

# THE CIVILIAN

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE OF CANADA

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## The Civil Service Federation of Canada

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IS it too great a claim to put forward that organization of the people for the purpose of studying the problems of life common to all is the highest expression of Democracy? If so, surely it may at least be stated that such organization is the foundation upon which democracy must go forward to its ultimate goal of idealism. In former days before this world became so populated, and so busy, and before great combinations of governmental and capitalistic forces became employers of immense armies of men, organization was not of such paramount importance as it is to-day. In former days when small industries with few employees was the rule, men had opportunities to present their individual claims, and, being on more familiar terms with their employers, such matters could be, and generally were adjusted without the necessity of organization. To-day, however, the individual employee, seeking a just increase in remuneration, or relief from insupportable conditions, could not even get an audience with an official of a large corporation who may have the authority to grant the request. Thus it is that in large affairs, every advance made by the salary man has been the result of collective bargaining.

Until about ten years ago organizations of Civil Servants were on such a small scale as to be almost negligible in results in as far as any improvement in conditions or ideals in the Public Service was concerned. Patronage in both men and material ran riot and there was no man in the land great enough to bring the debauchery to an end. The sale of material to the Government by means of Patronage lists was a condition quite beyond the function of Civil Servants, either organized or unorganized. The effect of Patronage, however, in appointments and promotions to the Civil Service resulted

in a condition which Civil Servants considered they had a right to discuss because such a condition affected the status of each individual in the Service. But, of still greater importance than the rights of the individual were the interests of the State. As Canada developed by



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leaps and bounds after the beginning of the present century, so Patronage grew and battered upon the fair name of Canada's Public Service. An aroused public opinion is the surest method of checking a public evil. The creating of such an atmosphere may be achieved by agencies within the Service itself or by influences outside the Service. Other democratic countries have enjoyed the benefits

of one or both of these agencies. Until the war came with all its harrowing and soul purging horrors, no opinion was expressed outside of the Service as to the Prussian system of appointments and promotions by means of Patronage. It is to the everlasting credit of members of the Civil Service that they initiated the discussion in regard to the problems of public employment, and that they steadfastly carried out their well ordered programme of organization, education and publicity. To those who have borne the burden and heat of the day, especially the pioneers who laboured amid the dark days of doubt and discouragement, there must to-day come a feeling of happiness in the results attained.

And so organization and publicity were the chosen agencies utilized to work out the salvation of the Canadian people from the scandal of filling public office by any means other than merit. On the present occasion of the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Dominion Civil Service organization, an attempt will be made to briefly review the events which led up to and followed the launching of this organization.

In many portions of Canada, Civil Servants had met together to form local associations. The purposes of these associations are in the highest degree meritorious. Some of the objects are,—(1) to endeavour by means of co-operation to benefit the economic state of the members,—(2) by the development and maintenance of good understandings to cultivate *esprit de corps*,—(3) to study conditions in the Public Service and suggest remedies for any possible defects.

Organization made its first appearance in Ottawa, in the spring of 1906, when an Athletic Association was formed with a membership of about 1,000 members. During the summer of 1907 was formed the