

necessary to try to apportion the blame in order to observe that in the Civil Service there is less incentive to exercise ability, and more temptation to "slack" through sheer boredom, than in any other profession.

But what a man does in particular circumstances is no criterion of what he can do. There have been, and there are, Departments where an official seven-hours' day is a thing to dream of and to smile at; where weeks are made to hold seven days, each of many hours' solid industry, and where the staff might be held up as an example by the most tyrannous of commercial slave-drivers. Yet there is no grumbling; chiefs and juniors bend their backs with a will. And not infrequently in such Departments men are heard to mutter, sotto voce, that "this is a jolly sight better than the old — Branch, where we had nothing to do but laze."

By other means, too, the Civil Servant vindicates his character as a worker. In the world of Literature he holds a place of which he may rightly be proud. There are many names entitled to respect that, once appearing daily in the official attendance book, now adorn the pages of publishers' catalogues. There are dramatic critics who still spend the hours of daylight at their desks in Whitehall (and King Edward VII.-street). There are hosts of minor lights living a double life: John Smith from ten to five; Algernon Snooks in the monthly magazines. It is confidentially asserted that a certain London Review (the boldness of whose opinions entitles it, perhaps, to a wider circulation than it has yet attained) perseveres in its existence only by reason of the gratuitous contributions of gentlemen who live on salaries provided in the Parliamentary Estimates.

In many lesser ways, also, the Civil Servant often finds an outlet for energies that are imperfectly exhausted in his official capacity. He is an office-holder in the Church or the Fab-

ian Society; he spends his annual leave on Salisbury Plain with the dignity of a stripe or two on a khaki tunic, and talks to rookies in words he wouldn't for the life of him use before his staff-officer at any other time; he is secretary of a tennis club, wins medals when he swims, or has a taste for boxing; he may point a bit, or sing a bit, or have something to do with Toynbee Hall; or he may merely have a passion for rose-culture. But he is a glaring exception who has not some occupation outside his ordinary duties—some nice, interesting, steady occupation.

As far as the purely personal virtues are concerned, the Civil Servant is, on the whole, very much the same as the rest of humanity. In one or two ways his environment affects him favourably, but not to any extraordinary extent. As a cog in an enormous, slow-moving machine, his life runs smoothly, and that cannot fail to have a soothing effect on his temper. He is far removed from the hurry and rush and petty bickering of commercial life; his salary is assured, and it is not essential that each shilling he can call his own should have been culled from the pocket of someone else by his own fingers. If he is of a frugal mind, he can frequently live within his income; his official worries stay inside when he closes the office door behind him in the evening; his colleagues are, as a rule, men with tastes similar to his own, and any annoyances that come his way are trivial. Granted that he is married (and that is no wild assumption), there is no serious hindrance to the cultivation of a mild and genial disposition and the acquisition of a pleasing degree of obesity.

It is a frequent cry that the chiefs delight to adopt an attitude of snobishness toward their official inferiors. There is an element of truth in the allegation, but the vice is not so prevalent as the outcry it evokes. Some ultra-sensitive junior observes that his chief, engaged in conversation