

But the Minister of Justice is not satisfied with bringing in a new measure to take away from the Civil Service Commission something of its jurisdiction. It was in 1918 that the hon. gentleman was one of those who in a moment of high sentiment formed the idea of abolishing patronage. It was in 1919 that the Civil Service Act was so amended as to allow of the bringing down of the classification, but it was in 1921 that the hon. gentleman and those associated with him tried by means of the Spinney bill to ruin the act, and had it not been for those who sat in opposition at that time the Civil Service Act would have been ruined. Unfortunately there was maintained in the act one section which permitted the Civil Service Commission to do certain things in the way of releasing positions. The Minister of Justice the other day said, at page 3557 of Hansard—and this is no excuse why the thing should be repeated:

The late government, I think with the assistance of my vote—

It was well that he said that because otherwise it would have been put up to him:

—appointed a large number of preventive officers. I think there were some six or seven hundred such officers, three hundred and fifty of which are now in the mounted police. None of these men come under the Civil Service Commission. In the Department of National Revenue there is a large staff of appraisers who are not appointed by the commission. There are a large number of employees in the Department of Finance in a similar position. The employees of the Soldier Settlement Board and of the department presided over by my hon. friend the acting Minister of Immigration (Mr. Gordon) are not subject at all to the Civil Service Commission. The members of the military forces and the mounted police, the employees of the tariff board, the radio commis-

—and the research council also do not come under the commission. There is no new departure suggested by this measure.

And any other commission that may subsequently be appointed by this administration will, of course, be in the same category:

But neither is there any closure on this sort of thing; there is no end to it. Just because that has been done in the past is no reason why a measure should now be introduced into this house which will release from the operation of this act some thousand or more employees. There is no reason why that should be done. At least the hon. gentleman who is in charge of this bill, if he had wanted to follow the law, could have found that relic which is to be found in the act after they had laid their unholy hands upon it, and which is known as section 59. The

hon. gentleman has said that he has had conferences with the officers of the penitentiaries branch. Of course, they would be the first ones to ask for a release of these people from the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Commission. The hon. gentleman also says that he has asked to have a conference with the members of his own department. It would have been extraordinary if these people, knowing what was in the mind of the hon. gentleman, had not acceded to his wish. The Civil Service Commission charged with the administration of the Civil Service Act, if the qualifications set for the employees of the penitentiary were not satisfactory, could still have made the appointments on qualifications which were considered satisfactory. The minister could have asked the Civil Service Commission to appoint men under new regulations. Did he? The law was in the hands of the hon. gentleman, and why was there any necessity to amend the Penitentiary Act? Why did he not take advantage of the Civil Service Act, section 59 of which reads:

In any case where the commission decides that it is not practicable—

If the hon. gentleman thinks it is not practicable in this case he could have submitted it to the Civil Service Commission:

—nor in the public interest to apply this act to any position or positions, the commission may, with the approval of the governor in council, exclude such position or positions in whole or in part from the operation of the act, and make such regulations as are deemed advisable prescribing how such position or positions are to be dealt with.

I say that if there is any sincerity of purpose in this measure now before the house, the hon. gentleman and his administration should proceed under the terms of the law that is now on the statute books, that very same law which was placed on the statute books at the instigation and on the demand of the hon. gentleman who is now charged with this bill. Why do they not ask the Civil Service Commission to say whether it is practicable or in the public interest that these men should continue to be appointed in the manner in which they have been appointed? If the qualifications are not satisfactory they should be changed. But the merit system should be followed in the matter of appointments and in the matter of promotions.

But there is more than that, and more will be said when the bill is in committee. So far as I can see from the spirit of this bill the whole administration will be left in the hands of the superintendent, subject of course—and that is a very wide condition—to the governor in council. The range of salaries,