

THE CIVILIAN

Devoted to the interests of the Civil Service
of Canada.

Subscription \$1.00 a year ;
Single copies 5 cents.

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THE CIVILIAN,
P. O. Box 484, Ottawa

Communications on any subject of interest to the Civil Service are invited and will receive careful consideration.

Ottawa, Apr. 21st, 1911

MARINE AND FISHERIES INCREASES.

The Marine and Fisheries Department is to be congratulated on the recognition that is being given at long last to the members of the outside services. By a recent order-in-council, light-keepers throughout the Dominion are to be brought under a classification system which will involve an increase in pay and uniformity in treatment henceforth. Inspectors are to be granted similar treatment. It remains to accord equal justice to the various agents, accountants, clerks, etc., employed in the agencies of the department throughout Canada. Though no intimation has been given as yet that the latter classes are to profit immediately by the Government's policy, there can surely be no doubt that it is the Government's intention to include them in the good things going.

THE ACT OF 1908.

As time goes on and we begin to see the trend of things, the chief error in connection with the carrying out of the Act of 1908 reveals itself more and more clearly.

The outstanding feature of that Act — apart from the principle of appointment and promotion by merit — was the laying down of an entirely new scheme of classification. Briefly, it provided that in the service proper two great divisions should be made — the administrative and the clerical. This was on British precedent.

In applying this principle the great difficulty arose, of course, from the fact that the service was not new but old, and that the new plan was superimposed upon an old and exceedingly topsy-turvy one. This was recognized by a clause which called for a reorganization of the old in the terms of the new. From the day of the framing of this clause, however, until the present, no steps have been taken to put it into practice. This is error number one, and the amount of hardship it has occasioned for certain deserving civil servants especially in the third division could not well be over-expressed in words.

The second error, and one which has been greatly aggravated by the first, is that no recognition has been made of the undoubted claim which long years of service established for a body of employees against the rendering of their advance more difficult. There can be no doubt that the solution of the tangled situation resulting from the above is the most urgent need of the hour, and that, until it is obtained, permanent betterment in the tone of the service cannot be expected.