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For the Blind.

A Notable Movement Led by Civil Servants.

The annual meeting of the Ottawa Association for the Blind, which was held last week, is a reminder of the many ways in which the influence of members of the Civil Service is exerted for the good of the community. From the founding of the Association seven years ago down to the present, members of the Civil Service have been active in promoting its welfare and directing its work.

The President is Mr. J. L. Payne, Controller of Railway Statistics, a man who has been active in many good causes and who seems to have found a field exactly suited to his abilities in this work for the blind. Mr. Payne is no mere figurehead of the Association, but is the active director not merely of its policy but of its practical activities.

The report presented by Mr. Payne at the annual meeting suggests some of the many advances that have been made under his direction. Chief among these is the organization for industrial purposes of the blind employees of the factory carried on by the Association. Formerly those employees were paid a weekly wage, necessarily a small one because of the handicap under which the blind handicrafts man works and because of the relatively high cost of superintendence of his operations. Having personally visited, at his own expense, other similar institutions in the United States, Mr. Payne decided, with the support of the Association generally, to introduce the system which seemed most successful, that of piecework. The change involved other preliminary and minor changes which took time, but at length the new plan was put into effect for those employees engaged in the making of brooms. The result was an almost magic transformation. The workers found that they could earn far more money than before, while the output

increased so greatly that the cost of producing each broom was actually lowered. Without any harmful "speeding up," the organization was made in every way more efficient and the quality of the product was so greatly improved that the brooms turned out by the Association are now bought on merit as of equal value with anything in the market. The tone of the workers was greatly improved, so that it is probable that no factory in Ottawa can show a happier lot of workers than that carried on by the Association. Within the last few weeks the basket shop has also been put on a piece basis with similar good results.

The Association now employs twenty-two people, including office help, of whom eighteen are without sight. Nine new workers have been added during the year, all blind. Among these are several from other parts of Ontario, and still further additions from outside are being arranged for. It is because of its work for the benefit of the province at large, probably, that the Ontario Govern-