

Q. But the contrary must sometimes prevent the promotion?—Satisfactory evidence of their qualifications should be had either by examinations or otherwise.

Q. The trouble arises as to who is to decide—whether it is to be left to the superior officer. He may exercise favoritism. I wish to put it so there should not be favoritism. And would it not be better to require examination?—But, then, in the examinations there might be favoritism.

Q. But not if conducted by somebody disinterested?—It might be. One of the Board might be interested.

Q. But there would not be so much chance as if the whole affair rested on the officer?—If men are not honest there is always a chance of favoritism.

Q. There would not be so much chance in a Board as by one officer?—Probably not. Of course if any individual is not conscientious he might act dishonestly on a Board just the same as an officer might.

Q. In the case of a Board there would not be the same chance to favor one subordinate more than another?—I think when there was a new appointment there might be an examination. But in the case of a promotion I don't know that an examination would accomplish the object you have.

Q. Would it not be advisable to make an examination, one of the things required, not the only thing, to compel a man to pass a certain standard before he can be promoted, but not to make the passing the grounds for his asking promotion?—I have no objection to examinations, but I doubt if examinations alone would accomplish this object. I think if you had too many of these examinations they would be very troublesome and would not secure the best men, they might shut out men who were in every way qualified for the office they sought. I take my own case for instance: I have no doubt I could not pass such a good examination as I could have done twenty years ago.

Q. I do not ask you that examinations should be held on knowledge possessed twenty or thirty years ago, but in the actual duties employés would be required to perform in the next grade?—If you could get examinations by a competent body it would be a good thing; but I don't think you could do it. Take for instance a Board for examining engineers.

Q. Your difficulty rests on the difficulty of obtaining a proper examining Board?—That is one difficulty. The man being examined might know more upon the particular subject than the examining Board did.

Q. But the Board could appoint examiners. The examiners may be the juniors of the parties examined?—They might and they might not. Take this instance: the office of the Chief Engineer of the canals is vacant. There are many candidates for the office. Who is to examine them? One of the candidates may know more than any body of men in Canada.

Q. But my question had no reference to the staff, but merely to juniors. In your Department, these remarks do not apply higher than to heads of parties; of course they cannot apply to the staff, that must be left entirely to the responsibility of the Minister?—I don't see my way to recommending that examinations should take place for promotions, they would be cumbersome and difficult.

Q. Supposing that a man required, after being a certain number of years in the Service, to pass an examination to qualify him for the next grade, whether there was a vacancy or not. Then when a vacancy occurred you would not have to examine him, you would have him already examined. That is the rule in the army?—That may be; but I doubt whether a competitive examination would make good soldiers, they may be scientific men but not good fighters.

Q. These are not fighting men. Would it not be well to have an uniform test to which all candidates for promotion would be subjected, so that it would show evidence of professional capacity?—I think it would be difficult to carry that out.

*By Mr. McDougall (Renfrew):—*

Q. Supposing a man is going into one of these grades where he really requires scientific information, would it not be well on this point?—I would have no objection to examining them every year if it could be accomplished.