

PUBLIC SERVICE NEWS.

Mr. Snowden asked Mrs. Courtney whether she had had experience of University men and non-University men working side by side and engaged on very much the same work. The reply ran—"Yes, in the Times Book Club. There were two or three University men there, and a large number of non-University men." "Did you come to any conclusion as to the relative capacity of the two classes?" "The kind of knowledge possessed by them was rather different." "But so far as business aptitude was concerned?" "So far as business aptitude was concerned I think the non-University men probably had the advantage." "They had the advantage?" "I think so. The others learnt; but they took some time."—*Civilian*, London, report of Royal Commission.

* * *

The sixth National Assembly of C. S. Commissioners, meeting in Washington, June 12, 13 and 14, is made up of members of National, State and Municipal Civil Service Commissions, and the objects of the Assembly, as stated in its Constitution, are as follows:

"To enable all those charged with the administration of civil service laws to become acquainted and exchange ideas; to promote co-operation, uniformity and perfection of methods of the different commissions; to enable the commissions to profit by exchange of ideas with officers who are directing departments, and to give such officers broader opportunity to inform themselves on the methods of the merit system."—The Chief.

* * *

It is stated that there are three main grounds upon which the retirement of an officer at sixty-five might be detrimental to the interests of the public service. They are the following:—(1) When the number of officers in a Department above the prescribed age is such that their simultaneous removal would cause grave inconvenience; (2) when an officer possesses peculiar qualifications which are essential to the performance of the duties of his office, and which it would be difficult to replace by a fresh appointment; (3) where an officer has been entrusted with the execution of a particular duty which is approaching completion, and it is found that the transfer of the work to another officer who is necessarily less familiar with it would be attended with inconvenience.—*C. S. Gazette*.

* * *

The "Irish Civil Service Review" deals as below with low salaries in the civil service in Ireland:—

The civil servants invariably come from a respectable, comfortable home. He cannot take a house or apartments in a working-class or slum district in the city; he is expected to dress reasonably well, he must (God help us!) keep up appearances, his country cousins imagine him in receipt of £700 or £1,000 a year, and stay with him for a few weeks or a month accordingly every year—he must act the affable and generous host. It costs money; shopkeepers are victimised, bills accumulate which are never paid, and no doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer or other high state officer would marvel at such outrageous dishonesty. Let them then give their servants a living wage.

On the morality of a people depends their greatness; and what must be thought of a system of Government that makes immorality and dishonesty almost a necessity to thousands of its own employees. Does that Government justify its existence, and how? Does it represent the enlightened mind of the nation? If so, the Writing is on the Wall, and the anger of an outraged God aroused.

WOMEN'S COLUMN.

The following is from the London *Civilian's* report of the Royal Commission:—

Mrs. Courtney said: "Perhaps the outstanding feature of the evidence is the witness' experience in the control of mixed staffs of men and women. 'I attach great importance to all the points here enumerated, viz., varied work, movement, and free intercourse between the sexes. I have never known any bad result from the last point. Men and women meeting over business do so in a matter-of-fact comrade-like spirit, which has a good effect on both mentally. There is less friction and jealousy than where either sex works separately. I have had much experience of this, both where they sat apart but went in and out of each other's rooms, where they sat together, and where they were all moving about a large building and dealing also with the public, as in the Times Library, and I can emphatically say that all those systems work well, and that I do not understand upon what experience persons who uphold the contrary base their opinion.'"

* * *

The evidence of Miss Emily Penrose ran on much the same lines as that of the other women witnesses. Miss Penrose made the useful suggestion that a women Civil Service Commissioner should be appointed. Her summing-up of the value of the competitive examination is well