



REFLECTIONS

BY STAFF WRITERS

MANY of the leading towns and cities in Western Ontario, including Toronto, will vote upon power by-laws next week.

In other words, they will vote to decide whether they will become partners with the Ontario Government in a provincial distribution of electricity from Niagara Falls. This distribution will not be

ONTARIO FOR CHEAP POWER

really provincial, because Hamilton, St. Catharines, Orillia, Bracebridge and Gravenhurst have already a power supply from other sources, and the towns east of Toronto and those along the Georgian Bay are too far away, apparently, to be served from the Falls. Ottawa already has a supply from a nearby source, and other Eastern Ontario municipalities may be favoured later by applying to other water-powers the scheme now being worked out in connection with Niagara Falls.

This, in a few words, is the power situation in that Province. No matter how the vote goes in the smaller cities and towns, much depends upon the vote in Toronto. If that city votes down its by-law, and resolves to depend upon some other means of ensuring cheap power, a new situation will be created. At the time of writing, the campaign is at full height and much interest is being taken. Those in favour of the by-law expect it to carry by a majority of three to one. Those opposed to it are confident that it will be beaten.

The argument for the Toronto by-law is the necessity of cheap power and cheap light. The arguments against it are more complex. The companies now supplying power and light have invested sixteen million dollars and it is claimed that the fairer way would be to buy out these plants rather than duplicate. Again, the Government proposes to buy its power at Niagara Falls from a purely American company which has no money invested in transmission lines in Ontario, a proceeding which is not favoured by many people who put patriotism before politics. A third argument is that the city would be wiser to carry out other reforms connected with water filtration and sewage disposal before going in for an expensive power policy which at best will benefit but a small portion of the community.

This summary may enable readers of "The Courier" in the other provinces to understand the significance of the voting which takes place next week. If the various by-laws carry, Ontario will enter upon a period of Government experiment in power supply. If they are defeated, or if even the Toronto by-law is voted down, the Government will be forced to reconstruct its policy and turn to expropriation or rate-regulation. There is no doubt that the saner minds in the Government and the Province would welcome a more conservative policy than has been advocated by the Power Commission, but the decision rests with the people.

THE women of Canada are not given to hysterical public attack, either on a musical genius from Poland or Hungary or on local magnates. Hence, when they take an active interest in matters of public concern and form a deputation as representative of "house-

WHEN WOMAN SPEAKS OUT

keepers and home-makers," their course deserves respectful and practical consideration. Last week a body of thirty members of the Women's National Council went to the members of Toronto's Board of Control and, seated around the sacred mahogany of the City Hall, told those gentlemen their frank opinion regarding the failure to supply the second city of this broad Dominion with pure water. It might be regarded as an historic occasion for the members of the Board of Control have not frequently been confronted with citizens who regard deaths from typhoid fever as an entirely serious matter when they are partially attributable to civic negligence. Any one of these Controllers would be willing to talk glibly concerning the sacredness of life. But the time of aldermanic gentlemen is of value and, after all, only thirty-three years have been consumed in the course of receiving ten different documents, compiled by experts who have shown the defects in Toronto's water-works system. During the last decade many

young citizens have died of typhoid fever. But few aldermen have been carried off in that fashion; so the community has not suffered so severely as it might have done in the case of all the City Fathers being water-drinkers. Among the members of this feminine delegation were such sane and broad-minded students of public affairs as Lady Edgar, Lady Moss, Mrs. Willoughby Cummings and Miss FitzGibbon. Mrs. Archibald M. Huestis, convenor of the Public Health Committee, and Dr. Helen MacMurchy were the most prominent speakers on the occasion and left the members of the Board of Control in no doubt as to the thoroughness of the delegates' technical information and their seriousness of purpose. The usual game of jocose personality and feeble postponement was played by the civic officials but was checked at every move by women who knew what they were talking about and who were determined to have their appeal amount to more than talk. This action on the part of intelligent and patriotic women comes not one moment too soon. Whatever may be said about woman's place in provincial or federal politics, there can be no doubt of her right to be heard and heeded in civic matters. The streets of Montreal are a filthy abomination. The water of Toronto is a menace to health. Who should have a right to speak of civic cleanliness and sanitation if not the women of the community? The time has come when they must take a personal interest in such matters. In the United States, the streets of certain cities have been transformed in appearance since the women have insisted on the "white wings" movement. When the best women in a community make up their minds and hearts that enough of criminal carelessness has been endured, the candidates for municipal honours may arouse to consider that election means responsibility.

FOR some months, this journal has protested from time to time against the action of the larger banks in sending money to New York to be invested in call loans, at a time when this money was greatly needed at home and at a time when the banks were with-

BRINGING HOME THE MONEY

drawing millions from circulation in order to increase the amount of "reserve" in their vaults. In September, the amount of Canadian money in New York amounted to 63 millions. During October and November 22 millions of this were brought back to Canada, and the amount there on November 30th was but 41 millions. The current loans outside Canada have also decreased in the same period. We must conclude, therefore, that the banks have done what they could in October and November to undo what they did in July and August. For this, we are willing to give them all due credit.

There is one feature which detracts somewhat from the full credit which might otherwise come to the banks. During November alone, the deposits in the banks decreased about seventeen millions of dollars, showing that people are finding other use for their balances than keeping them in the banks earning a paltry three per cent. This withdrawal of deposits has offset the banking advantage which would naturally accrue from the bringing back of this money from New York. The banks have really no more money than they had in September with which to transact Canadian business.

Just what has become of the seventeen millions of withdrawn deposits it is impossible to tell with any degree of authority. It is reasonable to assume, however, that it has been used largely in private loans. Builders, manufacturers, wholesalers and financiers have been offering six to seven per cent. for money on the best possible security. It is only natural to believe that certain wise people with bank balances have taken advantage of a profitable opportunity. Further, many standard stocks have been selling at bargain prices, and there has been considerable investment buying. At November prices, Nova Scotia Steel pays 10.91 per cent.; Richelieu & Ontario 8.62, Mackay common 7.84, Dominion Textile preferred 7.37, Lake of the Woods