

Mr. IRVINE: You have just suggested that the minister or the deputy minister would be better than the Civil Service Commission.

Mr. CHEVRIER: If I am not wearying the House I will come to the point my hon. friend mentions later. I am afraid I have already spoken at too great length, especially as I went fully into this matter last year. But now, I think, the time has come for constructive criticism on my part. It is now impossible to make appointments to the Civil Service in the case of these minor positions, of these labouring or manual positions, by a demonstration of skill or competitive examination. The only way that it could be done would be by having a board composed of bricklayers, charwomen, boilermakers, and the like, who would put these applicants through the respective tests and grade them in the various categories. I say that the appointment to these positions should be handed back to the department and not to anybody else; that the deputy minister should then arrange a scheme whereby these positions could be handled through his department, and he should carry the responsibility. Now I will be asked in regard to this category, as I will be in regard to the third category: If a member of parliament makes a recommendation, should it be followed? Why should it not be followed? If the deputy minister is the responsible individual in charge of his department, he will obey that suggestion or he will not. If he obeys that suggestion and makes a good appointment, nobody will suffer. If he obeys that suggestion and makes an improper appointment, then the deputy minister is responsible to parliament and he should be censured.

Mr. HOEY: In view of the fact that the hon. member is familiar with the Civil Service in a sense in which some of us are not, would he tell us whether there are many such positions outside the present exempted list?

Mr. CHEVRIER: I am not speaking for the Civil Service Commission, but I think I say what is right when I state that there are now within the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Commission the categories of elevator men, caretakers and watchmen. All the other labouring positions have been returned. Why in their wisdom they have kept the elevator man who runs the elevator purely and simply by putting on and shutting off the power, and why they have released the highly technical qualified electrician who makes the repairs to that elevator is more than I can say. Why they have kept the caretaker and watchman

and have released, say, a bricklayer who earns six or seven dollars a day, I cannot say, but just at present I think I am speaking correctly when I say that there remains but those three categories within the Civil Service Commission. And then we are told that we are going to disrupt the whole Civil Service.

Now, I come to the second class, that of positions of a clerical nature. I say that all positions of a clerical nature, no matter what the salary may be from the start, where the minimum salary is \$800 or \$900, up to a standard where they cease to be ordinary clerical positions, and become technical positions, where the salary is about \$2,400 or \$2,500, should be filled after competitive examinations. All appointments to the Civil Service in those categories should be made by competitive examination, by special board under the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Commission, and paid by the government. This board would be responsible for the holding of examinations and responsible to this parliament. All the appointments to these positions would be by qualifying examinations. As a result of these examinations those who came up to the required standard would be placed on the list of eligibles. Here now is where we again part. The deputy minister should assume the responsibility of his office, and from that list of those who have passed the qualifying examination, who have a standard of the minimum marks, the deputy minister would be at liberty on his own responsibility to select the clerks that he thinks are best fitted for the particular positions for which he requires them. Again, I will be told that that is a return of patronage.

Mr. HOEY: Would he have the power of dismissal?

Mr. CHEVRIER: The deputy minister would have the power of dismissal, the power of promotion, and the duty of looking after statutory increases and sick leave. I am coming to all those points. In regard to those particular classes I recognize the necessity just as well as hon. gentlemen opposite, of introducing into the Civil Service of Canada only such men and women as are capable of filling the positions for which they are fitted, and I can say for the credit of the Civil Service that the vast majority are in this category, and it ill behoves hon. members of this House, or any other person, to criticize blindly, and to use the pet phrase of certain people, and say that the Civil Service of Canada is overmanned and overpaid. That is one reason why I urge that a commission should be appointed—to amongst other