

They must buy all their supplies here and they must employ Canadian labour. The supplies to some extent and the Canadian labour entirely are more expensive, and hence the Canadian ship-owner is at a slight disadvantage. It seems unfortunate that this could not have been offset by some measure of protection. It is in the interest of the whole country that Canadian shipping should thrive and increase.

THE PURITAN POET

THE year which has just closed was observed, during its last month, in literary circles as the tercentenary of John Milton's birth. The remark has frequently been made that no one now reads "Paradise Lost." That is not saying that the world would not be the better for more knowledge of the Miltonic genius. John Milton lived and wrote in a stormy day and it is not surprising that some of its turbulence and intolerance affected his later work. But English literature has not many volumes to display which are so enriched by creative imagination as the works of John Milton. His prose works, a perfect "field of the cloth of gold" in the opinion of Lord Macaulay, would have made a lesser man famous, but, except one prophetic passage from the "Areopagitica," they are unfamiliar to the public.

We are given to patronage of the past, to speaking slightly of the poor dear Early Victorians and with kindly tolerance of the Elizabethan age. Have we not invented the telephone, the aeroplane and the kinetoscope? But anyone who contemplates the dreary expanse of modern drama, who is inflicted with Molnar's "Devil," for instance, cannot help comparing its tawdry superficiality with the gloomy magnificence of the Seventeenth Century poet's "Satan." "Puritanism" is nearly always used in modern days as a synonym for prudery, while we forget that the early Puritans of the Colonel Hutchison type were by no means insensitive to the appeal of form and colour. Milton's exquisite "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" show an appreciation of nature's melodies, of the stateliness of noble architecture and the impressiveness of great drama such as no cold and impervious character could have experienced. The Cavalier poets, Herrick and Suckling, have left us dainty verse and sparkling songs but no such immortal music as "Comus." The satirist of the Restoration has given us a caricature of the hypocritical class who joined the Puritan ranks for the sake of political or military preferment. But there was much that was noble and enduring in the Elizabethan Puritan and it is this strain, clarified of certain absurdities and excesses, which is the healthiest influence in modern England.

GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE

THERE is a sort of axiom which is too often overlooked in discussing honesty and dishonesty in government—a dishonest people cannot have an honest government. We talk of our governments as if they were something entirely separated from ourselves, as if they were distinct entities. If the aldermen of Pittsburgh and San Francisco have been corrupt, the blame lies on the people of these cities. If Toronto and Montreal are the worst-governed cities in Canada, it is because of the people. If there are looseness and corruption among the civil servants of the Dominion Government, it is because the people with whom they come in contact are loose and corrupt. There is no other logical conclusion.

In the recent war between Russia and Japan, there was one great difference. When Russia sent money to the front to purchase supplies, provide medical attendance and necessary assistance of one kind or another, the money got "lost" or "side-tracked." On the other hand Japanese money never disappeared in this way. The Japanese officials were patriotic and honest.

When Great Britain went to war with the Boers, the army contractors everywhere began to look for "fat" contracts. Waste of various kinds was rampant. Even in Canada, there were many examples of the Canadian and British governments being "salted" in the purchase of supplies. Nearly every merchant who got a contract built a new warehouse or a fine new residence. Every man who owned a \$50 horse in this country was anxious to sell it to the Government for \$150.

It is the rummiest kind of nonsense to expect a government and a civil service to be much better than the people. Members of parliament are offered blocks of stock in industrial companies, mining ventures and other undertakings, free of charge. Why? If members of parliament are subjects of such tempting offers, are civil servants in responsible positions any less liable?

The only real safeguard against corruption, bribery, secret commissions and present-giving is a strong patriotic public sentiment. Laws against these malpractices are necessary. A noble-minded judiciary is necessary. Public-spirited and fearless crown prosecutors are necessary. Yet, even with all these, public service will be very little better than the business morals of the people. Why has not the Intercolonial Railway been put under an independent commission? Simply because several hundred politicians and contractors of one kind and another recognise that the "patronage" would be abolished and that fair prices would prevail. Under an independent commission or a private company, there would be fewer "passes" for the merchants and prominent people of about twenty counties. There would be fewer appointments for sons, brothers and cousins of prominent political workers. To fail to recognise this, would be but to play the part of the ostrich with his head in the sand.

Not every member of parliament or legislature is dishonest; not every civil servant is looking for private gain from public service; not every man who sells to public bodies is charging other than a fair rate. There is probably no more dishonesty among these classes than among other classes. There is, however, a feeling that a government or a municipal corporation should pay high prices when it buys. The City of Toronto pays a higher price for labour than any other employer in that municipality. Every service performed by that corporation costs more than a similar service performed under private management. It is much the same under provincial and federal governments. This shows that the sentiment of the people is in favour of mulcting public bodies. Even the trades unions insist on this principle or practice. This is not corruption, of course, but it comes so close to it, that to step over the line does not require a long stride. It is not a far cry from trades unions charging a city \$2.00 a day for labour which is sold to private employers at \$1.50, to a merchant charging a government retail prices for supplies sold in similar quantities to private parties at twenty-five per cent. discount.

It all comes back to public sentiment and general practice. When public opinion condemns a newspaper for selling its advertising space to a government for twenty-five per cent. more than it charges other customers, when it condemns a merchant who makes an unreasonable profit out of a government contract, when it condemns a member of parliament for trying to secure the expenditure of money in his constituency when it is not necessary, when it maintains that every man dealing with the government shall be both honest and patriotic—then we may expect laws against corrupt practices to be of some avail.

THE BRITISH SPELLING

BRITISH dictionaries and British publications generally spell favour and harbour with a "u." The "Canadian Courier" follows the British practice. The *Canadian Magazine* also does this. Most Canadian publications, however, follow the United States spelling and omit the "u." They also spell traveller and waggon with one "l" and one "g." Now comes the announcement that the Ontario Department of Education will follow the British spelling instead of Daniel Webster. This has brought down upon it the wrath of the *Toronto Globe*, a journal which usually recognises that this is a British country.

On May 30th, 1890, Sir John Macdonald submitted to the Privy Council and had approved a minute making British spelling the official spelling. He had been building up a constitution which was intended as a bulwark to British rule in this part of the North American continent and it was therefore natural that with other British institutions he should adopt the British educational standard in the matter of the spelling of English words. With this official declaration on record, it is only right and proper that the educational authorities of this country should observe it in preparing their text-books.

Whether "Honourable" should be spelled with a "u" or without it is not really of much consequence, beyond the circumstance that other people who fly the Union Jack favour the more ancient method. It is but another of the light straws which indicate that this is a British as well as an American country. It is to be hoped that the rumour is true and that Sir James Whitney and Dr. Pyne contemplate this revival of the official spelling, which is used in all public documents issued by the Dominion Government. Before the *Globe* visits its condemnation on Sir James Whitney, it might try conclusions with Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Liberal cabinet at Ottawa.