

yet, Acts of Parliament containing subtle distinctions and designed for small groups, are hard to obtain: so much so that for centuries the maxim has held,—*De minimis non curat lex*.

Let the service by all means obtain the best terms possible; but let us not fail of our main object by presenting a divided front—demanding, some one thing and some another. “Old Timer” suggests, and we think his suggestion, in some form or another, a reasonable one, although far from being specific,—that transferred civil servants be granted the right of paying contributions for as many past years of service as they can. He has failed to observe, or at least to state, that men who have neither wives or children, or who are of indifferent health, would in all probability decline to make any such payments, whereas men in possession of these dear pledges, or in robust health, would strain every resource to qualify for as many years as possible. As reasonable men we must look upon this as a source of considerable loss to the government. He who seeks equity must do equity. Nor, if we waive this point, has “Old Timer” remembered to state whether such payments are to be *inclusive* or *exclusive* of interest, and if inclusive at what rate; and yet the difference may be truly portentous. If the payments are to include interest, will everyone be satisfied with that plan; and, where payments for the complete number of years cannot be made, what years are to be chosen,—the last, the middle or the first years? Time is of the very essence of interest payments, and a rule would have to be laid down. Who will lay down that rule with even the roughest semblance of justice? And how many will agree that it is just when laid down? On the other hand, suppose the payments are to be *exclusive* of interest, and that those concerned agree to regard this arrangement as fair, there is no assurance that the government will see eye-to-eye with them and consent to forego a loss of interest that, in

the aggregate, would amount to a large sum. We state this particular case somewhat fully and frankly to show that subjects which, upon the surface, appear simple, are in reality most complex.

We are glad to have had “Old Timer’s” communication, and he is free of our columns for any purpose of the like importance. We misjudge him, however, if he does not see some reason for taking common ground on what is acceptable to all, leaving special interests to be the subject of special representation at the proper time. As to those to whom these special interests apply, they should consult together, without loss of time, and agree, if possible, upon what they will consent to accept. The large class represented by our correspondent should certainly take occasion by the hand, reach a conclusion that will satisfy the majority, and communicate the result to the Civil Service Association without delay.

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#### BOURBONISM IN THE SERVICE.

The best men of both political parties are at one in desiring a reform of the Civil Service, as is evidenced by the non-partisan character of the debates upon the Bill of last session. The great mass of the public has thrown its weight into the same scale. All thinking men being agreed as to the necessity, there was passed the law of last session—a law which no one claims to be perfect, but which still marks a great advance on anything that has gone before. Two excellent commissioners have since been appointed. Portions of the Outside Service have been brought in—with the confusing results inevitable under a partial application of the law. And there for the time being the process has ceased. But, though the Kingdom cometh not with observation, we may let that pass for the present. Better a thousand times that opinion should be thoroughly sifted and clari-