

competent, and was dismissed. He did not attend to his duties, and declined to answer letters from Ottawa. He was dismissed. By the certificate of the Commissioners the same man was appointed, under Section 21, at a salary of \$2,100, to inspect offices, one of which he was incompetent to manage at \$500 salary. When he goes out inspecting, another officer of the department has to be sent over the ground to do the work properly. Just the same, he went over the heads of a number of good men of long service."

Another civil servant told the following story: "A certain branch of the Ottawa service was investigated by Commission. Much was found wrong with it. A number of changes were made. One man was recommended for superannuation. He had acted in a manner to cause some uneasiness as to the normality of his reasoning faculties. He was superannuated. Some months after, this man was appointed, under the certificate of the Commissioners, to a higher position in the service, and at a much greater salary. And," he added, "the certificate recommended him on account of having made a careful enquiry into the applicant's professional standing and ability . . . and that he passes the requisite knowledge and ability, and is duly qualified as to health, character and habits."

### Special Competitive Examinations.

Special appointments are made to the service quite apart from those who pass the semi-annual examinations. These appointments are not made under Section 21, but under Section 18, which latter section calls for examination. Grief is felt throughout the service by true lovers of the merit system, that this examination is not what it seems. The atmosphere is surcharged with doubt as to the genuineness of the Special

Competitive Examination. The claim is made that many of the appointments are purely appointive and should appear under the Section 21 column. One member of the service relates the case at an "appointment under S. C. Examination of an expert typist who could only pick out the keys with one finger." Another tells of a man "appointed to the charge of an important work who lacked the rudiments of an English education." Were such appointments made under Section 21, as patronage, the service would accept it as part of a system to be got rid of only after a course of education in what is decent and just for the men and women doing the country's work. But they are made under the merit system, the cases cited being but minor instances chosen from a number to indicate that a screw is loose, or something worse, in the organization of the Civil Service Commission.

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With certain imperfections, the foregoing completes the task allotted the writer in respect of this subject. The editors of *The Civilian* made no mistake in taking steps to have facts and considerations collected regarding the progress of the merit system as it has existed in the Inside Service since 1908. Something has gone wrong with the works of the Commission, and the greatest doubt exists as to the rights and securities of public service. The powers of Messrs. Fripp and Chabot seem to be invoked as often as those of the Commissioners. The most ardent supporters of the Commission principle, as well as the most sincere personal friends of the Commissioners themselves, agree that the Commissioners must re-habilitate their reputation as guardians of the merit system and champions of the square deal for all, or lose themselves in chaos.