

## WHOM SHALL WE SEND TO OTTAWA?

### The Work of Parliament.

THE most important of the matters with which the parliament of Canada has to deal are those relating to trade and commerce and industrial development. These involve transportation, improved methods of agricultural production, and the opening up of new territory to the lumberman, the miner, the farmer and the merchant. The problems to be solved are those which in a small way the practical business man has to deal with continually in his every day affairs. If it be proposed to make a law affecting any branch of business, the practical business man is the first to discern its weakness or its strength, and the probable results of its enactment. It is out of the growth and development or other changes in commerce and industry that the necessity for new legislation affecting them arises. If a government adopt what is called a progressive policy, which opens up new possibilities for enterprise, or alters existing conditions, the central idea is that such action will tend to increase the trade and the wealth of the country. The active and methodical brain of the business man traverses the whole field, and in the light of his knowledge and experience he is able to give most valuable assistance in shaping a policy that will produce beneficial results. But apart from broad lines of policy there is a vast deal of legislation affecting business interests. The necessity for raising a revenue, the changed conditions caused by inventive genius, or by the relentless competition of nations—these and like causes are constantly giving rise to new problems, to be solved by new laws and regulations. With few exceptions, everything in legislation, even the running of a Sunday train or the enactment of a prohibitory law, must be considered in its relation to the business interests of the country.

### Workers Are Needed.

Does it not follow that a body which has to deal so largely with business affairs should be very largely composed of practical business men—the most able, experienced and high-minded representatives of their class? And is it not that the nearer we can approach to this ideal the less we shall have of political corruption and the more of that genuine statesmanship which makes for the national welfare? We are all weary of the interminable speeches of a parliamentary session, the charges, the recriminations, the wasted days. Much talk is of course inevitable. But it is not the long speeches in parliament that make

the laws. It is the work in the committee rooms, where the quiet, methodical, seldom-speaking business man by a few terse words enforces a truth or punctures a fallacy. To eliminate the talker, and give place to workers is one of the great needs of the time. We find the same conditions in our boards of trade, city councils and other deliberative assemblies. In some of these it is practically impossible to institute a reform, but in the parliament of Canada, where each member is chosen from a large constituency, it should not be difficult to ensure that every representative be a worker—a man of ideas rather than words.

### Present Conditions.

If you take up the Parliamentary Companion and read the biographies of the members of the Canadian parliament, you are at once struck with the number of representatives who belong to the legal profession. No doubt some of them have gone into politics because of strong party pressure, but it is fair to assume that most of them have been prompted by ambition. If it interfere to some extent with their business, it gives them, on the other hand, a standing in their constituencies which ought to be of value. There are also possibilities of portfolios, or judgeships, or commissions, or other perfectly legitimate and proper objects of desire. Lawyers are, of course, intelligent men. Some of them are men of exceptional business ability, well versed in commercial affairs. But if the majority of the men of that profession who are in parliament to-day were perfectly candid, they would probably admit that personal ambition is the mainspring of their political career. And the elector has no right to censure them on that account. The question for him to answer is whether he has done his full duty in electing them, rather than in giving his support to practical business men who may also be ambitious, but whose ambition is tempered with a larger desire for a wise and prudent administration of the affairs of the country. But when one suggests that there are perhaps too many lawyers in parliament, it does not follow that all the objectionable members belong to that profession. If you take up your Parliamentary Companion again and scan the list of names from your own province, you will find some gentlemen who are not lawyers and who are not ideal representatives. And you are perfectly safe in assuming that the like is true of all the other provinces. There are in the parliament of Canada to-day men who have been conspicuous failures in business,

and other men (not lawyers) who would embrace with cheerful complacency the emoluments of a comfortable official position. And neither parliament nor the great commercial interests of the country would be much the loser if they did.

### The Scandal Crop.

More serious in its effect upon the public mind and the legislation and institutions of the country than any other element of Canadian politics, is the growing crop of scandals associated with the election of members of the house of commons. The evil is not confined to one party. Ambitious and unscrupulous men employ unscrupulous methods. They can easily secure the aid of men with a price, and an election may develop, not into a choice between men, but a test of rival cunning and fraud. We are to have an enquiry by a judicial commission into this whole matter of election frauds. The leaders of both great parties profess an earnest desire to punish the guilty and prevent a recurrence of corrupt acts. Doubtless there will be more stringent legislation affecting the election of members of parliament. But, after all, it is not at Ottawa, but down in the constituencies, that the evil must be grappled with and strangled.

### The Remedy.

The people have the remedy in their own hands. Let each party in each constituency nominate a man of honorable character and a good business record, and let only legitimate means be employed in the campaign. Then, whichever party has a majority, you have a parliament of able men, who may differ as to policy, but who will not waste time in too much talk, and who will give to the affairs of the country the time and consideration that are now too much absorbed in charges and counter charges which bring a blush to the cheek of the man who desires for his country a noble reputation and a prosperous development. A. M. B.

### A Coming Musical Event.

The decision of Mr. Max Wiel to bring to Halifax, the young American violiniste Leonora Jackson, about the end of October, is an event worth noting by musical people. Miss Jackson is but twenty years of age, but has had a most phenomenal success abroad, having played it is said with some of the greatest orchestral organizations in Europe. Since her return to America Miss Jackson has been heard in the principal cities of this continent, her greatest success having been achieved at Boston in connexion with the famous Symphony Orchestra of that city. It is indeed a high compliment when the conductor of this orchestra endorses a soloist to the extent of eight evening engagements in one series of concerts.