

the expenditure under this Bill might be in order. I drafted the amendment which I had proposed moving but as I have to leave the House in a very few minutes, instead of formally moving it at the present time I propose to bring before the House the matter I intend to deal with. It relates to dismissals from the Civil Service. We have given a good deal of thought to the mode of entry into the service. The method of entry as prescribed by this classification, by the Bill and by the practice of the Civil Service Commission, is to me, very satisfactory indeed.

I do not think the system of entry to the Civil Service was ever anything like so satisfactory as it is at present. Never was the guarantee that only those would be admitted who were fitted for the work and who were entitled to be admitted carried out to the same extent as it is now. I wish to say, after a good deal of consideration of the classification and of the work of the experts that Parliament has in its hands, that it has been splendidly done and if adopted, as I have no doubt it will be, and put into operation, it will do a very great deal indeed to raise the standard of the Civil Service. Now, while that is a very important point in connection with the service, there are other important matters. One is the supervision of the employees while they are in the service. I have thought that our present system is very defective: the organization in many of the departments is not such as to secure from the staff the best services possible, and it is very frequently such as no business man would allow in his private business. I have thought that instead of the deputies being held entirely responsible for the working of the staff, it would be an economy if we had another officer whose duty it would be to supervise the working staff. We know that a deputy minister may be an excellent officer so far as carrying on the work and so far as initiating and assisting in carrying out policies is concerned, but he may be totally lacking in executive ability and in those qualities which a man who is placed over a staff of five or six hundred employees requires in order to get the best work out of them. If we had another officer whose duty it was to get the maximum amount of work from the staffs under his control, I believe it would result in greater economy in our Civil Service. But while that may or may not be the case, we must not forget that while we are guarding the door which provides entry to the Civil Service, we must not close the door which provides for exit from it. It is unreasonable

[Mr. Steele]

to expect that every civil servant who is, or who has been, appointed is going to prove himself absolutely efficient; and when a man proves that he is incapable or inefficient it is only just to the country that means should be provided for relieving him from any further duties, and that those means should be put into operation. Section 28 of the Civil Service Act of 1918 reads as follows:

Subject to the provisions of section three of this Act, nothing herein contained shall impair the power of the Governor in Council to remove or dismiss any deputy head, officer, clerk or employee, but no such deputy head, officer, clerk, or employee, whose appointment is of a permanent nature, shall be removed from office except by authority of the Governor in Council.

Now, that provides for the form of dismissal of civil servants in a sort of negative way. What we require, I think, is a positive method of having our civil servants dismissed; and while I would not urge that the matter be taken out of the hands of the Governor in Council entirely, I do think that the officer who is directly responsible for the work of the civil servants, and who knows what work is being done in his department, should have power to dismiss an incapable or inefficient servant if he sees fit. In the report of the Special Committee which was appointed last session to inquire into the working of the Civil Service, there was this clause, and it was framed after a good deal of investigation and consideration:

That the method of dismissal provided by section 28 of the Act is too formal and difficult of accomplishment to meet with the results which no doubt were contemplated when the section was adopted, and in consequence the efficiency of the service is impaired.

We found, on investigation, that dismissals were practically never made; that even when recommendations in some cases had been made for the dismissal of civil servants, they were not acted upon. I am not surprised at that. I do not know why the Governor in Council should be spending their time in deciding whether John Jones, who has been lazy, incapable, inefficient and neglectful of his duty should be allowed to remain in the service of Canada or not. Then the Civil Service Federation—and I wish to show from this that the Civil Service themselves are asking that a better method of dismissal be adopted—at their annual convention last March passed the following resolution:

That we call upon the Civil Service Commission, or any other body competent in the premises, to institute at once a thorough inquiry into the Civil Service with a view to im-