

service in Ottawa; and in that way the experiment might be tried.

I do not wish to resume my seat without pressing upon the House and upon the minister my firm belief that there are many, many cases of actual distress among the civil servants to-day. I know a messenger who is at the maximum of his class. He has five children, and he must pay at least \$25 a month for rent. It is absolutely impossible for him to educate those children on his salary of \$800 a year. He needs assistance, and he needs it now. And his case is one of hundreds. This matter affects not only the service, but also our merchants and the business of the city. I would like to see, if possible, some measure of relief for the lower grades of the service at this session of Parliament.

Mr. VERVILLE: If there is a class of people who deserve an increase it is the outside Civil Service. When Civil Service matters are discussed in this House we generally have in mind the inside service—I do not know why unless it is that we are here at the capital. I am very far from being opposed to an increase for the inside service, because they also have to face the difficulty of the increased cost of living. Last year I quoted figures made up by the Ottawa men themselves to show that the cost of living in a very moderate way was over \$900 a year, and the hon. member for Ottawa (Mr. Fripp) tells us that the average salary is below that. If we pay the Civil Service lower than a living wage, we are really inviting these men to dishonesty. It is a wonder that there is not more dishonesty in the Civil Service, for we know that it is impossible to live in this city on the wages some are receiving. But in the outside service we find some men receiving \$600 a year, and we cannot but wonder how these people can possibly bring up their families. We may be told that at times they receive remuneration for overtime. But it seems to me to be most unfair for the Government, in fixing salaries, to consider what a man may earn in extra hours at night, and sometimes late at night. And if we give the man in Ottawa who works six or eight hours a day \$1,000 a year, the man who works for an equal number of hours in another part of the country in the outside service should receive as much. Whatever a man makes in overtime should not be considered in his salary. Comparison has been made of the capabilities of those in the outside and those in the inside service. We have heard also something about the employment of females in the

service. I claim it makes no difference whether it is female or male help in the Civil Service, there should be equal pay for equal work.

Mr. PROULX. But if they have no families to support?

Mr. VERVILLE: That makes no difference. If we were to argue in that way, we would pay the unmarried man only half what we pay the married man, and so fill our service with the unmarried and let the married starve. In this House we have a minimum rate of wages. Everybody admits that some members are more competent than others and also some follow more conscientiously than others the routine business of the House. Yet all receive the same salary. If we are to follow the principle of grading pay to merit, then we should pay the more competent members of this House a larger salary than we pay the other. As to this question of female help in the service, one must go back many years to understand the presence of women in industrial life. I do not wish to go into that history. Women have been forced to work by economic conditions, and under those circumstances if a woman performs as much work as a man, she should receive the same remuneration for it. If all employers, both the Government and private employers, were to pay female help at the same rate as they pay the same kind of male help, you would see more men at work and probably more women staying at home. I shall not review the history of this matter, because it would be necessary to go back to 1763, and that is too far back. I hope the minister will consider the conditions now existing in the outside service, and grant some aid to those employees. It was my privilege, while the Estimates of the Inland Revenue Department were before the House, to state to the minister that he was forbidden by law to give more than \$600 to some men in his department, and this is surely an opportune time to do something to remedy that condition.

Mr. WHITE: I should have stated, in speaking on the resolution, that provision has been made for certain increases in the range of salaries in the Customs and Inland Revenue Departments.

Mr. VERVILLE: I hope my friend will not forget also the Department of Public Works, the Department of Railways and Canals, in fact all the employees in the outside service of the Government. We know that the messengers in this House,