

THE CIVILIAN

A fortnightly journal devoted to the interests of the Civil Service of Canada.

Subscription \$1.00 a year;

Single copies 5 cents.

Advertising rates are graded according to position and space, and will be furnished upon application to

THE OTTAWA PRINTING CO.

MSS intended for publication, and all communications relating to the editorial policy of the journal, must be addressed

THE BOARD OF EDITORS,

THE CIVILIAN,

P. O. Box 484, Ottawa

Communications on any subject of interest to the Civil Service are invited and will receive careful consideration.

Ottawa, Aug. 14th, 1908

STEP LADDER REFORM.

Of all the responsibilities resting upon the Deputy Head of a department, there are probably none that equal in far-reaching seriousness the use of the step-ladder in departmental re-organization. A Deputy Head may make an error unwittingly in the administration of the policy of his department and thus retard the material growth of the country in respect of its minerals, lands, fisheries, finances, etc. But in the re-construction of his staff he is dealing with human hearts, and with the happiness of a large number of worthy people. If the clerks who are over-stepped are admittedly of inferior capacity and unfitted for the obligations of higher

offices, criticism must yield to commiseration. It is conceivable that of the injustices suffered by many clerks in the service in the past, some were inspired by the best intentions and by a sincere desire to promote the efficiency of the service. But this cannot well be claimed for all past re-organizing changes nor for some which rumor says are immediately impending.

The last Canada Gazette announces the advancement of a clerk in a department who has risen from a junior clerkship in 1900 to a chief clerkship in 1908 at \$2,100, and who over-stepped in his rapid ascent a score or more of his seniors in office. That this advancement is covered by the contingency above referred to may be true or it may not. The object of THE CIVILIAN is to differentiate between worthy and meritorious advancement for the public good and another kind by which the party advanced becomes the sole beneficiary.

Preferment in the service, based upon nature's livery or fortune's star or such like other considerations apart from seniority or merit have in the past operated detrimentally to office efficiency and blasted the careers of men of capacity and merit. Officials chafing under a sense of past and a fear of future injustice are ill-fitted for a whole-souled, patriotic devotion to the service of their country.

The task of treating this subject is as delicate as it is inevitable. Delicate because in order to attack the abuse instances must be singled out that may appear in the light of a personal attack, but it is the system not the individual which is under fire. THE CIVILIAN feels the gravity of its responsibilities in respect of this long outstanding evil and invites suggestions from its readers as to methods and means of defence against perpetuation of such abuses under the new regime to take effect on the 1st of September.