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How Matters Stand.

The civil service is in an unsettled and unsatisfactory state at the present moment.

We have the Act of 1908, which undertook to apply the so-called merit system to the inside service at Ottawa. Quite part from the details of that measure — and there are not a few that demand attention — there remains the extending of the principle which it embodies over the rest of the service. Why should not this important question receive the immediate and serious consideration of the government? Surely it is an important question. Of course there are other and great questions before the government at the present time, but is it not a mistake to think that any question however great should cast into shadow one which admittedly lies at the root of efficient administration? Is it not a mistake to say that the naval question or what not should make the civil service question wait? To deal with the latter only means the organization of forces which the government can always command in plenty.

Then there is the superannuation question—a part of and yet distinct from that above referred to. It is so technical in essence and its application is so independent of all other considerations that it might well be handed over at once to the Departmental experts who must deal with it in the careful and constructive way that is demanded.

There is also the matter of the revision of salary scales all round which the ever steady advancing cost of living brings nearer as a pressing necessity every day.

There are other matters in plenty that might be suggested. They all recall the fact that we have a commission on the civil service at work, whose report will doubtless have weight when these issues come to be decided by the government. But the commission seems not to be dealing with civil service theory of late. Might not an interim report, seeing that the session already looms on the horizon, be a good thing for the commission to consider, in view of the all important nature of those subjects to which we have referred, and the fact that time is needed by the government for their deliberation.