

REPORT.

The Committee appointed to enquire into the present condition of the Civil Service, and the method of nominating and examining candidates for appointment with a view to ascertaining whether better means cannot be adopted for securing the appointment of properly qualified persons, and the general efficiency of the Service, with power to send for persons, papers and records, and to report their observations on the subject referred to them, together with the minutes of evidence taken before them, by leave to report.

Your Committee regret that, owing to the unusual delay in bringing down the return to an address of the House for statistics of the Civil Service, they have not been able to consider and report upon those statistics.

They have, however, orally examined several of the Deputy Ministers of the different departments and other gentlemen of high standing in the service of the Dominion, and the Deputy Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario. Some of these gentlemen also submitted written memoranda on the subject referred to the Committee. To all these witnesses the Committee are indebted for much valuable information given with unvarying readiness and courtesy.

Their evidence is submitted in the appendix to this report. That evidence and the finding of the Committee are to be understood as referring to a lengthened experience under different Governments.

The Committee have also considered as fully as time as would allow the system in force in the Civil Service of Great Britain and that of the Colony of Victoria, Australia, and several suggestions made by members of the Committee.

In regard to the present condition of the Service and the method of nominating and examining candidates for appointment, your Committee find as follows:

The matters referred to, and the general economy of the Service are regulated to a great extent by statute. The Act provides rules for appointments, promotions, superannuations and other details of management. It also establishes a Civil Service Board composed of permanent heads of Departments to conduct the prescribed entrance examinations.

In carrying out the provisions of the Act great irregularities are found to have existed. The entrance examinations which were intended to secure the efficiency of the employés have been only applied at all to candidates for the inside service of the Departments, and even in regard to these they appear to have been almost a matter of form. The subjects have been very elementary and the test is not nearly equal to that applied to scholars entering the high schools of Ontario, and is said by the Chairman of the Board to be intended merely to exclude those who are utterly ignorant and quite unfit for the Service. It certainly appears to be ill-calculated to do more than this and quite insufficient to ensure the real efficiency of those who pass. Such as it is, no power rests with official heads of Departments or the Civil Service Board, to compel candidates to undergo it. These are examined only when they make voluntary application or are sent to the Board by the Minister who appoints them. As a matter of fact the provisions of the law in this respect have been very generally violated ever since its establishment, compliance with them having been the exception rather than the rule.

The practice of making appointments by political patronage was considered by most of the witnesses to be bad both in principle and results. Some, however, thought it might work well enough if checked by a proper entrance examination and system of probation.

In the outside service with the exception of the Inland Revenue Department and the engineering branches the exercise of political patronage seems to be almost unchecked, and its results correspondingly bad. Except in the departments men-