

V.

I believe in an administration of public affairs—federal, provincial, and municipal—that makes for an equality of respect towards the rectitude of administrative rule.

There is a wave motion to be reckoned with, in the rectitude of administrative rule, and it is difficult at times to catch up with the cause of civic degeneracy in order to provide against it as an effect. A belief in the rectitude of administrative rule can never be eliminated from the ethics of any State or community. The appreciation of such is always more or less in evidence, directly or indirectly. A hurried canvass for votes will often induce the mithering to make more of the secondary than of the essential; while the prospect of there being a majority against the essential too often breeds a listlessness on the part of the intelligent. And, between the illogical inducement on the one hand and the culpable listlessness on the other, incapables are too frequently chosen to assume the oversight of public affairs. And thus is it that hard things have come to be said indiscriminately of our public men and the waywardness of all administrative rule. In fact, in the heated contests for office, there seems to be more heed given to a defamatory falsity than to an honest pleading; and thus the swing of the communal mind from a contemplation of what is wrong to what is right, and back again to what is wrong or injurious to the public welfare, is what produces, no doubt, the wave motion that blunts or corrupts the communal conscience at one time, and quickens or rectifies it at another time, to the disadvantage or advantage of the various phases of administrative rule from the parish council to the halls of parliament.

.

To give support to a rule that is not worthy of respect is one of the worst features in the civic ethics of any State. The stereotyped partyite is as enervating to the welfare of the State as is the publicist who cares only about securing votes to accomplish his self-aggrandisement. On the other hand, it is gratifying to know that the constituencies, which possess a native intelligence in larger or smaller measure, are getting wider awake than heretofore to the unworthy practices that make for disrespect to a prospective rule having exclusively the public interest at heart. The saying that a man cannot be a politician and at the same time be an honest citizen; or that it is not to be looked upon as a wrong-doing in line with other breaches of the moral law to steal from the State; or that the control of government patronage is a "sine qua non" in climbing to and keeping