

in a frenzy at his "privileges" has the power to juggle with the Civil Service Act! Any one who has experienced the effect of the present hours upon himself will view with dismay the proposition to lengthen them. What will it mean? It will mean that he will have two hours longer in the ill-ventilated and in some cases dangerously over-heated rooms in which he has to work. I would like to take you into some of the rooms of the new block which are in this state and then ask you to ascend to the top of that building and learn the paternal interest of a Government which provides insufficient air space for its clerks and magnificent chambers for its models of patents. These extra ten hours a week will mean sickness to some and to all ill health and shortened lives. They will make a nervous and discontented service and will lower the standard of the work and increase the staff. I forbear to say what effect it will have upon the women in the service, many of whom are the widows and orphans of old civil servants who received the benefit of two months' salary to bury their dead.

And what will the moral effect be upon men who have been doing loyal and conscientious service for their country, who have worked after hours without ever thinking of extra pay? It will have but one effect, that of discouraging them in their duty. Does anyone imagine for a moment that the staff will decrease or remain stationary? I would ask you ironically, if this be the case what is to become of that "friend" in your constituency to whom you have promised a "place" and from whom you are even now receiving the gentlest of reminders? Canada is a growing country and in twenty-five years the service will have increased in numbers by thirty per cent. But it is with the present we have to deal. And how have the present conditions arisen? Why are there in every part of the service drones and incompetents? You are responsible and you alone. In your anxiety to obtain offices however honorable for your friends you have created this condition and it would not be too sweeping to assert that all the objectionable features in the life of the service to-day have their root in the influence which you wield and which you are never slow to use.

Further on the writer says:

And with peculiar foresight, while the bill provides for longer hours and therefore increases the probability of sickness, it also restricts the provision for sick leave. This is even handed justice with a vengeance!

But I have still to deal with the two farcial elements of the bill which seem to have been thrown in with a sort of grotesque humor in order to vary the monotony of what might otherwise be too saturnine a document. I refer to the "conduct book" and the "supervisor." And one of those humorous clauses provides, with characteristic prudence, a position for one other gentleman who has proved himself worthy of party confidence. Looking the matter fairly in the face I can think of only one being who is at all competent to fill that post and in all likelihood he would not accept the position at the salary offered. I mean the Archangel Michael. He would do excellently well for the part of supervisor of the service and it will require someone of an angelic and just a nature to stand between the deputy minister and the Government; for his recommendations would tend to show incompetence in either; he would be between the devil and the deep sea. But if the above named celestial being or anyone else equally competent should be prevailed upon to take the "place" how the service would welcome him! Here at last might be a chance of getting some credit for conscientious work and manly intention. But I might easily dwell too seriously upon the equipment which such an official must have; you have no doubt already applied for the position and may get it if you have a constituency which is safe to open and if your "friends" rally around you with sufficient clamor.

As for the other farcial clause, the "conduct book,"

it seems to have crept in somehow from a vague remembrance on the part of the framer of the bill that he once had to bring a piece of cardboard home from school upon which his misdeeds were registered, and which sent him to bed with the "surface upon which he sits" glowing and smarting with a just chastisement, and it occurred to him that it might be a good plan to import that principle into the measure he was considering as being of a piece with its puerile character. This is a clause which no one who is in the habit of doing his duty can fear and therefore the service at large need not trouble about it; but it shows the spirit in which the new measure is framed.

There is a way and a very simple one to cure all the disorders of the Civil Service which is held to be in such an alarming state that a medicine so drastic as the new bill must be administered at once. It is merely to strike at the evils where they exist, to dismiss the loafers, to cancel the antiquated and cumbersome methods of transacting public business, to put some trust in the public servants, and if they betray it to let them feel the hand of the law; to make the service as a class, know that its honest efforts are appreciated and that it exists for more reasons than a refuge for political intriguers; to allow promotion to follow merit and not influence; and without pampering to permit the so-called privileges, which are really the only compensations of a life which breeds inability to battle with the world. This is the common sense method. But it is also the method which would do away with political influence and it will therefore be carefully strangled. If it were not thought popular to trifle with Civil Service rights and privileges justice might be done, but unfortunately as I before said that spirit is in the air and no chance of popularity must be overlooked. To bait the Civil Service has come to be a political virtue and so you are asked to insist in bringing into the world a measure conceived in ignorance of the true needs of the service and in prejudice against its best interests. But I ask you to pause and reflect that after all your judgment may not be infallible and that to the consideration of such a complex subject you had better give more than a moment of your time.

