

classify the service, you must necessarily of course have some regard for the salaries and positions of the various members of the service, but any reclassification or regrading which will be worthy of the name, which will tend to increase the efficiency of the service, must be based on the ability of the different members of the service and their fitness for the particular work to which they are to be assigned. If some regard is not had to these considerations, the reclassification or regrading will be entirely mechanical, and will leave the service, so far as efficiency is concerned, in very much the same position as it is in to-day. In saying this, I do not for one moment desire to minimize the difficulties which lie before any government which will undertake to deal effectively with this question, but if the service is to be increased in efficiency and if the reclassification is to have any beneficial effect, something will have to be done along these lines.

Mr. CONMEE. It seem to me that the board should have some jurisdiction over grading, promotion and regulating discipline. The grading should not be based entirely on existing salaries. In his book on the 'Civil Service in Great Britain,' Dorman B. Eaton in the chapter on 'The Merit System in the Great Departments' says:

The board has the right of promotion and authority for discipline without interference from any other quarter, but cannot increase salaries or expenses. Promotions are for merit. In certain parts of the service they are based on examinations, and in other parts on official records kept in the offices, and almost without exception all the higher places are filled from those below. Personal records of the conduct of all officers are kept by the board. . . . The circumstances of all promotions stand recorded in the official books, and may be referred to in the event of any complaint or inquiry being made into the matter.

As I understand it, the English system recognizes that the public has an interest not only in the efficiency of the service and in the discipline maintained, but in the justice that may be meted out to the various individuals in the service. Not only is the evil of political patronage, so far as it is an evil, to be done away with, but social influence, clerical influence and a great many other kinds of influence, which in my humble opinion are as vicious in principle as the so-called political influence, under the British system the heads of departments are unable to advance by favouritism any person who may be a relative or a friend. The man in the service relies on his ability and his record. Surely it is an injustice that a man should do departments are unable to advance by favouritism a higher salary. I think the commission ought to have some power to regulate these matters. It would be in the

public interest, in the interest of elevating the public service and be simple justice to those who have entered the service on the competitive basis.

Mr. FISHER. This clause only applies to people who are at present in the service. These people have attained the positions they occupy under the present law, and I do not think we should undertake to alter their conditions, even at the recommendation of the commission. When there is a question of promotion these people will have to undergo the necessary examination, but I do not think it would be right to undertake to degrade them now.

Mr. CONMEE. I have no idea whatever that any one should be degraded in the service, but I do think there should be some examination as to whether a man is fit at all to occupy a position in the service. That was done in England when the English Act was brought into force. A large number were discarded there on the ground that they had not sufficient general knowledge or ability to fill any position in the service in the rank in which they were. Men who have been long in the service and who have acquired a certain efficiency should not be disturbed; but if there are any who are absolutely useless, they should make room for others. I do not say they should be turned on the street. It would be better for the government to give them an annuity now than retain them in the service when they are utterly incompetent. If you are going to introduce the competitive principle, you should start, as the hon. member for Nanaimo (Mr. Ralph Smith) has said, with some regard to that principle in the case of those now in the service.

On section 39—annual increase.

Mr. FOSTER. I would call attention to subsection 4. Is it meant that the increase of \$100 annually in the first paragraph is to be conditioned by subsection 4?

Mr. FISHER. No, I think that applies to subsection 3.

Mr. FOSTER. As it reads, it would apply to all.

Mr. FISHER. My hon. friend will notice the thirty-third line, 'and in the case of officers, clerks and other employees of the second and third division to whom a further increase is recommended, accompanied by a certificate of merit from the commission.'

Mr. FOSTER. What you do is omit the first division from the clause requiring that certificate.

Mr. FISHER. The intention is that the usual increase shall be given without a certificate from the commission. It is only the exceptional or merit increase,