

county town of Middlesex cannot believe that any class of its inhabitants, save a morbid minority, is desirous of staring at the unfortunate and erring young man who has taken the life of another. However sorry all right-thinking citizens must feel over the deplorable tragedy, it would be a maudlin policy which would encourage idle and unhealthy curiosity regarding the captured Moir. By what freak of degenerate fancy certain women become passionately sympathetic over the offender in a murder case one can hardly understand. Yet the sheriff at London declares that a young girl of seventeen was eager to see a "real live murderer," while another feminine fool sent a bouquet of roses to the imprisoned man. Let us hope that this is merely a passing wave of hysteria which will leave all London citizens in a sane and sober frame of mind. Women who send flowers and fruit to criminals and wax sentimental over their plight are a menace to the general good. Such characters are not to be found among those who are quietly and sincerely ministering to the needy and the suffering. A woman who would lavish roses on the offender in such a case is quite incapable of feeding the hungry or helping the prosaic poor who live around the corner. True mercy is neither sensational nor hysterical. It shuns the limelight and seeks to blend with justice in a fashion far removed from the methods of the maiden who regards crime as cheap vaudeville.

THE MIDDLEMAN

MIDDLEMEN on the patronage list have been condemned by the Dominion Senate. In this country, a man who can go to a government and sell something at \$10 which is worth \$5 is supposed to be clever. To a greater or less extent, the practice is prevalent at Ottawa and all provincial capitals. It is not a question of Liberal or Conservative; it is a question of moral consciousness on the part of the general public.

There are some things we do better than our fathers did. We treat women better, we abhor slavery, we treat criminals as if they were human beings, but we do not demand nor expect government money to be spent to the best advantage. The member of parliament or the cabinet minister is expected to remember his friends and to forget his oath of office. Patronage is considered to be the legitimate reward of the party in office. Government appointments and contracts are awarded everywhere on the basis of party service. In this way, the people are badly served, money is wasted and immoral practices are countenanced.

The Senate is right. Middlemen should be abolished. The patronage list should go. Every cabinet minister should be as careful of his expenditures of public money as an official guardian or a trustee. This reform cannot come from above; it must originate below. The voter must demand it. Civil Service Reform will do something, but not all. The public must set up a new standard for public life and demand that every representative shall live up to it. The feeling that to the victor belong the spoils must be eradicated from the public mind before party representatives in legislatures or parliaments can be expected to abandon it.

WHITE COAL AND BLACK

THAT popular term "white coal" seems to have had its origin in Switzerland and France when the people began to recognise the value of the glaciers. In Ontario people speak of "the white coal of Niagara," meaning thereby the electricity which is developed from the water-powers at the Falls. This is a use of the term which is misleading. In Southern Italy, this hydro-electric energy is also called *carbone bianco*, although there are no glaciers there either. The phrase was first used, apparently, about 1900 in France, when the French government and people were investigating the hydro-electric possibilities of the Alps. A body was formed for this purpose and was known as the *Congress de la Houille Blanche*, and its two-volume report is the earliest exhaustive report on this form of energy. In Canada, the only place where the term really applies would be in the neighbourhood of the Rocky Mountains, for example, at Calgary.

Nevertheless, the term "white coal" being more picturesque than "hydro-electric energy" is likely to remain in general use in many districts where there are no glaciers. In Ontario, as in Switzerland and Southern France, where there is no supply of black coal, people are looking more and more to the white coal to supply them with the light and power which is necessary to industrial and commercial development.

America is really far behind Europe in its white coal development. As early as 1894, the city of Lyons in France began the

development of hydro-electric energy for its silk and other manufacturing establishments. About 14,000 horse-power is now generated on the Rhone and Lyons is enabled to produce about one hundred million dollars' worth of manufactures annually. Good steam-coal can be procured there at about \$4.25 a ton, yet the electric energy proves even cheaper. Motor-power sells at \$34 per horse-power on a twelve-hour basis and \$45 on a twenty-four hour basis. Smaller quantities cost about eleven cents per kilowatt hour. Lighting on the meter system runs from 13 to 16 cents.

Geneva has one of the few municipally-owned plants in Europe and gets its power at low rates. For example, a sixteen candle-power lamp, continuous service, costs \$4 per year, while motor-power costs \$32 to \$43 on a ten-hour basis, and from \$41 to \$56 on a twenty-four hour basis. There are many other plants in Switzerland, most of them small and mostly owned by private companies. They are most important in that country which is absolutely without coal and has only small quantities of wood.

Ontario has gone farther than any other province of Canada in attempting to develop hydro-electric energy on an extensive scale. The Hydro-Electric Commission, which is really a department of the provincial government, has been at work for three years and has published a great deal of information. It has drawn up a scheme for the transmission of power from Niagara Falls through the whole of the south-western portion of the province over a government-owned system of trunk lines. It has also published much information, compiled by experts, as to the hydro-electric possibilities of the water-powers in the other portions of the province. Great interest in its work has been taken by manufacturers and wage-earners, each class realising that much of Ontario's supremacy in the industrial world depends upon the cheap and efficient development and distribution of this form of energy.

The other provinces will ultimately follow Ontario's example and constitute a department for the investigation of this important subject. Nova Scotia is perhaps in least need of white coal, since its supply of black coal is most accessible and seemingly inexhaustible; yet even there there is talk of utilising the wonderful tides of Fundy for industrial purposes. It is too early to estimate what effect hydro-electric energy is to have upon national development, but it is safe to assume that no country in the world, with the possible exception of Switzerland, has greater or more numerous water-powers. If nature has not given us black coal in abundance, she has provided us with swiftly-flowing rivers in abundance. All that remains for us to do is to see that this great asset is turned to the best advantage. The subject should be given a premier position in all our technical schools and colleges. Each provincial government should see that the latest information is always available for the use of manufacturers, hydraulic and electrical engineers and the municipalities whose future depends upon cheap and abundant light and power.

THE MILITIA AND QUEBEC

LAST week it was pointed out in these columns that the Headquarters plans for the mobilisation at Quebec were weak and required revision. That revision has already been announced. The Minister of Militia has announced in the House that the training camps will be held as usual this year. This means that all the rural corps that expected to have a gala time in Quebec and an opportunity to see H.R.H. the Prince of Wales on his sixth visit to Canada will be disappointed. They are to have no such inspiring outing. It is rather unfortunate that so much hope should have been raised until the possibilities of realisation had been adequately considered.

As to the city corps, no definite announcement has been made at the time of writing. Undoubtedly some of these will go. The great mobilisation scheme has been abandoned and a smaller one will be substituted. As intimated last week, the first scheme was too ambitious, unless the Government were prepared to spend a very large sum of money upon the experiment. A smaller scheme may be equally efficacious in its experiences and will certainly be much less expensive.

With the celebration less than two months away, the details of the military part of it are thus entirely undecided. If the other features of this once-promising event are not more successfully handled, it may be found necessary to ask the Prince to invent some excuse for staying at home this year. Such a result would, however, be an ignominious ending to a plan which meant much for Canada's pride and reputation. Let us sincerely hope that no such exhibition of our national inefficiency shall be rendered possible or necessary.