



THIS thing of politics is a blamed tiresome and unthankless business, and if it wan't that I've got my eye onto the Registership of our country when old Witherspoon pegs out, and he must be well on to seventy-five now, I'd just as soon quit.

I've worked hard for the party all my life, and it's time they was doing something for me. I don't count being a M.P.P. because it costs ye so much to get elected, and what with the time ye lose right in the busy part of the season and the price of liquor, there aint much money into it. But I did calculate that when the house bust up I'd be free of politics for the summer anyway. However, to day I got a letter from the Wayback Liberal Association saying that they'd appointed me a delegate to the Liberal Convention in Ottawa next month. Durn it all! I darsn't refuse or they'd send some other feller instead which would get a claim onto the party, and perhaps get the nomination next election and then I wouldn't have no show for the Registership. They don't say nothing about paying my expenses. No, of course they expect me to put up for the honor of the position. Well, I guess I got to stand it, but it makes me tired I tell ye.

And what's the use of it all anyway? I've been at these here conventions afore and yelled and hollered and dranked whiskey and spoke my little piece about how the party was all united and harmonious and bound to get there—but what good did it do? The leaders had the whole thing cut-and-dried, and if any feller had any amendment to spring on us, he was labored with and told to set down and not to say nothing that was going to spoil the harmony of the occasion. And you bet he done it. The convention'll be run just like Mowat runs his Government. The leaders'll get together and draw out a platform and tell the rest of us to vote for it and give no back talk. Well, I aint kicking. I want that Registership, begosh! That's what I'm after. And the rest of the delegates all has their private snaps. Some of 'em wants offices for themselves or there friends. Some has Government contracts, or would like to get em; and some is young sprouts of lawyers that just wants to make themselves solid with the party so's to get clients.

Well now, suppose some crank like Waters goes there and gets up to propose a amendment such as Woman Suffrage, or Free Trade, or the Single Tax, is it likely that us practical politicians is going to back him up and offend the leaders of the party? Not much. There will be a rush to see which can sit on him first, so as to please the big men which run the show.

This being so, what's the use of a convention at all? I don't see why Laurier and Cartwright and Mowat and two or three more, which really has all the say, couldn't

just meet together quietly and fix the program to suit theirselves, and let us know through the *Globe* what our policy is to be. It would save us a lot of needless bother.

I expressed this view of the case to Hardy after he had opened with a corkscrew some new brands of stationery which he wished me to examine. "This here convention business," says I "is all nonsense. Here's luck! What's the sense of taking us fellers away from our farms in the busy season—that's blamed good stuff—just to go through the motions of voting—no, I never take water in mine—on a platform that's all fixed upon already, and you won't allow us to change—Thanks I don't mind if I do!—you must take the public for durned fools."

Hardy laughed and poured himself out another four fingers straight.



"We do," says he, "Haven't you found out that before? Why, my dear Guffy, the beginning and the end of statesmanship is a thorough realization of the great truth that the public are fools and must be treated accordingly. Some must be treated to promises; some to taffy and highfalutin talk about principle; some to whiskey. Ha! ha! Nothing personal, I assure you, my dear sir."

I kind of suspicion he did mean something personal though, but I accepted his apology and let him fill up my glass, for he does keep mighty good liquor.

"And about that Registership," says I.

"Oh, that will be all right, I assure you. There will be other claimants, of course, but M.P.P.'s always have the preference—that is, those who like you, have always voted in accord with the wishes of the Government. By the way, I want to tell you a good joke about a vacancy we filled the other day. There were about two dozen applicants, and we'd definitely promised it to about half of them. We put it off as long as possible, but finally we had to make a choice. Wasn't there some kicking though among the men that got left? I was in Mowat's office the day after. One of the fellows came in. He was as crazy as a bed-bug.

"'Sir Oliver,' says he, 'you've treated me shamefully. Didn't you promise the place to me?' 'Oh, no, my dear sir!' said Mowat in his blandest tones, 'you must have misunderstood me. I admit that under other circumstances your claim would have been an exceedingly strong one, but on investigation we found your application was made actually before the death of the former occupant of the position, and it was the unanimous feeling of the Cabinet that we could not encourage such highly undecorous precipitancy.'