

# THE CIVILIAN

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## Ethics, Not Finance.

### Final Stages of the Salary Question.

It is the plain truth that never before in the history of the civil service has disappointment and unrest been greater than during the past few days. The cause is not far to seek. After months of anxious waiting, the end of the session draws plainly into view, and with it a definite and all but final refusal of the prayer of the service, constant for two years past, for relief from the financial burden.

True, we have the new act. Deplorable would it be if the service did not recognize its great possibilities. But it has fallen upon evil days when the service, in the harassment begotten of the salary difficulty, looks to it and is prone to judge it by that standard alone. The act, of course, is frankly not intended to afford immediate relief. All told, it involves an increase of about \$55,000 a year on salaries account, but of that the Deputy Ministers alone get 40%, the chief clerks an additional 20%, while an approximate estimate of the amount that falls to the share of the second-class clerks—comprising the army of the service—places it at the magnificent total of 5% ! It would not be fair to forget that the ultimate benefit to the rank and file will be proportionately larger than this, but in good truth the relief which it affords for the present is small indeed.

Then, again, we have had the supplementary estimates. On the eve of a promised reorganization, they have caused, in spots, some rubbing of the eyes. Like the new act, their favours

are for the high. It is not too much to say that anger and heart-burnings will be their only fruit if this is all the body of the service is to receive.

Is there, then, no balm in Gilead ? It is useless to go over again and again the plain facts on which the case of the service rests. For our own part we grow weary of the theme. From first to last no answer has been made by any one—for the simple reason that no answer is possible. But at this eleventh hour let us re-state some of the features in the situation that stand out most clearly in the light of the turn things have taken. The House still sits, and everything is possible to the House.

Perhaps the most curious development in connection with the whole case has been the gradual disassociation of the salary question and the question of civil service reform. When it is remembered that the original cause for the appointment of the civil service commission was the need for a readjustment of civil service salaries, and that the first of its findings was to emphasize that need and to suggest a remedy, the irony of the present contretemps is apparent. The questions are not separate, they are one. How can you make an efficient zealous officer of a man who is straining every nerve without success to pay the butcher and the baker and to keep a roof above his family's head ? The reorganization may do something, but there are hundreds