

night. Tuberculosis cases were shut up in those crowded, hermetically sealed and unwashed rooms, and it is little wonder that the files show a constantly increasing list of applications for sick leave. Just think what a commotion a Civil Servant's application for sick leave would cause nowadays!

If we had to put up with some of the nuisances our fathers endured there would be a riot in no time. Perhaps, however, in gaining our ideal conditions we have lost something of the noble quality of patience.

Some of the buildings were so dark that the electric light was burned all day. I have heard survivors of that barbarous system say that the Government was experimenting on the eyes of its servants, on the basis of Darwin's theory that the more strain a member endures the stronger that member becomes. The idea was, I believe, to make human eyes learn to work in the dark. This, it was thought, would enable the Government to lengthen office hours and save artificial light. But the plan was frustrated by the impossibility of preventing the use of electricity. Possibly if the experiment had been tried long enough and artificial light refused, those of the civil servants who did not go blind would have developed cat's eyes. Humanity may rejoice in the outcome but science has reason to mourn. The opportunity has gone. The Civil Service Commission would never allow any such barbarous treatment of Government employes now, even in the interests of science.

At the time when Civil Servants were being exposed to disease germs and eye experiments, the factories of private corporations were subjected to severe Government inspection, to insure proper air, light and sanitary provision generally. This was probably before the Modern Reader's Bible was published, so we may suppose that the authorities knew nothing about the scriptural

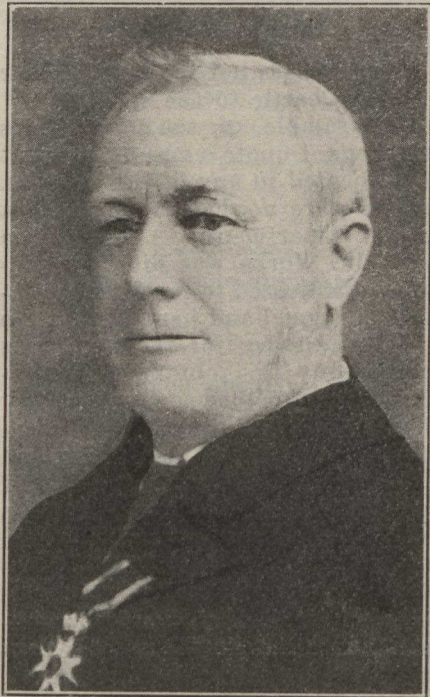
injunction concerning the beam in your own eye.

"I wasn't there; I merely state
"What was told to me by the
Chinese plate."

OUTSIDE SERVICE PORTRAITS.

NO. XVI.

The subject of this sketch is Mr. Isaac N. Mathers, Assistant Receiver General at Halifax, N.S.



MR. ISAAC N. MATHERS.

Mr. Mathers, who is one of the best known citizens of our most Easterly province, was born at Newry, Ireland, on June 11th, 1845. He was educated at Dundalk, where he won a 'Foundation' scholarship by competitive examination at the age of 13.

His early commercial training was received in Liverpool where he was employed in the large shipping