

(e) THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE WORK BETWEEN THE SEVERAL DEPARTMENTS OR AUTHORITIES.

(124) This is another subject which requires more careful examination than I have been able to give to it, and I feel some diffidence in offering any remarks upon it.

The branches of administration which come within the purview of the Dominion Government are so numerous and so varied in their nature that it is clearly necessary to adopt some system of grouping; and it is certainly desirable not only that the branches to be dealt with by each Minister should be as nearly cognate as possible, but that all work of the same character should be concentrated in one Department. In the system under which the present distribution has been arranged it is not easy to recognize any underlying principle.

(125) For example, the Department of Agriculture, besides the work which one would naturally expect to find allotted to it, deals with patents, copyright, trade-marks, exhibitions, public health and quarantine. The Department of Inland Revenue, the main function of which is collecting the duties of excise, deals also with the inspection of weights and measures, the inspection of gas and electric light, patent medicines, and the adulteration of food and fertilizers. The Department of Public Works maintains harbours, piers and navigation works generally; but the maintenance of the St. Lawrence Ship Channel, a work not very different in character from the other navigation works, is under the control of the Department of Marine and Fisheries. I have already referred to the fact that two Departments, namely, the Post Office and the Department of Trade and Commerce, deal with steamship subsidies, while the latter Department is also charged with duties relating to the inspection of grain which, at first sight, seem more appropriate to the Department of Agriculture.

I am not in a position to make any definite suggestions as to the redistribution of these duties; but I think that the whole subject should receive early consideration by the Government.

(126) In this connection, however, I may perhaps be allowed to make a suggestion with regard to the Departments of Customs and Inland Revenue. Both of them are engaged in work of much the same character and each maintains a staff at various points in the Dominion. The suggestion which I have to make is that these two Departments and their staffs should be amalgamated. I feel sure that the convenience of the public would be consulted by such a change, and that considerable economies could be effected not only in the higher positions but also among the rank and file. Collectors of Customs, with a number of subordinate officials, are stationed at almost all places at which there are Inland Revenue Collectors; and at many of these places, judging from the amount of revenue collected, the duties must be scarcely sufficient to occupy the whole time of the officials. In suggesting this amalgamation I confine myself, so far as the Department of Inland Revenue is concerned, to that portion of its functions which relates to the collection of the excise. Its other duties seem to be more appropriate to the Department of Trade and Commerce.

IV.—GENERALLY THE MANNER IN WHICH THE PUBLIC BUSINESS OF THE DOMINION IS ADMINISTERED.

(127) Under this head I have brought together some miscellaneous points which have suggested themselves to me in the course of my inquiries and which could not conveniently be dealt with under any of the foregoing sections of this Report.

(i) *The development of the natural resources of the country.*—The Dominion of Canada is peculiarly fortunate, in comparison with other countries, in the wealth of its natural resources; but, notwithstanding what has already been done in this connection, I feel some doubt whether adequate steps have been taken for preserving and developing these resources for the benefit of the nation as a whole.