

The American Assembly.

When the report reached Canada last year that the Eighth Assembly of the Civil Service Commissioners of United States, in session at Los Angeles, had accepted Mr. Wm. Foran's invitation to meet in Ottawa in 1916, a great deal of interest in this important organization was aroused. To those who have not been fortunate enough to attend its sessions, something of who they are and what they stand for may not be amiss. It is of interest to Canadian civil servants to note that while the Assembly was primarily of commissioners, that this year, at any rate, representatives of various Federal, State and Municipal Employees' organizations were present.

As long ago as in 1881 the nucleus of the Civil Service Reform League was formed. Its present President, Richard H. Dana, one of the outstanding figures at the Assembly, a wealthy citizen of Cambridge, Mass., has always been a member and has devoted most of a life time to the promotion of reform in the Service of United States; seeking to have fitness and merit count, rather than political pull. Struggling in the face of tremendous odds, perseverance has resulted in the introduction of Commissions in Federal affairs and in ten States. The roll of delegates was made up mostly of representatives of these several Commissions. They are now and have been for years big men of affairs in their home states.

The principal objects of the Assembly is the interchange of ideas on administration of the common features of the various Civil Service Acts. This has resulted in the preparation of a Standard Law, embodying features that are practicable in various States and could be made valid under their constitutions.

The Civilian has published the programme of the Assembly, and in a general way it is sufficient for *Civilian* readers to know that this programme was carried out, with but little change. Without in any sense minimizing the importance of these other items it seems as if the parts played by Canadians merit most of our attention.

Wm. Foran, Secretary of the Civil Service Commission of Canada, was indefatigable in his efforts to make the Assembly a success. He made good; witness, election to the Presidency for the coming year.

Commissioners Shortt and La Rochelle were regular attendants at all sessions, and at various times took such parts in the discussions as would indicate a happy solution of many of

the problems confronting them; if it were true that their hands were absolutely free. However, the presence of members of the Cabinet (and possibly from the Service standpoint of more importance) the very regular attendance of many deputy ministers may be taken as an evidence of the quickening to life of the reform movement.

It is the intention of *The Civilian* as time goes on, and space permits, to publish the text of many of the interesting papers and a summary of the discussions thereon. Special attention will be given the problems of international interest. A noteworthy feature was the speech of R. S. White, President of the C. S. Federation, at the banquet attended by the delegates, the Civil Service commissioner being joint chairman and having as head-table guests the Secretary of State, P. E. Blondin, Minister of Agriculture Martin Burrell, and most of the deputy ministers in town.

The Civil Service Association had planned to entertain the Assembly at a garden party at the Experimental