

officers in grades close to them. Many of those men have very important services to discharge; they occupy positions for which the best talent in Canada is none too good, and I have, time and again, when I have observed our civil list growing up to large sums for administration from a comparatively moderate sum, pointed out the desirability of making a reform. That was my individual opinion. Here we are trying to do the best we can under very difficult circumstances. It is our duty not to allow the expenditure of Canada to exceed a certain figure. We are endeavouring to do so as best we can. I do not pretend to say, and no one can pretend to say that objections cannot be offered; but I do most respectfully submit to the committee that it will not do to admit that a civil servant is entitled to have his salary increased \$50 a year for his life. I do not grudge a civil servant or any man a fair day's pay for a fair day's work, but we must measure the pay by the remuneration for similar kinds of labour elsewhere. I do not think hon. gentlemen opposite, if they come to consider what is paid to civil servants, will consider they are underpaid, and most assuredly they cannot say that the vote of \$1,500,000 for the civil service, irrespective of the very large sums voted for the payment of the outside service, is a small percentage for a country like Canada to spend.

Mr. SPROULE. It is not with any disposition to object to the hon. Minister carrying out a policy of economy in the various departments that I take exception to his remarks, but because we have always understood that the statutory increase was a matter of legal right. Why was it called a statutory increase? It was because it was fixed by statute, and because the statute controlled one man as well as another.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. The Minister of Justice advises that that was not a correct construction.

Mr. SPROULE. That may be, but it has always heretofore been taken that it was a statutory increase, and could not be altered. The Act says:

The minimum salary paid to a chief clerk shall be one thousand eight hundred dollars, with an annual increase of fifty dollars up to a maximum of two thousand four hundred dollars.

Again the Act says:

The minimum salary of a first-class clerk shall be one thousand four hundred dollars per annum, with an annual increase of fifty dollars up to a maximum of one thousand eight hundred dollars.

And section 26 of the Act is as follows:—

No officer, clerk or employee shall receive any increase of salary except by Order in Council passed on the report of the deputy head, concurred in by the head of the department, stating

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT.

that such officer, clerk or employee is deserving of such increase.

That section of the Act was the authority under which the deputy head of a department acted, but we have no intimation from the Government that the deputy head so acted in the present case. The Act further says:

The increase of salary of any officer, clerk or employee authorized under this Act for the then current year may be suspended by the head of the department for neglect of duty or misconduct.

That appears the only provision for the suspension of the \$50 a year increase; but yet, the Government have suspended it of their own motion without even an Order in Council. We ought to know the authority under which they so acted, and we ought to know if they can violate a statute with impunity, or whether the statute has been wrongly interpreted heretofore. It always did seem to me that there was no possibility of stopping this statutory increase unless we amended the law. I claim that the Government should have first repealed this section of the Act, and then they would have gone about it in a proper way.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. In regard to the point raised by the hon. gentleman (Mr. Haggart), I find that there were ten first-class clerks last year, and as we have estimated for ten this year, there is no discrepancy. My hon. friend from Northumberland (Mr. Cochrane) is very much exercised by reason of the fact, that there is an increase of \$370 this year for civil government, Department of Interior; but if he looks at the Estimates of last year which were prepared by a Government in whom he (Mr. Cochrane) had great confidence, he will find that there was an increase of \$5,590.

Mr. COCHRANE. Your friends said that was wrong.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I do not think my hon. friend (Mr. Cochrane) can show that he protested very violently against that increase made by his friends last year. I was not then a member of the Government, but I understand that the Estimates prepared by the late Government were adopted by the present advisers of His Excellency.

Mr. DAVIN. I find in the Estimates of last year that there were eleven first-class clerks instead of ten.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I have counted them again, and I find there are only ten. If my hon. friend (Mr. Cochrane) will look at page 87 of the Estimates he will find under the item "Dominion lands chargeable to income" that we ask for a vote of \$90,938.25, which is a decrease on the Estimates of last year of \$27,283.75. I should explain to the committee, that although not technically, this is practically a