

THE CIVILIAN

VOL. IX.

MARCH 2, 1917.

No. 23

Report of Sub-Committee on Membership and Representation

To the President and Members of the Executive Committee:

The committee having had under careful consideration the questions pertaining to Membership and Representation of the Civil Service Association of Ottawa in all their various aspects, beg to report as follows:

From the beginning of its history, the membership of this Association has been very unsatisfactory, and unmistakeably portrays a lack of interest in the work of the Association throughout the Civil Service at Ottawa. Startling as this statement may seem, it is in nowise an exaggeration of the facts, as the following statistics amply show: The membership in 1907 was 1,934; in 1907-08, 2,042; in 1908-09, 2,337; in 1909-10, 2,247; in 1910-11, 2,009; in 1911-12, 1,676; in 1912-13, 1,919; in 1913-14, 2,636; in 1914-15, 2,376; and in 1915-16, 1,543. The total number of civil servants employed at Ottawa is largely a matter of conjecture; nevertheless, it is safe to say that the number is at least 5,000. Thus, only once did the membership of the Association exceed fifty per cent of that number. This deplorable state of affairs is largely attributable to two prime causes: first, the Association is unknown to, and unthought of by, a large percentage of the Service, and, secondly, the efforts of the Association have hitherto been confined largely towards bringing about certain necessary reforms in the Service. The meaning of these two, "Civil Service Association" and "Civil Service Reform," are not sufficiently understood by the majority of the Service to be appreciated as significant factors in their lives. This is but the experience the world over whenever questions of reform are involved, and it is not to be expected that even a body of otherwise enlightened civil servants should prove an exception to the rule and look upon an organization solely devoted to reform with other than a doubtful mind.

The effect of allowing these conditions to long continue will surely prove disastrous to the Association and consequently to the Service. An Association whose bulwark is its membership cannot hope to succeed in its undertakings if its very stability remains impaired. The peculiar nature of these undertakings is such as to require the strongest possible support; without which not only is success impossible, but the very existence of the Association as an organization is threatened. The Service can give the support which is so essential, and it is to the Service that the Association must turn, as the Service should, and will, turn to the Association.

Having briefly reviewed the conditions under which the Association is arduously working on behalf of the Service—conditions which must be apparent to all—the committee now turn to the task of finding a remedy.

Little, if anything, has yet been done by the Association to forcefully bring to the mind of each and every individual in the Civil Service at Ottawa the fact that the Civil Service Association of Ottawa is a real, live organization, organized, constituted and working unceasingly in their interests alone and doing so against difficulties which few other organizations have to con-