

in its scope as other previous reports have been. Some of its considerations and recommendations are as follows:—

“There has been an absence of one central authority taking cognizance of the various departments of the public service and endeavouring to harmonize and co-ordinate them into one organized administrative body. Owing to the great development of the country exigencies have arisen from time to time and services have been created to meet these exigencies; but no organized effort has been made to co-ordinate these services and to assign to each its proper status and duties in the general machinery of the administration.”

“Nor can the responsibility for this state of affairs be specially laid at the door of any Minister or set of Ministers. It must be attributed to the fact that hitherto there has been no central authority charged with the duty of assimilating, in so far as might be possible, the status and conditions of service of the outside officials of the various departments of the Government. Careful supervision and inspection is carried out by the various head offices in Ottawa over their own officials in all parts of the Dominion, but each is striving to meet its own problems and difficulties in its own way.”

“That entrance to and promotions in the service should not be a matter of political patronage, but that the whole Outside Service should be placed under the Civil Service Commission; that promotions therein should be by merit, and that the higher positions should be filled from the service itself.”

“That examinations for promotion be solely in regard to a man's fitness for the duties of the office.”

Promotions

“Your Commissioners consider that in many cases promotions have been forced on the several departments owing to political influence; that the officials promoted do the same work as they performed in the lower grade, and, as has been mentioned before, promotions have taken place as a rule for other causes than the necessities of the service. In the recommendations which will follow at the conclusion of this report your Commissioners will indicate what they consider necessary under this head.”

As the result of the report of this Committee, the Government of the day introduced an important amending bill (1907-8). The bill dealt mainly with the Inside Service, and was notable for the greatest step so far taken by any government in Canada for efficient administration of the rapidly increasing number of civil servants. An independent commission was inaugurated or in other words, the Merit System. The Commissioners were made responsible only to the Senate and House of Commons.

Extracts from a Report of Sir George Murray, November 30, 1912, on the Public Service of Canada

“On the other hand, I must say that cases have come under my notice which lead me to think that in some instances the recommendations of both the heads and the deputy heads of departments have not been founded exclusively on ‘merit’ as the Act directs, but that other considerations, or perhaps I should say ‘merits’ other than those contemplated by the Act, have been allowed to carry weight, and that grave injustice has sometimes been done to deserving officers who have in consequence been passed over. I should hope, however, that promotions of this kind are becoming fewer, as a sense of the responsibility for the selection of the fittest candidate becomes more real. Not only does the public service suffer if the fittest man is not promoted, but grave injustice is inflicted on the individual who is passed over merely because he is unable to bring political or other influence to bear in his favour.”