

stone, etc., etc., regarding many of which there is great ignorance.

On the artistic side, too, much needs to be done. Some Ontario men have made fortunes out of paper and have donated fine gifts to hospitals, etc. But no one, so far as my knowledge goes, has ever devoted himself to the improvement of book-making—a thing in which we are very far behind.

Nor should we overlook the need of decorating the walls of our public buildings. How many square yards, nay, acres of bare walls, are there in Toronto and other towns of Ontario awaiting suitable decoration by our painters? Here there is room for unlimited devotion to the public interest.

Our learning, too, needs encouragement. Prizes, scholarships and professorships are needed in all parts, in schools and colleges, in all kinds of subjects. It is cheering to know that something is being done here by private enterprise. We have the Edward Blake and the Carter Scholarships. Mr. George B. Nicholson of Algoma is reported recently (Dec. 19) as giving a scholarship to Chapleau Continuation School. And there are a good many more, such as the Eaton Endowments, although much still remains to be done.

Witty remarks are sometimes made regarding the multitude of secret societies which flourish amongst Anglo-Saxons in North America and the trivial or sometimes corrupt things they do. And lodge influence is often evil and regrettable. Yet all these things have a useful side. They help to stimulate a public action which is practically independent of government control. How much better to have them with all their pettiness than to have an excess of censors and repressive regulation of meetings such as prevail in many countries. But these societies should be doing more for the public good. They should spend less on fine regalia and stupid processions and lend more encouragement to public sanitation, to the relief of orphans, to education and to moral effort. They do some of these now, but they might do much more.

But now I must close. I hope I may encourage some to look deeper than the study of constitutional questions, however interesting, into the things which really determine what constitutions are, and how they are to function; into the things upon which civilization itself is founded. The relations existing between race, climatic conditions, geographical phenomena, food in its abundance or scarcity, national constitutions, municipal institutions, public or private morality, etc., etc., are very complex and difficult of elucidation, and to change a constitution may produce a much smaller result than to change an article of food or of drink.

My advice would be to worry less about political changes, to strive harder to raise intelligence and make conscience keener, convinced that if the individual rises the State will rise also, slowly perhaps, but much more surely than by the application of any amount of political engineering, flag-waving and vapid talk about the glories of civilization.

Above all let us try to prevent governments from interfering in private affairs. We have been taught that an Englishman's house is his castle. Let us try to render more solid this good old tradition and all that is akin to it. Let us not forget that all that is good in humanity must rest on a basis of self-reliance, which grandmotherly oversight tends to weaken and destroy. Free men in the exercise of liberty will sometimes do despicable wrong, but even so, there is less danger here than in the creation and development of a breed of sneaking, hypocritical creatures whose masked faces and poisoned daggers may meet us at every turn of the road in the future, if we are not careful to produce true independence of character.