

that are often monotonous and irksome beyond any conception of those who have never spent years at a desk.

To follow the doings of a staff of average workers, to know how the best work is to be got out of them in the long run of a lifetime spent in the service, this is the proper business of a minister. Practically without exception every man who has ever assumed ministerial responsibilities in Canada has been ambitious to leave behind him a good record as an administrator. But when to all his other necessary duties are added a mass of detail which represents nothing except the clatter of an administrative machine set up years ago and now utterly out of date and useless, it is not to be wondered at if cases multiply of civil servants who feel that their work is not appreciated and their just claims receive but scant attention.

The fault is nobody's, the fault is everybody's. The system is completely wrong and it cannot be altered too soon.

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No point is more clearly made in the report of Sir George Murray than that there is need of some co-ordinating authority to apply to all departments of the public service those principles that it is deemed desirable to maintain. And, of course, the very appointment of an expert like Sir George Murray to investigate and report upon the whole situation is, of itself, proof that the powers that be are desirous of working out some such plan of co-ordination.

The departments and branches are many, but the Dominion Government is one. To let each department run on its own lines may be very handy for the departments, but it is sure to raise difficulties for the public service as a whole.

Need is constantly felt of some means by which the results of the work of one department may be made

available for the use of all. Sir George Murray suggests at least two things in this line. The first is that the Commission of Conservation should be made a small working body with power to map out work in relation to waterways and other natural resources, thus preventing duplication by several departments that may desire to cover the same ground; and the other is that there should be some uniform plan of accounts for all departments. In other similar respects the lack of co-ordination is felt. For instance, very recently a commission was appointed by Hon. George E. Foster, Minister of Trade and Commerce to work out some uniform plan of statistical reporting for the departments. And *Civilian* readers will remember the essay of Mr. Bowman, winner of the prize offered by Mr. Charles Magrath, ex-M.P., setting forth a plan for linking up and standardizing the engineering work under the government.

From the point of view of the civil service, there is great need of some understandable system of classification and promotion. As it stands today, there are some branches of the service which are recognized as most desirable places of appointment while others are shunned by those in a position to choose. In fact there are branches in the same department which differ so greatly in their attractions that men employed in one are constantly planning to be transferred to the other, while chiefs of divisions are heard to declare that their work is made difficult by their men being "stolen" by chiefs of other divisions.

A civil servant should be able to feel that he is working for the Dominion of Canada, and that so long as he does his work as well as he can, his employee will advance him as he earns advancement. His success should not be made to depend upon mere luck in being appointed to a place in a "good" department.