

Q. That is under the old condition of affairs when the department made the appointment?—A. Yes. Suggestions were made to us, names of suitable candidates for the position were submitted to us and from the names submitted to us we made a selection very often from what the department considered the most suitable person for the filling of the position.

Q. Who would submit those names?—A. Those names would be submitted from several quarters, usually submitted all down through the year by supporters of the Government. That has been the custom from Confederation down.

Q. Local people who knew the conditions?—A. Yes, who knew the conditions and knew the man.

Q. Give me a case of an isolated lighthouse?—A. There are so many. You go down to Lake Ontario here and take a small island off of Prince Edward, the Main Ducks.

Q. Suppose a lighthouse-keeper resigned or died, what steps in the old days would you take to have that filled?—A. We would immediately get in touch with our agent at Prescott, Captain Taylor at the present time, and we would ascertain from him whether he knew of any suitable person, and in addition it always becomes known in every locality—I have never known of a position becoming vacant that did not very readily become known in the locality where the position became vacant, and in nearly every case that I can recollect representations were made to us as to the qualifications of certain people, one, two, three or four or five, as the case may be.

Q. Those representations would come in fairly quickly?—A. Yes, they will, fairly quickly, and from among the number thus submitted Captain Taylor or a representative from the Commissioner of Lights office would get in touch with the several persons so nominated and would reach some conclusion with respect to one or more of those applicants. His conclusions would be reported to me and in turn reported to the minister, as a result of which an appointment would be made.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. The efficiency of the service was protected in that way by your officials?—A. In my judgment absolutely protected.

*By Hon. Mr. Calder:*

Q. How does the present system interfere with the administration of the department?—A. Under the present system we would have to report to the Civil Service Commission that a vacancy had taken place. The Civil Service Commission in turn themselves say "We have to advertise for a certain period of time." In the meantime we have to make temporary provision for filling the position because the light must be kept going no matter what happens here or elsewhere. That position may be advertised for thirty days. In the meantime applications are received; they are all submitted to the department, all received at the department. They are considered by the Commissioner of Lights and his staff and the Commissioner of Lights and his staff uses his judgment and selects from among the applicants for the position a certain person. He reports to the Civil Service Commission, and the Civil Service Commission almost invariably—it takes a long time in many cases, but in the end I don't think there is one single case in our department where the selection of the Commissioner of Lights has not been accepted.

Q. Your argument is that you might save that delay?—A. Absolutely, and save the expense. All that has happened in the meantime is that there have been long delays, and that there have been innumerable letters that have served absolutely no useful purpose beyond occupying the time of quite a number of people in our department and necessarily a similar number in the Civil Service Commission.

Q. With this possible exception that under this system the advertisement appears, and every person who has a desire to apply is given an opportunity?—A. I quite agree.

[Mr. Alexander Johnston.]