

Section 4.—The Civil Service of Canada*

In the widest sense the Federal Civil Service comprises all servants of the Crown—other than those holding political or judicial office—who are employed in a civil capacity and whose remuneration is paid wholly and directly from moneys voted by Parliament. Collectively, they form the staffs of the various departments, commissions, boards, bureaus, and other agencies of the Federal Government. Nearly every category of occupation is represented in the Civil Service, and personnel are further differentiated in terms of the authority under which appointments are made. A few are appointed by either or both Houses of Parliament directly, a number by departments and other agencies in accordance with the provisions of certain statutes, generally with executive approval of the Governor in Council, and the remainder—by far the majority—are selected and appointed by the Civil Service Commission.

As the central personnel agency of the Federal Government, the Civil Service Commission is the custodian of the "merit principle" in respect of both initial appointments and promotions. The steps by which the Commission, in its present form, came to be constituted is the record of Civil Service reform in Canada which began a year after Confederation and culminated in the passing of the Civil Service Act of 1918. Successive Royal Commissions deliberated on the problem of creating an effective and efficient working force and from their findings and recommendations emerged the concept of a quasi-judicial body, with a large measure of autonomy and with jurisdiction over nearly the whole of the public service.

Recruitment.—The recruitment of civil servants is conducted by means of open competitive examinations. In the past 30 years over 1,000,000 applicants for civil service posts have been examined by the Commission. Examinations are held periodically as the staff requirements of the public service dictate. Positions located throughout the country are treated in the same manner as positions at Ottawa, but applicants for local positions must be bona fide residents of the locality in each case, whereas any Canadian citizen is entitled to apply for positions open at Ottawa. Competitive examinations are announced through the public press and through posters displayed on the public notice boards of post offices, offices of the National Employment Service, offices of the Civil Service Commission, public libraries and elsewhere.

The relative capacities of applicants are measured by objective tests designed and applied by the Commission. The nature of the test varies with the class of position and it may be of the written or the oral type, or a combination of the two. For certain classes of positions ratings are based entirely on the education and experience of applicants as given on their application forms. In some cases a demonstration of skill may be required.

The names of persons successful in civil service examinations, arranged in order of rank, are recorded on eligible lists. Examination results are formally announced by publication in the *Canada Gazette* and each candidate—successful or unsuccessful—is advised of his standing. As required, appointments are made from the eligible lists, which remain valid for one year.

The statutory preference which existed for veterans of the First World War was extended to veterans of the Second World War and proved to be a major factor in occupational rehabilitation. In the period May, 1945, to December, 1948, approximately 50,000 veterans were appointed to civil service positions. The figure represents approximately 75 p.c. of all male appointments in the period.

* Revised by the Secretary of the Civil Service Commission, except where otherwise indicated.