

Riddance of Patronage a Great Gain

Dominion Forest Service now Appoints Field Staff on Merit Basis—Benefits to Soldiers.

The bringing of appointments to the outside service of the Dominion under the jurisdiction of the Civil-Service Commission under the amendments to the Civil Service Act passed at the last session of Parliament has been of great advantage already and its good effects have been felt in the forest service as well as elsewhere. The fact that the appointments of forest and fire rangers, permanent and temporary, are made through the Commission, which laid down the qualifications that would be required, placed the whole situation on a different basis and forestalled the efforts of men without qualifications and their friends to get them appointed. It also impressed on those who made a business of activity in interfering with appointments that their occupation was gone and their influence which was frequently exerted to upset discipline and efficiency in the service, has practically disappeared. Thus even the announcement of the definite adoption of the principle of Civil Service Reform has had a wholesome effect and has materially improved the spirit of the service.

Unfit Rejected

The definite results of the adoption of the Civil Service system has been that in appointments of temporary rangers or the filling of permanent positions that had become vacant only men who could show definite qualifications for the positions were considered and the appointment of the absolutely unfit or inexperienced was made impossible. In consequence, ineffective rangers have been largely eliminated from the temporary staff. The supervising officers of the forest service for the districts concerned were consulted by the Commission so as to get the benefit of their experience and local knowledge

of the men and the conditions under which they were to work and full weight was given to this evidence in determining the selection of the candidates. The knowledge that their judgment was to be given weight in the selection of the staff they were to supervise has given the supervising officers a greater interest and a better spirit in their work. The feeling of cooperation between the rangers and supervising officers has been greatly strengthened as they now are more thoroughly in sympathy in their interest in their work and their desire for efficiency.

Course for Soldiers

One important result of the adoption of the Civil Service system and an indication of how results follow one another is the establishment of a forest ranger course for returned soldiers at Vancouver in cooperation with the Military Hospitals Commission. Consideration of the establishment of a course of training for forest rangers was no new thing but action had always been hindered by the fact that even if men qualified themselves for positions as rangers, the existing system of appointment gave no guarantee that the man who spent his time and money qualifying himself would get an appointment even if there was a vacancy. Now, however, with the changed conditions, the establishment of such a course was a logical step and as the desire was to help returned soldiers first of all the Military Hospitals Commission was approached by the officials of the Forest Service on the subject, and in cooperation a course was laid out.

The lectures were given by officers of the Dominion forest service and by other foresters and a good number of returned soldiers who were found to be physically fit and took the course