

each man was entitled to go to any registered medical practitioner for examination. I think the experience was that this was a mistake, and I shall not say anything further about that. Then a new system was established. I understand that in each military depot regular boards are set up, made up for the most part of officers of the army medical corps. The result is that many local doctors are not being used.

I think this system has a distinct advantage. I would direct the attention of the minister to protests which have been made in various places against the adoption of this method. I hope the minister will not back down on its use. I call to mind a report in a French-language newspaper published in Quebec city which gave the details of what had occurred in a meeting of the city council. There had been a protest by one alderman against doctors being brought in from outside to carry on these medical investigations. I hope the minister will not be influenced by local politicians in connection with this matter. Will the minister tell us the present position with respect to medical examinations, having regard to the fact that the earlier system was evidently found to be wanting?

Mr. RALSTON: I think my hon. friend is mixed up as between two jurisdictions. The service he speaks of, the examination by a civilian doctor, was an examination which was conducted under the Department of National War Services, and, later, under the Department of Labour, in order to ascertain whether a man should be called up for examination by an army medical board. I would much prefer to have the Minister of Labour speak on this point, and I shall only say what my own impression is. I should like to leave it to the Minister of Labour, because I have no doubt that the matter will be discussed when he is before the committee. My impression, however, is that my hon. friend is wrong; that what might be called a screening examination by the civilian doctor has not yet been entirely done away with.

Mr. McCANN: That is still carried on.

Mr. RALSTON: Yes. As I understand it, a civilian doctor examines the man and reports the results of his examination to the Department of Labour or to the registrar of the board in the locality in which the man is called up. If the man is reported on favourably as being within a medical category which would enable him to be accepted into the army, a notice is sent to the man to appear before the army medical board for examination.

[Mr. R. B. Hanson.]

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): That is to say, if the examination is unfavourable in the first instance?

Mr. RALSTON: No; if it is favourable, favourable to the army. I mean, if the man has been found to be physically qualified by the civilian doctor's examination. If, on the other hand, the civilian doctor finds that the man is not physically fit or does not come within a high enough category, the man returns home and the civilian doctor reports the results of his examination to the registrar of the board. The board—I think I am right about this—has a medical revision officer whose principal job, or at least one of whose jobs is to examine these reports and, if he considers that there is a possibility that the man might be passed by the army medical board, notwithstanding the results of his examination which the civilian doctor has reported, the man is ordered up for examination by the medical revision board, which is composed of civilian doctors.

Mr. McCANN: Three.

Mr. RALSTON: This is still under the Department of Labour, not defence. If the medical revision board finds that the man was wrongly classified by the first civilian practitioner, the registrar orders the man to appear before the army medical board.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): So that there is a check-up on the local physician?

Mr. RALSTON: Yes; there are really three examinations. If the man is turned down by the civilian doctor, there is an examination by the medical revision board; and if the man is passed by the medical revision board, he goes to the army medical board in the regular way.

My hon. friend speaks of the organization of the army medical board. There were a great many boards throughout the country. It was a tremendous strain on the medical profession to supply men enough and have them sufficiently au fait with the medical regulations to make examinations which would stand up. It is a tremendous work that has been done, and on two or three previous occasions before the committee I have indicated the efforts made by the director-general of medical services to see that these boards were standardized and located in convenient positions so as to save transportation expenses. The system we are endeavouring to inaugurate is that at the