



WORK FOR THE CANADIAN CLUBS

MUCH may reasonably be expected from the Canadian Clubs in the fight for "Civil Service Reform and the Abolition of the Patronage List." There is no party politics in this work and it is at once federal and provincial.

At Ottawa, Civil Service Reform has commenced. On September 1st, the whole inside service passed under the control of the permanent Civil Service Commission. Every appointment and promotion since that date has been reviewed by them. No man or woman over thirty-five years of age can enter the service. The man with a "pull" has no easier road to a position than the man without a "pull." The recommendation of a member of Parliament has no more effect than the recommendation of any other good citizen. This system will be extended to the Outside Service as soon as the Commission machinery is in good working order. No further legislation is required. Any portion of it may be transferred from the old system to the new by an Order-in-Council. The great work along this line is to be done at the provincial capitals where the civil services are still a portion of the party spoils. And it is here where the Canadian Clubs may use their influence.

As for the "patronage list," this evil exists at Ottawa as well as the provincial centres. Mr. Brodeur is the only minister, if we mistake not, who has appointed a general purchasing agent and announced the abolition of the patronage list. There are over fifty cabinet ministers in Canada who have not yet made the same announcement, and here again is where the Canadian Clubs may be useful. Everything which the governments buy should be bought in the cheapest market, whether the seller be a Liberal or a Conservative. The tender system obtains in all large contracts; it is in the small contracts, the day-to-day purchases, and the "rush" orders that patronage creeps in and the waste of public money occurs.

The Canadian Clubs do not need to pass resolutions on these subjects. By having discussion of them, they may greatly assist in educating and forming public opinion. There are thousands of good citizens who are not yet awake to these evils and the easy remedies available. There are prejudices and habits to be broken down. The Canadian Clubs have a duty to perform in this respect. Next to the press, they have become the chief forums for the open discussion of public questions of a non-partisan character. They thus have a responsibility as well as an opportunity.

THE DOLLAR IN EDUCATION

TORONTO has suddenly awakened to a consciousness that its educational system is bad. The critics say the reason is plain—the schools cost too much.

Better ventilated schools; larger supplies of school books, drawing materials, maps and other accessories; kindergartens; manual training workshops; domestic science paraphernalia—all these cost money, and Toronto has been adding these features at a rapid rate. The result is that the average cost per pupil has risen considerably. The teachers are paid much higher salaries and a higher standard of pedagogical qualification is demanded. This is another item of the increased cost. The educational reformers have been exceedingly busy and they appear to have gone farther than the average citizen realised, until some active person began to compare the cost of educating a child to-day with what it cost twenty years ago.

It would seem unwise, however, to condemn any educational system, simply by a reference to the cost. And here is where the Toronto tax-payers are likely to go wrong. "Cost" is only a relative term after all. For example, in the days when the parents bought

all their own text-books, scribblers, slates, pencils, drawing-books, writing-books, paint-boxes and other supplies, the cost was partially borne by the taxes and partially by the individual purses. In the old days a father with three children attending the public schools paid out from ten to fifteen dollars a year for books and supplies. He also paid, say, fifteen dollars a year in school-taxes. Now his taxes have increased to twenty or twenty-five dollars a year, and his children get all their text-books and supplies free. The parent is really paying no more than before. Indeed, the father of a large family who is not a property-owner is paying less.

Again, the schools are doing more for both parents and children than they ever did. The kindergarten has relieved the pressure on homes where there is a family of small children. The manual training and domestic science departments are doing something for the boys and girls which gives them a better start in life. Surely this should be taken into account. Before 1850, education was so expensive that only a few parents could afford to provide it in any considerable degree for their children. Now every child is given fair educational equipment.

Toronto should hesitate before it allows any such reactionary movement to gather headway. It may be true that too much money is spent in "frills." It may be true that the interference of teachers in the election of members of the Education Board has had a tendency to make salaries unnecessarily large. These are not a sufficient justification for abolishing everything in the school curriculum but reading, writing and arithmetic. They do not prove that the advances of recent years were uneconomic or unwise.

ONTARIO AND TEMPERANCE REFORM

ONTARIO is having its annual campaign of temperance reform. "Abolish the bar" is the cry everywhere. In the country sections and in the towns and villages it takes the form of "local option." In Toronto and other cities, it is merely "license reduction." In all cases, it is a fight against the liquor traffic.

The greatest condemnation of the liquor business is its refusal to obey the laws. It seems impossible to get license-holders to refrain from selling during prohibited hours, from supplying liquor to minors and drunkards and from infringing the laws in other respects. These difficulties have led the temperance people to enter upon a fight, looking to ultimate prohibition of the whole traffic. Such a fight is a natural result, when restrictive regulations are found to be impossible of enforcement.

On the other hand, the temperance reformers do not give sufficient credit to the license-holders for the improvements which they have effected. The character of the hotel-man of to-day is much superior to that of twenty-five years ago, averages considered. The liquor sold is of better quality and less harmful. There are fewer drunkards. The drinking is moderate indeed as compared with a period three decades past, and the license-holder has been a considerable factor in promoting this moderation. Furthermore, the quantity of mineral water, light beers and light wines sold is in great proportion to the quantity of ardent spirits.

Moderation and temperance are steadily gaining ground. It is questionable, however, if the people are quite prepared for as much "reform" as the temperance party think. If that reform is pressed beyond the bounds which common-sense will justify, then the inevitable reaction will occur as in the days of the historical Scott Act. The temperance portion of the public must be careful not to go too fast lest their machine jump the track and come to grief.

There is one thing for which we may all plead—a broader discussion of both the economic and moral elements. Owners of hotel