

# REPORT ON THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF CANADA

BY

SIR GEORGE MURRAY

The Right

Hon. R. L. BORDEN, K.C.,  
Prime Minister.

OTTAWA, November 30, 1912.

SIR,—I have the honour to inform you that, so far as the time at my disposal will permit, I have completed the inquiry, with which you were good enough to entrust me, into the organisation of the public service of Canada; and I beg to submit the following report.

(2) At the outset I may perhaps be allowed to say that no one can be more conscious than I am how little weight any views of mine on this subject are entitled to carry, owing to the difficulty of forming a judgment on matters depending so largely on local conditions and local sentiment, the effect of which cannot be fully realized without a prolonged stay in the country. I ought, however, to add that while there are some points to which I should have been glad to give more attention if time had permitted, there are others on which I think it is unlikely that my conclusions would have been affected by further consideration.

(3) I propose to deal with the questions referred to me in the order in which they stand in my instructions.

## I.—THE METHODS EMPLOYED IN THE TRANSACTION OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

(4) My suggestions under this head will be confined almost exclusively to the functions of Ministers and the possibility of affording them relief, leaving for a later portion of the report some other questions of departmental organisation.

(5) Nothing has impressed me so much in the course of my inquiry as the almost intolerable burden which the present system of transacting business imposes on Ministers themselves. They both have too much to do and do too much.

(6) Speaking broadly, it may be said that every act of the Executive Government, or of any member of it, requires the sanction of the Governor in Council which, under present practice, is identical with the Cabinet.

(7) The number of these Orders in Council averages from three thousand to four thousand per annum, and their subject matter ranges from questions of the highest importance, such as the approval of a treaty with some foreign Power, the disallowance of provincial legislation, the appointment of a judge, or the exercise of the prerogative of mercy, down to the acceptance of a tender for the erection of a pump, the promotion of a clerk from one grade to another, and the appointment of a lighthouse keeper or an exciseman.