

that division, and there is no reason in the world why the post office inspectors of the different divisions should not continue to do as they have done in the past, to regulate the mail clerks who may now run from the province of Quebec right through to Vancouver and back again under the control of the different inspectors that are over the route from one province of the Dominion to the other. I mean to say that there is no economy at all in the appointment of new officers as proposed under this bill. It will not lessen the pay of the mail clerks if they get mileage. They will travel more miles and their cost to the country will be increased without any advantage to the public service. I understood, until I heard the hon. Secretary of State explain the bill, that this bill contemplated the appointment of several superintendents. I gathered from what the hon. Secretary of State said in his remarks that it only contemplated the appointment of one superintendent for the whole Dominion. How is that going to be regulated?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Oh there will be others. I will read the report of Mr. Sweetman.

Hon. Mr. MACDONALD (P.E.I.)—If we had the bill before us we could gather from it what was intended: but a bill comes up at the last hours of the session, and it is only laid on the desk of the Minister who is leading the House. We cannot be expected to know what the provisions of such a bill may be, or to deal with it in such an intelligent manner as we might be expected to deal with it if we had the bill before us and had studied its provisions.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—If the hon. Secretary of State said there was only one superintendent to be appointed—

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Oh no, I think there are nine superintendents over the whole Dominion.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Yes. The bill is for the purpose of reorganizing the department under different heads. They are to appoint a controller who is to be the head of the whole mail service, and then in addition to that they are to have superintendents in different provinces and in different parts of the provinces, who communi-

cate directly with the controller, and the operations of that branch of the service are to be carried on from the central point here. They have adopted, so far as I can ascertain, the system which prevails in the United States at the present moment.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—And in England, so I am told.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Perhaps so, but I know in the United States everything is operated from Washington. It is therefore a centralization of the whole system under one management in Ottawa. I feel quite confident, from the limited study I have been able to give this bill, that the system is not a bad one; I think it will work very well. I do not, however, believe that it is going to be an economical system, unless they can so reform the service as to dispense with a number of officers. In the other House the Postmaster General said:

I am going to appoint from the experienced officers in the service a controller. We will have to increase his salary, but the office will be at headquarters here, at the department. They will appoint a certain number of superintendents also among the mail service.

Supposing it is eight or nine, as the hon. Secretary of State says, they will have to increase their salaries, because they are holding a superior position, being like a foreman in an establishment to guide and direct the others. What I would like to know is, who is to fill the position vacated by the controller and by the superintendents? If there be additional appointments, then certainly you have to adopt some other system by which you will carry out your idea of economy.

Hon. Mr. POWER—The old system of inspectors, as far as regards the mail service, is to be discontinued. The local post office inspectors are not to deal with the mail service in the future. That I believe is the feeling of all the practical men in the Post Office Department—the postmasters and inspectors and the officers here at Ottawa. I do not know what is to be done with respect to the chief controller, but I know that in the provinces the intention is that, other things being equal, the government take the senior mail clerk.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—They may or may not.