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THE census returns of 1891, so far as they relate to population, are no doubt a surprise to many, as they must be a disappointment to all Canadians. It is useless to attempt to disguise the fact. Here is a young country, with a vast extent of unoccupied territory, as fertile as any in the world; with immense resources in forests, mines and fisheries, and with an energetic population, derived largely from the very best stock the world affords, and yet for some reason or other its progress during the last ten years is only about equal to that of the long-settled and over-crowded Mother Country, from whose shores emigrants are constantly embarking by thousands for the New World. The percentage of increase in Canada is less than half that of her next door neighbour, notwithstanding the comparatively dense population of the latter country. A still more disappointing aspect of the fact is that notwithstanding the considerable number of immigrants who have landed on our shores, the total addition to our population during the ten years is less than the average natural increase. The first obvious inference is that the immigration from the Dominion must be discouragingly large. The fact, too, that while the Maritime Provinces have been almost stationary, and Quebec and Ontario have made but slight progress, the rate of growth in the North-West and the Pacific Province has been comparatively large, emphasizes the truth already well known, that the movement of population trends constantly westward. The same tendency is equally manifest in the Eastern and Central States of the American Union. But it is little consolation for us to be told that our showing is no worse than that of New England, so long as the fact unfortunately is clear that the westward-moving people of the Republic stay in their own country, while a large percentage of ours cross the line. To speak plainly, that is just the chief source of our trouble. The conditions of life in the two countries, from some cause or other, are such that there is a constant flow of some of the best elements of our population across the boundary. The young men in particular, those who should be the bone and sinew of our young nation, are steadily leaving us, to find the remunerative employment which they cannot obtain in their own country. They are scarcely to blame. Many of them love Canada as their native land, and leave it with

the deepest regret. But the country is weakened, nevertheless, by their loss. To find out the cause or causes of this deplorable result, and to point out the remedy, if remedy there be, is a task worthy of our best statesmen. It may be that those causes lie beyond the control of statesmanship, that they are to be found mainly in the operation of laws, geographical or economic, over which we have no control; that there is nothing to be done but to content ourselves with a slower but sounder and surer development; or to wait for the change which is sure to come as the great cistern to the south becomes more nearly full, and the stream begins to flow back in this direction. But so pessimistic a conclusion should not and must not be accepted without the closest and most profound investigation of which our public men are capable. Now is the time and here is the opportunity for the true statesman to come to the front.

HITHERTO, since the commencement of the revelations of this memorable session, the attention of Parliament, the press and the public has been so fixed upon the work of investigation, that little thought has as yet been given to the work of reformation. Yet it is now surely time that all thoughtful citizens were beginning to enquire seriously not only how those who have been found guilty of criminal carelessness or dishonesty in the public service shall be punished, but what means shall be taken to prevent, as far as possible, the repetition of such betrayals of trust in the future. As most of the offences with which the Committees, at least those of the Commons, have had to deal have been in connection with the official work of the Departments, the thoughts naturally turn to the Civil Service as the field in which radical reform is most imperatively needed. *Hansard* is now to hand with a full report of the debate which took place in the Senate, a week or two since, in connection with the enquiry of Hon. Mr. McInnes as to what measures the Government proposed to take to effect the needed reform. The reply of the Premier indicated, it will be remembered, two steps in particular which the Government propose to take in the way of reorganization—first, the appointment of a non-partisan Royal Commission to prepare and recommend an improved scheme for conducting the business of the Departments, and second, the appointment of a Comptroller or Inspector, standing independent of the Government of the day, to a large extent, whose duty it would be to scrutinize the management of the finances of the Departments, as well as the conduct of officials and the way in which the work was done. We have already expressed our doubt as to the efficacy of such an arrangement. The fuller light thrown upon it by the debate and from other sources strengthens that doubt into a conviction that the Government proposal fails to go to the root of the evil. Is it not, by the way, a little singular that Premier Abbott, almost in the same breath in which he states the Government's intention of appointing a Commission of enquiry, announces a purpose which must have the effect of limiting that enquiry to mere matters of detail? Hon. Mr. McInnes, in his brief address, reminded the Senate of several previous attempts which had been made by Parliament to reform the Civil Service. He recalled particularly the Commission appointed for that purpose in 1880, and its chief recommendations, viz., the abolition of political patronage, open and competitive examinations, promotion by merit, and the appointment of a permanent Civil Service Commission. These are substantially the measures that have wrought so complete and salutary a reform in the Civil Service of Great Britain, and that are bringing about a similar improvement in that of the United States. Compared with such a system, any reorganization which could be effected under Premier Abbott's scheme would be superficial and worthless. The pernicious patronage system, which is the origin and fountain of most of the wrong doing, it would be, if we understand the proposal, beyond the power of the Commission to touch. Premier Abbott thinks that all that is necessary is the introduction and observance of business principles in the management of the Departments. Has it occurred to him that one of the first and most indispensable of business principles is that officials shall be appointed solely on their merits? Every successful manager of a great business will

