

EDITORIAL

Something Rotten in Denmark.

The extraordinary situation disclosed in the opening article in this issue should be carefully read and digested by the members of all our services. If the spirit of the new legislation is not to be better observed than the old, what happened in the Customs and Post Office departments yesterday may happen in any other department tomorrow.

We know now that an advertisement for the higher and technical positions may be doctored by the expurgation of any reference to the duties to be performed. So that to this extent we may have promotions cut off from the well-informed departmental civil servants and the just hopes and ambitions of the qualified members of a whole department annihilated.

By such methods it would be possible for the federal system of public ownership to be manned, as to many of its executive positions, by men who know nothing of the business in hand. And so, when Canada organizes the machinery to operate the greatest railway system in the world, with its steamer and hotel systems, we may enjoy the edifying and highly patriotic entertainment of seeing some bosom friend of a high minded politician chosen for the chief executive position. Long live Patronage, Plutocracy, and Bankruptcy !!

Returned soldiers were appointed to each of the positions which are discussed in our leading article to-day. Now *The Civilian* was for the war and is for the returned soldier. We venture to say, however, that every returned man who understands the question at issue will agree with the view herein expressed. In the entrance examinations the syllabus is general in its character and the returned man has an advantage of 40 or 50 per cent over his civilian competitor. But in the examination for a technical position, such as the Vancouver collectorship, the syllabus must be particular and specific and qualifications for the special duties must be considered, or else we must continue to make of public ownership in Canada the "tragic farce" it was called by the Hon. Mr. Carvell.

It is altogether a happy event to be able to record in this issue the fact that the Civil Service Commission has contended for the "Merit law" in its dealings with the departments concerned. We are bound to point out, however, to Dr. Roche and his colleagues, and we do so sympathetically and co-operatively that it is only the strict letter of the law which has been observed. The Commission should have fought to the last ditch for the inclusion of experience in the technical duties of office in

the qualifications required for these two positions. The appointments should not be allowed to pass without the most strenuous protest from the Federation expressed through the voices of its many constituent members.

All the information available in connection with the two cases has been submitted to our readers. One important item of information has yet to be disclosed, viz., the party or parties responsible for the framing of the advertisement for the Vancouver position. We are rather pleased we do not know the responsible parties and that in this Christmas number it does not therefore become our duty to state our real feelings in respect to the person or persons responsible for this act of war against the merit principle. After the New Year we will revert to this subject. In the meantime we quote the ever immortal bard:

"By the pricking of my thumbs
Something wicked this way comes."

Minimum Living Wage

The government employees in the United States are asking, and will secure, a minimum wage, for full time adult service, of \$1,320, rising in six years to \$2,200. They present figures proving that the latter figure, or \$2,262.47 to be exact, is the minimum amount upon which a family can live in decent health and comfort. Conditions in the States are so nearly identical with our own, unless they are better, that the article fits us exactly. We are not unreasonable; the inertia to be overcome has been so great that we have not aimed high enough.

East and West

The Postal Journal this month contains two letters from the West which should go far in the direction of re-establishing the entente cordiale between the postal workers east and west. We have all been almost too busy working for the good of the service to ask whether we were all properly affiliated or not. Community of interest must bring us all together in the end. We are now a unit, potentially and in spirit. Let us do everything in our power to make the union actual.

Always At It.

When you have a particularly good piece of news regarding action taken by the Government for civil servants, the officers who have been responsible for the success do not ask that you give them credit. They are merely doing their duty, as the elected representatives of the Service, but they feel that you should realize that the price of success is eternal vigilance and hard work.

In most cases it is not possible for the officers to take the Service into their confidence during the progress of the negotiations with Government, and in nearly every case it is impossible for the officers to announce the steps taken