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Marching Towards Freedom

Preparations for the Abolition of Patronage in the Outside Service are Making Rapid Progress.

Every day sees some new advance of the cause of emancipation of the Canadian Public Service from the bondage of the patronage system.

The new Ministers of the Crown—notably Hon. Mr. Calder and Hon. Mr. Crerar—have declared for the abolition of the spoils system in no mistakeable terms, ranking themselves in this regard with Sir Robert Borden and Sir George Foster.

Sir Robert Borden has announced that patronage lists—both in regard to appointments and in regard to purchases—have been abolished.

Newspapers of all shades of politics, from coast to coast, hail the prospect of a universal merit system with joy. Not even the politicians know the inner rottenness of the spoils system better than do the newspaper men.

Public opinion seems to be in complete accord on this question. The Government will surely have unanimous support in making the coming transformation all-inclusive and complete to the smallest detail.

Commissioners Met Deputies.

The Civil Service Commissioners are hard at work upon the report that the Premier has asked for. The assembling of accurate information in regard to the outside branches of the different departments is, necessarily, the first step in this undertaking. With this end in view they held a conference, on October 26th, with the deputy ministers of the Service, nearly all the permanent heads being present.

While details of the meeting have not been given out, it is understood that the assembled deputies were unanimous in their approval of the proposed change.

Commissioner LaRochelle addressed them at length on the workings of the merit system so far as it has been applied to the Inside Service and outlined possible improvements both in regard to the administration of the Inside and in the method as it may be made applicable to the Outside.

An important point was in regard to appointments under Section 21 of the Act of 1908. It is proposed that appointments from outside the Service, under this clause, shall, hereafter, be made only when it has been ascertained that there is no one in the Service eligible for promotion to the vacant position. Commissioner Jameson is said to be very much interested in this restriction to the present practice, pointing out that frequent appointments from the outside are discouraging to men already in the Service and remove their incentive to energy and efficiency.