they do not abide by the old divisions into second and third class clerkships. I want to make one other remark. I think the member for Ottawa (Mr. Belcourt) scarcely intended to be so severe on rural members like myself, as some of my friends on this side of the House thought he did. I did not understand that he meant to say anything very offensive to poor, ignorant rural representatives like myself in this House. But, I think I have heard hon. members, like the hon. member who spoke a moment ago, speak as though members on this side of the House were attacking the civil service. This is one of the most extraordinary statements that I have ever heard, although I have been a member of this House for eighteen years, and I have heard some very curious things said. If there is one thing we have been accustomed to more than another it has been the most violent attacks from the hon. members who are now occupying the Treasury benches upon the salaries paid to the civil servants of this country. We have, upon this side, been defending the civil service. I quite agree with what the hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Sir Louis Davies) said a moment ago, and I think it is a matter that ought always to be kept in view in discussing the civil service, as to the necessity of endeavouring to induce men to remain in the service. I am not quite sure if

that point of view has been as strongly insisted upon as it might have been in this discussion. I do say to the hon. gentleman that when he puts that position before the House as strongly as he did to-day, I wish he would go as far as the hon. leader of the opposition (Sir Charles Tupper) asked him to go, and asked the government to go, and let us have the decision of the courts so that we may know whether the members of the civil service are not being robbed, at present by this government, of their statutory increase. I do not say that the government is doing so deliberately, but I say that it is deliberately withholding a statement as to the condition of the law from the civil servants which the civil servants are entitled to have. These men entered the service with the understanding that they were to have their statutory increase. I believe, and it is the opinion of many of the best lawyers in the House, that they are entitled to have their statutory increase. The hon. leader of the opposition has asked the government to have a case laid before the courts so that we may know whether they are by law entitled to this increase, and up to this time the government have refused to do the civil service the common justice of doing this. So that I think it ill-becomes hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House to twit hon. gentlemen upon this side of the House with any desire to do an injustice, either by word or deed, to the civil service.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. I wish to say a word in regard to one point. I think the hon. gentleman will agree with me that there is nothing in the name itself. I would say that what was the third class, under the former system, and the junior second class, will be practically the same, and call for the same salary. So that, whether you call them by one name or another, it can have nothing to do with the merits of this Bill. I think there is a convenience in distinguishing between them, because third-class clerks under the former law come under the Superannuation Act, so that there is a convenience of distinguishing between those who are officers, who came under that law, and officers that do not.

Mr. FOSTER. My hon. friend can hardly carry that out. Is a gentleman put into a second-class clerkship, by the legislation you are passing through now, eligible for superannuation?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. Under the new system, yes. The superannuation system that he would come in under is different from the other. We have, strictly speaking, no superannuation now. We have a savings fund. These gentlemen will come in under what I may call the new savings fund system, but they will not be under the old superannuation system.

Mr. TAYLOR. I just want to say a word in reply to the hon. member for Ottawa