

*By Mr. Hanson:*

Q. Unless he has an excellent clerk?—A. Yes, unless he has an excellent clerk. In many cases we have electoral districts where practically all of the work is done by the clerk.

Q. All of the outside work is done by the clerk?—A. Yes.

*By Mr. Boys:*

Q. You have fairly well crystallized ideas of what the increases should be?—A. No, I have not. Section 30 of the present Act provides a tariff and permits the Auditor General or the Chief Electoral Officer to give an additional fee providing the returning officer can show cause for it. The tariff provides that the returning officer must show wherein his district is exceptional.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. From your experience, can you tell us just how the schedule of fees should be raised, without the returning officer being obliged to prove that his case is exceptional?—A. I can make some suggestions, but I do not think it is possible for me or any other man to provide a tariff which will be suitable or satisfactory to all of the returning officers. A very large part of the difficulty is caused by the difference in the provincial fees. For instance, the provincial fees for returning officers in the province of Quebec are low; in British Columbia they are very high, and consequently the federal returning-officers base their own remuneration on the basis of the provincial fees.

Q. You have no complaint from the province of Quebec?—A. We have complaints, but not to the same extent. The same applies to the maritime provinces. In the local elections the fees are much lower than the federal fees.

*By Mr. Lapierre:*

Q. Is the mileage question taken into consideration?—A. That has always been a cause of trouble. We have returning officers who will put in claims for mileage they have never travelled; we have other returning officers who more or less forget their mileage and put in a bloc item, and cannot give us the details of it, so we are up against it from both points of view, from the returning officer putting in exorbitant mileage, which we know to be exorbitant mileage, and other returning officers not putting in enough mileage, when we know he has travelled more miles than those for which he is claiming.

Q. Does that apply to the large rural districts or, say, to the unorganized territory of Northern Ontario?—A. It is more or less up to the man; it is not particularly regarding any territory. Some men will make out an account for that service which we know is very large—

Q. Do you not find it very difficult to arrive at a figure that is satisfactory to the returning officer who has a large unorganized territory to look after?—A. Of course, the rate for mileage is based upon the tariff, but we find great difficulty in checking up the mileage claimed by the returning officers.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. Have you any suggestion to make which would make your work easier, such as a flat rate, based on the population, or the number of voters, or the geographical situation?—A. No, I cannot say that I have. The trouble will always be with us.

*By Mr. Boys:*

Q. You seriously think there is cause for complaint?—A. Undoubtedly there is, but it is the men's own fault. If they strictly follow the instructions of the Chief Electoral Officer and use the forms provided for them, they will have very little difficulty in having their accounts satisfactorily adjusted.