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A MEMORY.

Athwart the roofs of the mighty town,
From the lofty windows where I sit,
I can see the blue of the stormy lake,
With a band of silver fringing it.

The wild west wind is driving the flock
Of the huge cloud-world to the lowering east,
The grey is riven and torn to white,
Not once, this morn' has the pageant ceased.

And I think of another day of clouds,
When its silver fringes, the blue lake wore;
And we two followed the narrow path,
Alone, by the desolate windy shore.

Sweetheart, that day comes back to me,
In a halo of smiles and a mist of tears
It lives with me, it will always live,
Have you thought of it once, in the after years?

BOHEMIEN.

THE UNIVERSITY AND THE PROFESSIONS.

VII.—THE CIVIL SERVICE.

As there are so few prizes—practically none—in the Civil Service, while there are so many blanks, it is often a matter of surprise that so many young men seek to enter it.

In some Churches—looking at it as a mere matter of personal distinction—a man may become a dignitary or a Bishop. In other churches he may reach what may be considered as practically an equivalent position. In the legal profession, the bench is the goal to be reached, once success at the bar has been achieved. In the army, the field-marshal's baton is proverbially carried in each soldier's knapsack; while, in the medical profession, successful research and notable discoveries in the healing art bring to the individual high distinction as a specialist, or as a consulting physician of eminence.

Nevertheless, a high position, with its honourable record, may, by patient toil and prolonged waiting, be reached in the civil service—more especially in the English diplomatic branch of it. Never, however, does the ordinary civil servant reach a position higher than that of a subordinate. The very term Deputy, or Under Secretary, which is the highest grade in the service, implies subordination to others. Not that civil servants in Canada do not reach positions of high distinction and independence. The Hon. Mr. Justice Dunkin's case is one in point; but, had he remained in the civil service, he never could have reached the high position which he afterwards adorned.

Since the organization of the Civil Service in England and in Canada, it has practically taken the rank and status of a profession in these countries. Entrance into it, in England and in this Dominion, is very properly by examination—at least, theoretically and by statute—but by no means invariably so. For candidates, qualified or unqualified, may still be pressed into the ranks of the "outside service" of the Dominion, by virtue of the Act.

Neither the last "Report of the Civil Service Examiners," nor the official "Civil Service List," gives the desired information as to whether any but persons who have passed the prescribed examinations have been admitted into the "inside service." Both reports are also silent as

to what becomes of the candidates who successfully pass these required examinations. To prospective candidates, this information would be of service, as it would show how far the demand regulates, or is equal to, the supply.

Even under the present system patronage and pressure have their place, as I shall show farther on. This canker in the civil service is its bane.

The efforts of all civil service reformers and of the various commissions of enquiry into the subject, have been largely directed to a mitigation of this evil. Two or three plans, with this view, have been suggested and discussed by the Parliamentary Committees and Royal Commissions which have had to deal with this matter.

The chief plan suggested is the substitution of a competitive for the "qualifying" examination. A second and less possible one is the training in each department, at small salaries at first, of young fellows (of about the average age of midshipmen), after they had passed the "preliminary" examination. No permanent appointment, with increased salary, was proposed to be made until success in passing the competitive examination had been assured. Thus, fitness and capacity could be practically tested, and a stricter classification in the various branches of the civil service secured.

Where no system of examination for admission to the civil service exists (as in this province), none but a theoretical or approximative classification of those admitted into the service can be made; and that only in and for each department separately.

It may be interesting, just here—especially for the benefit of the prospective candidate for the civil service—to say a word or two on the nature and effect of each of the four examinations at present prescribed—"preliminary," "qualifying," (with "options"), or competitive, and for "promotion" from one grade in the service to another.

1. *The Preliminary.* This is purely scholastic, or literary, in a sense, but in its requirements it does not extend beyond the "Second or Third Book" of the public school course. No undergraduate should be required to pass it, except as a matter of form, and to comply with the statutory requirements on the subject.

2. *The Qualifying.* This, in point of fact, means such an examination—in its simplest form—as every candidate must successfully pass before he can be considered as at all "qualified," or eligible for admission to the civil service. It takes two forms, however. But the second of these forms makes all the difference between what are technically known in the service as the "qualifying," and the "competitive" examination. On the merits or practical value of these two standards of qualification, there are differences of opinion, as I shall point out.

The "qualifying" examination, as its name implies, entitles the successful candidate for admission to any vacancy which may arise in the lowest grade of the service.

3. *The Competitive.* In the official curriculum, this examination is set down under the head of "optional subjects," to the "qualifying" examination. Of these options there are seven, ranging from "composition" to "telegraphy." In that form the curriculum is misleading to the uninitiated. It is so from the fact that the candidate, on passing the "qualifying" examination, merely puts himself among the rank and file of the expectant and "qualified" aspirants for admission to the Civil Service, while he may have thought that he had really placed himself "on the high road to preferment."