

The Increase Before Parliament.

Extracts from the Debates upon the Resolution.—The Process of Reform.—The Two Acts.—The Cost of Living Increase.—The Re-organization.

The most important event in civil service annals for many months past was the introduction by the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture, on Friday, January the 29th, of the resolution designed to pave the way to the granting of a cost of living increase to the inside service. The resolution itself was published in the last issue of THE CIVILIAN. Up to the time of going to press with the present number, the resolution is still without the final ratification of the House, though the more important explanations and declarations of policy in this connection have been made, and the principle of the new Act generally accepted. The delay involved need not be regretted, as the more thorough the debate upon the resolution the less protracted will be the discussion of the resultant Act.

In order that the service may have a record in accessible form of the more important statements made by the government in the course of the debates, with regard to its general attitude towards the service and with respect also to the proposed increase, THE CIVILIAN presents below a series of excerpts chosen somewhat liberally from the Hansard reports, and arranged under headings appropriate for reference.

Process of Reform to be Followed by the Government.

With regard to the general line of action followed by the government in dealing with the problem of civil service reform, Mr. Fisher stated as follows:—

"Speaking in general terms and as shortly as possible, I may say that the report of the Royal Commission embodied five principal recommendations: (1) that the entry into the Civil Service should in future be through a competitive examination instead of, as had been the case up to that time, through a qualifying examination; (2) that the service should be reorganized and classified on a somewhat different basis, the classification dealing rather with the duties than the personnel of the offices; (3) that an independent and non-political body of the Civil Service Commissioners should be appointed who would have charge of the competitive examinations and generally of the administration of the Civil Service under the government; (4) that the salaries of the Civil Service should be increased in consequence of the largely increased cost of living during the many years in which the salaries generally had not been greatly increased; (5) that a system of superannuation should be worked out and adopted for the benefit of those retiring from the service. The Bill of last session covered three of these recommendations. The resolution which I now have the honour to propose to the House covers the fourth of these recommendations."

The Prime Minister on the same subject, but from a somewhat different point of view, also made the following statements:—