

THE CIVILIAN

VOL. II.

JANUARY 14th, 1910

No. 19

The New Way and the Old.

Many newspapers, both in Ottawa and out of it, have given considerable space during the past fortnight to comment on what is termed the "Taylor case." No such special terminology is called for. The Taylor case has nothing new or special about it, but represents a perfectly normal and ordinary working out of the Act of 1908. Here are the facts—which, strange to say, neither of our Ottawa contemporaries who referred to the matter took the effort to obtain, even in elementary detail, and which *The Civilian* therefore places without comment before its readers in their true face:

A vacancy in Division III, A, (\$900-\$1,200) having been created in the Accountants' Branch of the Department of the Interior, the Deputy Minister recommended Mr. Taylor, of the Swamp Lands Branch, a clerk in Division III, B, for the promotion. The creation of the vacancy and the recommendation of the Deputy Minister happened to coincide in point of time with the process of settling a very momentous question in Ottawa Valley hockey circles as to whether Mr. Taylor, who is about the best cover point at hockey that the country has produced, should play with the City of Ottawa or the Town of Renfrew during the present winter. Mr. Taylor commands something like \$3,000 per winter for his services as a hockeyist, but an additional consideration is the private position which a community in such a case may be willing to hunt up for him. Renfrew it seems offered him \$1,200 in this way — "on the

side" as it were; at Ottawa, Mr. Taylor's position in the service was worth only a maximum of \$800. All this, however, had nothing whatever to do with the procedure as to Mr. Taylor's proposed promotion. The recommendation of his Deputy, we suspect, did not refer to his hockey but to his efficiency as a clerk. What the Commission in turn had to satisfy itself of was simply that Mr. Taylor was the best man available for the vacancy in question. This seemed to have three aspects. Mr. Taylor's promotion would have involved, in the first place, the bringing of a new man into the Accountants' Branch, with the implication that there was no one as good to be had in the branch itself. In the second place, by a similar process of reasoning, Mr. Taylor must needs have been the best available in his own branch—that of Swamp Lands. Thirdly, if the promotion was to be open to the Swamp Lands Branch, why not to all other branches in the Department, the possibility of a transfer being admitted? The problem then was to ascertain if Mr. Taylor was the best man in the Department, or if not who was. Mr. Taylor, it happened, had entered the service without examination, and his work, in so large a field, shewed to no such extraordinary advantage on the records. It was resolved, therefore, to throw the position open to competition throughout the entire Department, and notice to this effect was sent to every head of a branch desiring him to make known the fact to any members of his staff who might be interested.