

# THE CIVILIAN

VOL. IX.

JANUARY 5, 1917.

No. 19

## Relief is Now Expected

**Minister of Finance Gives Sympathetic Hearing to Petition of Inside Service on Cost of Living Matter. Third Division Discussed.**

The situation in regard to the desired increases of remuneration to the Inside Service at Ottawa has changed materially during the past ten days, and *The Civilian* is glad to be able to say that the change is decidedly for the better. There is now excellent grounds for hoping that the Government will take some steps at an early date to relieve the hard situation in which its employees have been placed by the unprecedented increase in the cost of living.

### The Interview.

As forecasted in the last issue, the officers of the Civil Service Association of Ottawa have interviewed the Government on this, at present, all-important matter. The delegation was received at noon on December 28th by Hon. Sir Thomas White, Minister of Finance. Hon. Thomas Crothers, Minister of Labour, was also present. The Service was represented by President Walter Todd, Vice-Presidents E. F. Drake and A. DeB. Tremaine and Secretary J. C. O'Connor.

A memorial, setting forth the difficulties incurred by civil servants through the cost of the necessities of life increasing while salaries remained nearly, and in some cases quite stationary, was presented and was perused by Sir Thomas White with close attention. The memorial was a lengthy document and in it were quoted statistics on the cost of living obtained from reports of the Department of Labour and other reliable sources. Due attention was also given to the increase of wages in most occupations which have kept pace, in some measure, with the advance in prices. Increased rates of pay have been won largely by workers in occupations that permit of organization under labour union systems. The Civil Service cannot exert pressure in this way and is reduced to the necessity of asking its employers for free concessions. Banks, trust companies and other large employers whose employees are not organized into unions have granted their workers substantial advances in salaries, or bonuses.

In the United Kingdom and certain of the overseas Dominions, as well as in the United States, financial relief has lately been given to the lower-paid grades of public employees by the governments.

The memorial analyzed the position of different classes in the Service, showing that many men, being at their maximum salaries, have received no increases for several years, while the \$50 annual increase granted to others in the lower divisions figures out at a very small percentage on the salary and offsets to only a trifling extent the increase in the cost of living.

Passing reference was also made to the patriotic work and gifts of the Service in Ottawa.