

Even a cursory study of the estimates must impress one with the increase in the public service of Canada. And not only with the increase, but with the greater diversity of service which comes with more complex civilization. The establishment of new departments and the assumption, under public pressure, of more important duties by old ones — these things teach anew and in their own way the lesson which is to be read on every hand, that the people of Canada must pay more and more attention to the great work of maintaining and improving the civil service.

THE RADIUM BUSINESS — AN INTERESTING STATE MONOPOLY.

The production and sale of that interesting metal, radium, is, as is well known, a monopoly in the control of the Austrian State Department. Some puzzling problems for civil servants have ensued.

The chief difficulty encountered by the department has been to find a suitable way of packing the precious mineral. The experts, however, have at last devised a satisfactory method.

Pure radium, of course, cannot be obtained; what is sold as radium is a chemical compound known as radium-barium chlorid. Of this there are three different grades in the market.

In making these ready for the consignee, the preparation is enclosed in a so-called radium cell, a round capsule $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, and $\frac{3}{4}$ inch long. This capsule is enclosed in a screw tube made of nicked brass, with a lead bottom in which there is a little sunken square which serves to hold the speck of radium. The cell or capsule itself is sealed by a mica plate, which obviates the necessity of opening it when in actual use. All tubes are carefully numbered and each bears an official stamp. Prospective buyers may note that it is not money alone that buys radium. Only scientific institutes and savants of repute are eligible as purchasers.

Postal-guide books are searched in vain for rules governing the dispatch of radium. No post-office has ever been called upon to handle a single milligram. In every case so far the sales have been made to buyers personally or their direct representatives sent expressly to Vienna for the purpose. It is not surprising that in the case of a product worth \$2,375,000 an ounce the strict rule is 'shipment at buyers' risk.'

TAKING THE CENSUS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA.

The present month marks the real beginning of Uncle Sam's great decennial task of counting noses and taking stock, a task imposed upon him by the Constitution of the United States. The other morning, in every nook and corner of the country, the 75,000 census enumerators took to the field with pencil and pad in hand. When their work is completed and the results tabulated by the wonderful electric devices now in use in the Census Office in Washington, Uncle Sam will know to what extent his family has increased during the past ten years. He will know also how rich he is, how prosperous he is, and how his farms, manufactures, mines and quarries are faring, and everything else worth knowing about himself.

The actual collection of data will continue fifteen days in the cities, and thirty days in the country districts.

Dr. E. Dana Durand, the chief of the census bureau, hopes to be able by June 1 to report the number of inhabitants in the United States, probably between 88,000,000 and 91,000,000. It will take four months to cover the manufacturing interests and probably three years to tabulate and analyze the vast undertaking. The completed task will represent the labors of 75,000 men and women enumerators, and 750 regular and 3,000 temporary clerks in the Census Bureau. A total of \$14,000,000 is to be expended in the work. In this connection it is interesting to note that the sum of \$44,000 was thought sufficient to cover the cost of the first general census in 1790. This census covered the original thirteen States, and showed a population of 3,200,000 whites and 700,000 slaves.

In Canada the actual work of enumeration will not begin until a year from next June. The United States takes stock in the last year of the decade; we in the first. Mr. Blue will spend probably less than a million, but will cover a wider range of subjects than the U. S. Department. Hopes are entertained that the recent amendment of the Civil Service Act will provide a more efficient set of officials than ever before. The late Carroll D. Wright once estimated the saving effected by methods of reform in connection with the taking of the census in the United States as running into the millions.

THE CUSTOMS CIVIL SERVICE ASSOCIATION OF HAMILTON, ONT.

The adjourned annual meeting of the Customs Civil Service Association of Hamilton, Ont., was held on Monday, the 18th of April, at which the election of officers took place, resulting as follows:—

President, Mr. McCallum; Vice-President, Mr. Woolcott; Secretary, Mr. R. Colvin; Treasurer, Mr. W. Stuart.