The D. R. A.

The annual meeting of the Dominion Rifle Association took place in the railway committee room of the House of Commons on the forenoon of Tuesday February 21st, Hon. Lieut.-Col. Gibson in the chair.

The annual report of the association was taken and read. It showed increased receipts and prize list.

Lt.-Col. Gibson and Hon. MacKenzie Howell having addressed the meeting, the latter presented a vote of thanks to His Excellency the Governor-General for his valuable contributions and other assistance.

Lord Stanley replied. He said he was more than touched by the kind reference which Mr. Howell had made to himself. He also desired to thank the association for postponing their meeting from last week, thus giving him an opportunity of being present with them. The cloud which then overhung his family was sufficiently lifted now to permit him to be amongst them to-day.

He referred to the pleasure which it always gave him to associate with them as one of themselves. Since last year there was a change in the head of the militia department, Mr. Howell being translated to another sphere in the public service. Mr. Patterson, although younger in the public service, he had always found anxious and willing to advance the interest of the force. He agreed with a remark of Col. Gibson as to better rifles being required for the force. The Snider was an obsolete weapon. (Hear hear.) He did not believe in waiting much longer and thought that the Martini-Henri would be a suitable weapon for the Canadian militia for many years. The question of ranges, while land was easily to be got,

ought to be considered. That, however, was a matter which belonged to the department more than the association. In conclusion he said that on leaving Canada he would take with him the most pleasant recollections of his intercourse with the association and its members. (Cheers.)

Lt.-Col. Burland moved a vote of thanks to the Minister of Militia.

Hon. J. L. Patterson in accepting the vote said the Dominion Rifle Association and the Dominion Artillery Association were kindred institutions which kept the interests in the militia force alive in Canada. He agreed with what had been said in regard to the Snider rifle and he trusted the Martini would be the weapon used in all future rifle competitions. (Cheers.) He was glad to be able to say that the grant would be continued to the rifle league. (Cheers.) He said it would be his duty to take the advice of the major-general commanding and throw the responsibility on him. (Hear, hear.) Both he and the general were of opinion that it would be better to have a smaller and more efficient force than merely one existing on paper. (Cheers.) Those military men in the Country who got up organizations for the sake of a military career would find their career very shortlived if they did not come up to the necessary standard. (Cheers.) The Militia Department would have been the last department he would have selected for himself, but finding that he was now there he was going to do his duty no matter who he hit. (Cheers.)

Major-General Herbert did not agree with doing away with the Snider rifle at competitions as long as the militia was armed with it. As regards arming the force the general favored not the Martini as it is now but the Martini converted into a small bore weapon like the Lee-Netford without the magazine attachment. The cost of such an arm would be little more than the simple re-arming with the Martini.

Lt.-Col. Gibson was elected president, in place of Lt.-Gov. Kirkpatrick resigned, with compliments from Hon. J. L. Patterson, Hon. Mackenzie Howell and Major-General Herbert. Col. Gibson accepted in a neat little speech and the meeting broke up.

Lieut.-Governor Kirkpatrick gives a challenge cup to be shot for.

All About The Bill.

The following letter appears in the "Journal" of February 21.

SIR: Your editorial of Saturday night dealt very ably with one point of the new Civil Service Act now before Parliament.

You showed very conclusively that the supervisor of the service of necessity demanded a trained intelligence of a very high order and that the inadequate salary attached to the office rendered it certain that the necessary ability could not be obtained for the sum of \$1,500 per annum. It is therefore fair to presume that, if a weak spot has been found in one portion of the proposed bill, still another point may be touched upon which shows, to say the least, a lack of that judicious treatment to which its importance entitled it.

I refer to the change in the hours of attendance and may be excused if I say that I approach the subject in a spirit of unselfishness.

In the first place any change in the direction of lengthened hours of labor is not in accordance with the spirit of the age. Even where the change would appear to be justified, such a demand is almost universally met by a refusal.

Throughout the civilized world the tendency is towards shorter hours; this, I venture to think, will not be disputed.

In the case of the civil service it is proposed to add