

THE CIVILIAN

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THE EDITORS,
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SIR ROBERT BORDEN IN HALIFAX PLATFORM.

A thorough and complete reformation of the laws relating to the Civil Service should be put into effect, so that future appointments shall be made by an independent commission acting upon the report of examiners after competitive examination. I am convinced that we shall perform a great public duty by establishing in this country that system which prevails in Great Britain, under which a member of Parliament has practically no voice in or control over any appointment to the Civil Service.

To use the power of filling positions in the public service as a reward for party service and without regard to the character and capacity of the individual selected is a gross breach of a solemn public trust. A private trustee so dishonouring his office would be subject to punishment by the criminal law.

The Civilian today adopts a new golden text, which will be found on the lower half of the adjoining column. This text is a few words chosen from the utterances of the Right Honourable Sir Robert Borden in regard to the merit system as embodied in the Halifax platform drawn up in 1907. It may be asked why the Premier has not, by a single stroke, introduced his policy of Civil Service purification during his tenure of office. The difficulties of the situation may not, perhaps, be appreciated by the service generally. Those, however, who were present during the debate on the Honourable Mr. White's Civil Service Bill were afforded grounds and reasons. It may amaze many of those in the service of King George in Canada to learn that the approbrious terms and epithets hurled at the service by Messrs. Fowler and Edwards on May 29th in the House of Commons were greeted with applause, and thereby hangs a tale.

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Even a Prime Minister cannot do everything, no matter how lofty and magnanimous his ideals. Even a Prime Minister may not be able to advance ethically at a faster rate than the standards of public morality will permit. That Messrs. Fowler and Edwards were greeted with applause instead of with brickbats indicates an extremely low standard of public morality, at least as regards the Civil Service of King George in Canada. These honourable gentlemen have never felt deeply with the Scottish bard that, "This is my own, my native land," or they could not treat with such contumely and indignity the business which is carried on in the name of "My Native Land."

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The lesson is hard-earned, but must be taken to heart. It devolves upon the service itself, through its organizations, to undertake the