

paper might say of Toronto, as the *Star* does of Montreal, "the main curse of the administration is the patronage evil." The Toronto administration is not quite so bad as that of Montreal, but the difference is one of degree only.

Civil service reform has been begun at Ottawa. September 1st saw the beginning of a new era, and the first day's duty of the independent Civil Service Commission. September 1st of 1909 should see an independent civil service commission in each of the nine provinces. If it could also see a reform in the larger centres, whereby the rule that the head of each civic department would be wholly responsible for his staff, their appointment, their conduct and their dismissal, it would be a long step in advance—in fact, it would be several steps.

The patronage evil dies hard: Its death knell has been sounded in this country, but a little time must necessarily elapse before the final execution.

THAT FAMOUS SARGENT

DURING the past two weeks, a portrait by Sargent has been displayed in the Art Gallery at the Toronto Exhibition and has aroused considerable comment. Most of the amateur picture-lovers could see little in it; the artists and those who claim "to know" praised it highly.

John S. Sargent was born in Florence in 1856; though his father was a physician from Boston. He was educated in Italy and Germany but finally settled down in England. London is now his headquarters. He first exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1879, being then twenty-three years of age. He became an A.R.A. in 1894 and a full academician in 1897. Not all his canvases are portraits, but he has painted such prominent people as Carolus Duran (his master), Ellen Terry, Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, Mrs. Carl Meyer and children, Octavia Hill and Mrs. Faudel Phillips.

This portrait, which has met with such a conflicting reception in Canada, was exhibited at the Champ de Mars salon of 1902 and was considered a masterpiece. It represents a young man between twenty-five and thirty years of age, slender, delicate, intellectual, cultivated and aesthetic. There is something of an immoral or unmoral look in the face, which suggests an Oscar Wilde type. The character of the man is further revealed by the presence of a French poodle and a highly ornamented walking-cane. To the man who does not understand the symbolism of portrait painting, the picture has little to present. Many painted portraits have no symbolism—they are merely coloured photographs, more or less exact. An oil portrait by a real artist is more; it is an interpretation of the man's character. The portraits painted for city halls and lodge rooms are usually in the first class; portraits by painters of real merit are in the second. The two classes overlap, but experienced art students may easily "place" any portrait which comes under their gaze. Canada has produced no Sargent, and only two or three portrait painters who are really entitled to be classed as such. At this particular exhibition, there was but one portrait by a Canadian artist which displayed the slightest attempt to interpret the character of the sitter.

LACROSSE AND THE SMALL TOWN

IS lacrosse, Canada's national game, dying a natural death? Occasionally we are assured that it is and the moans that accompany the announcement are almost heart-rending. But one thing to which attention should be called is that the gruesome announcements always come from the dwellers in the larger cities of Canada. And the announcement is of their observation and not of their information. Lacrosse is indigenous to Canadian soil, not to city streets, and just because in those same city streets the horse chesnut has largely superceded the maple, should these same mourners not weep lest the maple leaf should in time give place to the leaf of the horse chesnut as the national emblem? Out in the towns and villages of the Dominion, lacrosse still maintains a hardy growth that easily promises to keep it alive for all time.

Let the man who thinks lacrosse is doomed to premature decease visit Cornwall, where every school has a lacrosse team playing for the head master's trophy and every corner lot has its bunch of bare-footed boys taking early training in the greatest of all games; let him visit St. Catharines, where every youth learns to use a lacrosse stick almost as naturally as he learns to walk; let him visit Winnipeg, where the summer schedule of the public school lacrosse league looks like several pages cut from the city directory; let him visit Bradford,

Elora, Fergus or a score of other small Ontario towns where business is suspended while the lacrosse game is on and the lacrosse club is as much a village institution as the village council, and he will speedily change his mind. Lacrosse in short is not a big city sport. Reduced almost to a science and played by professionals, it is a big city attraction—just the same as professional baseball and the theatres are attractions. But lacrosse as a sport is less expensive for the majority of the youth of Canadian cities. It needs the support of the entire community. And it cannot get that support in places where every variety of attraction is reaching out after the elusive quarter. It can get it in smaller places where every man, woman and child takes a personal interest in the lacrosse team. So in the smaller places lacrosse thrives and will continue to thrive.

Out in the open, away from the blare of the fakir's trumpet, man craves for the natural. And lacrosse is the natural sport of the Canadian. In the city where everything tends to cultivate the taste for the artificial, lacrosse is handicapped, not only because it is too expensive for the average youth but because a press that panders to the popular taste fills its sporting pages with glowing accounts of ball games that are as near theatrical performances as the art of the advertiser can make them. The city youth is nourished in baseball lore; he finds the American game boomed till it fills the very air. It is played in limited space and at a cost easily within his means. He absorbs it, grows up with it and learns to believe that Canada's national game is dying out. He also learns to believe that the city is all there is of Canada. And in the parlance of his chosen pastime, he must be credited with two errors.

THE ROYAL MEETINGS

THE meetings at Cronberg and Ischl displayed in the most favourable light three of the commanding personalities of European politics. No man can be a more engaging host than the Kaiser; King Edward's complete mastery of all the arts of social success earned him a European reputation long before he came to the throne, and the venerable Emperor of Austria's simple cordiality shows at its best in personal intercourse with his intimate friends. Royal visits, as Queen Victoria's letters have made abundantly clear, are the occasion of even more anxiety and apprehension than private visits, and the host who wears a crown is even more harassed by proleptic doubts than the humbler host in the silk hat. The etiquette is so much stricter, individual tastes and peculiarities command such a wider difference, and the transition from the formal to the informal is often so much more difficult to contrive than in private life, that host and guest alike are conscious as a rule of more than the usual relief when the visit is over and all has gone smoothly.

Meetings between monarchs are often more significant when they do not take place than when they do. Five years ago it is probable that King Edward would not have broken his journey to Marienbad in order to spend a few hours with the Kaiser; and the omission to do so would rightly have been interpreted as indicative of a certain tension between the German and British peoples. The inauguration of a custom which will, we hope, become an annual event, is however more significant to-day, though in a pleasanter sense, than would have been its omission a few years ago. It means not only that cordiality is now restored to the intercourse between the two monarchs, but that Anglo-German relations generally are on the mend. The nature of the improvement needs, however, to be defined. Great Britain still regards the growing naval power of Germany as the greatest potential danger to the security of the British Isles and of the British Empire; still feels that Germany has acquired an unhealthy predominance on the Continent, and still distrusts both the course and the spirit of German diplomacy. That France and Russia have interests more nearly identical with our own both in Europe and in the Near East is now accepted by the great body of English opinion as an axiom. At the same time there is no desire to thwart Germany on any legitimate line of advance; there is a real perception that if Great Britain and Germany are estranged it is France, our best friend in Europe, who suffers; and there is a not less clear recognition of the fact that *ententes* from which Germany is, or seems to be, excluded, lack a great, almost a vital, guarantee of permanence and efficacy.

No such reflections as these arise from the Ischl meeting. The British people have almost ceased to remember that sixty years ago the name of Austria was symbolical to them of all that was reactionary and tyrannical. While not always agreeing with Austrian policy in the Balkans, they have learned to regard the Cis-Leithan half of the Dual Monarchy as a State which in the last half-century, and amid enormous difficulties, has made an uninterrupted progress in liberty and the art of government, and is now one of the best administered countries in the world. For the Emperor they entertain very much the same sentiment of affectionate good-will that the non-British world felt towards Queen Victoria. They have watched his evolution from absolutism to constitutionalism with sympathy and admiration. They have shared in the universal grief which the prolonged record of his private tragedies and his public misfortunes must always command.

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