

lightful. They are among the giant creations of genius, and not to know them is to be an ignoramus and a duffer. Is not *Henry Esmond* greater than *The Four Georges*? Is not *Joseph Vance* as good, or better, than all the useful or even beautiful pots De Morgan made before he found he was a novelist? And even Mr. Ewart might admit that "Kipps," considered simply as sociology, is worth all the rest of H. G. Wells on the subject put together. Mr. Ewart is wrong in thinking that only facts are true. On the contrary, "that which never anywhere came to pass," as the saying runs, "that alone never grows old."

And I notice, further, that Mr. Ewart never mentions poetry at all. That "breath and finer spirit of all knowledge" (which is Wordsworth's definition of poetry), that "criticism of life under the conditions fixed by the laws of truth and beauty" (which is Matthew Arnold's) is to play second fiddle to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and the *Rand-McNally* maps in the improvement of the civil servant's mind. After that I tremble to say that I have spent days with a line of "Claribel" in my ears—never letting it interfere with my work, oh, dear no,—or that I think our Duncan Scott and Wilfred Campbell will be remembered when the fame even of the deputy ministers they serve under has faded utterly into oblivion.

Speaking of poetry and reading, I wonder if Mr. Ewart has seen the article of that remarkable woman who signs herself Vernon Lee on "Wasteful Pleasures" in the last *Contemporary*. I will quote two sentences which are *à propos* here:

"Aesthetic pleasure implies energy during rest and leisureliness during labour. It means making the most of whatever beautiful and noble possibilities may come into our life; nay, it means, in each single soul, being, for however brief a time, beautiful and noble because one is filled with beauty and nobility."

And again:

"Seeing and feeling like a poet means quite miraculously multiplying life's resources for oneself and others; in fact the highest practicality imaginable, the real transmutation of brass into gold. What we all waste, more than money, time and labour, more than anything else, is our own and our children's inborn capacity to see and feel as poets do, and make much joy out of little material."

To make joy out of little—that is a familiar endeavour with civil servants struggling with the cost of living. For goodness' sake, Mr. Ewart, do not deny us anything so cheap to hand in the fight as a non-copyrighted Shakespeare.

#### A Modern Mistake and an Ancient Joke.

But this is ungracious, perhaps, to Mr. Ewart, who is probably not fond of poetry. *De gustibus, etc.* It is not at all what I set out to say—which is to lay a much more serious charge at his door.

The trouble with Mr. Ewart is that with the best intention in the world of helping the service to a higher plane, he has not set himself first to discover what the real needs of the service are, and what he can really do. He sees in the civil service a conglomerate body of employees, working under much the same general conditions as, say, the employees of the Bank of Montreal, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, or any other such corporation. He takes it for granted that the growth and opportunity of a civil servant must come entirely from within. And he forthwith delivers himself after the manner of the lamented Samuel Smiles.

Now, that is not at all the need of the civil service, and not at all what a man like Mr. Ewart should be doing, granting his interest in the subject. Taken by and large, the service presents no broader and no narrower target for fatherly advice than any other body of employees of like