insist on the power of appointing and dismissing his subordinates, realizing that thus only can he be enabled to select as foremen of the different branches of the business, and, in fact, as employees generally, thoroughly capable and trustworthy men. He knows well that upon the presence of such men, more even than upon the most complete system, depends the efficiency of the service. Does the Government propose to give their Commissioner the power of appointment and dismissal, or in any other way to abolish the baneful system of patronage? Apart from this radical change, all plans of reform, if not foredoomed to failure, must fall far short of completeness.

WILL not the honest and patriotic newspapers, on both sides, join us in advocating the abolition of patronage in the Civil Service? So radical a change can be brought about only by concurrence of Government and Opposition. But what a relief it would be to members of the Government and of Parliament? What a boon to the country generally? Till that is brought about it is idle to hope for any thorough reform in the Civil Service. But we are far from supposing that even this great reform, were it accomplished, would effectually purify the political life of the Dominion. There are other sources of corruption inherent in our present political methods which must be removed before we can hope to see the politics of the country lifted to the high plane on which every honest citizen would like to see them. Chief among these is the subsidy system, which has grown to such monstrous dimensions within the last few years. It is unnecessary, even had we space, to describe it at length. Every reader knows what it is and how it is worked; knows, too, how it is tainting and demoralizing the political life of the whole Dominion. It is rapidly converting whole constituencies into marketable commodities, setting them up at political auction, to be purchased by the highest subsidy-bidder. It is destroying the public spirit, never yet, alas! so strong as it should be, of the people of the Provinces. No wonder that an influential journal in the United States exclaimed, when it got a clear conception of the working of this system, that such a system would ruin any nation. It cannot be denied that under this system millions of dollars have been squandered, or embezzled; that railway charters have been made merchandise of; that individuals have been enriched at the public expense. It cannot be doubted even by the most credulous partisan that of the millions upon millions of dollars that have been expended in railways and canals, a large part has been appropriated under political pressure, or with a view to political effect, rather than with a single eye to the welfare of the Dominion. It is a hopeful sign that even the members and supporters of the Government are appalled at some of the revelations now being made, and are resolving and declaring that it is time to call a halt, and that henceforth subsidies must be voted much more carefully and sparingly. A most significant remark was that made, we think, by a Minister the other day, in defence of an appropriation for a post-office in some small place, while large towns were left without one, to the effect that that Province, or that section of the Province, had not had its share of the public money! We have no hesitation in saying that this system of voting large or small sums of money by the Parliamentary majority at the bidding of the Government, for the construction of so-called public works in various localities all over the Dominion, is far more mischievous and dangerous to political morality than even the pernicious patronage system itself. What is to be done? Is it not time that honest politicians on either side of politics were putting their hands together, resolved to find and apply a radical reform of the subsidy system?

THE census returns have diverted public attention during the week, to a considerable extent, from the investigations of the various Committees at Ottawa. There have been no new or startling developments in connection with these investigations. The Senate Committee and the Commons Committee on Privileges and Elections seem to be approaching the end of their labours. In regard to the latter, the public interest has centred mainly in the argument of Mr. Fitzpatrick, on behalf of Mr. Thomas McGreevy, and the facts presented by the other lawyers