

FRIENDS.

(Contributed.)

It was a "grey" day in April. A thaw setting in overnight was responsible for the wet, icy streets and dirty, soft snow-banks bordering the city's sidewalks, while a leaden grey sky overhead gave ominous warning of future rain, and wet, chilly days to come. Inside the office quiet reigned, save for the scratching of multiple pens, and that indefinable "hum" that characterizes the busy room.

Oblivious to all else, I bent over my plan, my mind completely absorbed in its interesting details, and was rather startled, you may well suppose, when awakened to real life once more by a mellow beam of light that glanced across the desk, and rested on the "bloc" title of my plan. Looking hastily up, my gaze encountered a cherubic shape, an elfin being of another world—so I thought. A little pair of wings of palest blue—green gauze, lay close to his shoulders; fairly golden hair hung in curling ringlets over his slender bust, and in spite of the dampness of the day his attire was nil. Fearful, yet curious, I ventured to ask the strange apparition: "Who are you, little stranger, and where is your home?"

"I," answered the elf, in dulcet tones, "I am every man's friend, and my home is in No Man's Land, in the green bowers and forest nooks of which you know naught—you and your kind, who spend your lives in rooms. I have for so long so wanted to help men, so wished to be friends to all, especially to the Knights of the Civil Service, but up to now my wish has always been balked. At last, at last, have I been allowed to visit your earth, to speak with men, to see their work!" Here he seated his slender form on the edge of my desk, and stretched forth his tiny hand. There was no mistaking the

impulsive friendliness of the simple gesture.

"Let us be friends," he went on; you want me as much as I want you! I," he concluded, his pent-up emotions bursting forth uncontrollably, "I am your Two Hundred Dollar Salary Raise!"

When I recovered from the blackness of the swoon that overcame me I glanced fearfully about; only the accustomed forms met my gaze; only the familiar sound of pens, scratching ceaselessly my ear.

G. L. K.

5,000 FACTS ABOUT CANADA.

Do you know Canada? A novel and unique mine of information is found in the popular booklet, "5,000 Facts About Canada," just issued for 1914, and compiled by Frank Yeigh, the well-known statistical authority on things Canadian. This new edition shows a marked advance over previous issues in an increase of new data, a handsome cover, a revised map, and improved paper. The publication contains all the essential facts of Canada's progress in a year, under such chapter heads as Agriculture, Area, Banking, Census, Mining, Manufacturing, Trade, etc., while striking tables of comparisons present a measuring rod of our national development. Its wide circulation is easily understood when its value is realized, for it presents the Dominion in a nutshell a ready reference encyclopedia of facts and figures. It may be had by sending 25 cents to The Canadian Facts Publishing Co., 588 Huron St., Toronto, or from news dealers.

OTTAWA CUSTOMS OFFICERS.

The following officers were elected at the annual meeting of the Ottawa Customs Association on January 28th:—Honorary President, F. N. Journeaux; Hon. Vice-President, R. A. Clarke; President, R. Spittal; Vice-President, T. A. Hood; Secretary, J. L. McCullough; Treasurer, W. J. Fairbairn; Delegate to Civil Service Federation, T. H. Burns; Auditors, A. C. Whittier and F. Lapointe.

A recent expedition from the Smithsonian Institute to eastern Siberia confirms the results of the famous Morris K. Jesup expedition, as to the close resemblances between the natives of Siberia and the American Indians.