



# REFLECTIONS

IIII BY STAFF WRITERS IIII

## THE CIVIL SERVICE REFORM BILL

THE inevitable has happened. On June 17th a Civil Service Reform Bill was introduced into the House of Commons, Hon. Sidney Fisher performing the ceremony. The bill establishes an independent Civil Service Commission, which will hold examinations for admission and promotion. The Commission shall consist of two members of the status of Deputy Ministers. The service is divided into three classes. The first consists of deputy heads, their assistants, chief and lesser technical officers, including chief clerks; the second division consists of those qualified by their duties and the third consists of those engaged in copying or routine work. The old act, however, still applies to outside service and this flaw has already been noted by the searching gaze of the Leader of the Opposition.

Salaries are stated with mathematical brevity and the increases shall be statutory yearly advances of fifty dollars if record justifies it, also an additional fifty dollars on certificate of merit by the commission. All promotions are by certificate of this body which will be guided as to conduct by monthly record kept in the department.

A heavy silence hung upon the House after the introduction of this promised bill. Its friends and enemies are beginning to assert themselves but after a somewhat lukewarm fashion. There is a certain degree of genuine reform in the proposed measures; but it is not of a thoroughness to please the Independents, while it is sufficiently advanced to alarm the party-at-any-price members. The Deputy Minister status of the Commissioners is a doubtful proposition, since the true reformer holds that the office of the latter should be as untrammelled as that of the Auditor-General. There is no reason satisfactory to unprejudiced citizens for the outside service being subject to patronage control. The people of the Dominion would undoubtedly approve of a more radical change in the management of this service and will look for something more salutary than the measures which the Minister of Agriculture has already announced.

## PURE WATER SUPPLY

THOSE who thought that the agitation begun by Toronto women last December for a purer water supply was a passing outburst of civic and domestic indignation were shown their mistake last week when the meeting in support of the filtration and trunk sewer by-laws was held under the auspices of the Local Council of Women. Dr. Amyot of the Provincial Board of Health stated that more than two hundred and fifty citizens have died in three years from typhoid fever directly due to bad water. The total number of deaths from typhoid in Toronto during that time was nearly four hundred. The meeting was attended by representative citizens, whose advanced views were voiced by Mr. H. Baker, secretary of the Riverdale Business Men's Association, when he declared that the health of the citizens, whatever the immediate cost, should be the first consideration. There is a curious indifference in many communities regarding matters of this nature, each man seeming to wait for his neighbour to agitate. So long as his household is not affected, the average citizen is likely to conclude that there cannot be much the matter. The public spirit which seeks to make conditions healthy and right, so far as they can be secured by civic authority, is a valuable sentiment and the possessors of such a spirit need infinite optimism, for complacent ignorance is too apt to write them down as busybodies.

In this connection, it is encouraging to mark the unselfish and public enterprise of the various organisations included in the National Council of Women. In the maritime provinces the local councils have recently busied themselves in arousing interest among women in the exhibitions of provincial industries and manufactures and have also aroused the authorities to the necessity for proper protection for

the feeble-minded. Their efforts in various Canadian cities have been exerted with dignity and effectiveness and it is altogether probable that the task which has been undertaken in Toronto will be carried out. When the intelligent and unselfish women of the community are fully convinced that certain conditions are a menace to health, reform is likely to follow.

## RELIGION AND AMUSEMENT

CONFLICT between religion and pleasure is a characteristic of all civilisations in all centuries. When Bishop Berry arises in the American Methodist Conference to declare that the church dare not abandon her old-time opposition to all worldly amusements, he is not preaching any new doctrine or sounding any new tocsin. It is the same old drum. The religious reformers of the past two thousand years have all preached similar doctrine. The monastery and the convent are based upon it in its extremest form.

If the world were to abandon worldly amusements altogether as Bishop Berry and his enthusiastic applauders advocate, what would be the result? If the theatre were closed, the playing card abolished, and dancing became a lost art, what effect would it have upon our lives? Would we all be more religious? Would we cease to lie and cheat and steal? Would we stop worshipping the gods of Success and Wealth and Rank? Would the social evil vanish? Would we cease to be envious and covetous and selfish? Would we be more likely to love our neighbour as ourselves? These are questions which some people will answer one way and some another, but they are questions which must be answered before the majority of people will give up these worldly amusements.

In the Province of Quebec, the people must go to church on Sunday morning. If they have done so, they may go visiting or play baseball in the afternoon. Or if it be the harvest season, and the cure decides that the weather looks threatening, he may advise the habitant to go straight home and bring in his hay or his grain. But whether it be playing baseball or harvesting wheat, the people go about with the religious sanction and supervision. The cure looks on and is a continuous protest against evil tendencies. This sort of conduct would not suit the Methodists of Ontario, but who will say that the habitants are less devout, less religious or even less righteous than the mechanics or farmers of Ontario? Can any one deny that the family life of the French-speaking Canadian of the Province of Quebec is more admirable from the social, religious and national standpoints, than the family life of Ontario? Have the childless women of the Protestant communities any reason to be exalted above the mothers of the Roman Catholic communities?

There are evils in the theatre. The plays that come to Canada, and the majority of the players, are unedifying. That, however, is not the fault of the theatre but of the people who control it. If the church desires reform, let it take hold of the theatre and give us moral instead of immoral amusement; let it be constructive instead of destructive.

There are evils in the card game. The cards themselves are innocent; it is the players who bet and gamble who are evil. So with the dance, which under natural circumstances is as innocent as the cooing and crowing of the infant learning to speak. If people are pure-minded their amusements will be innocent and good. Would it not be better, therefore, to preach purity of mind and thought and speech and conduct, so that whether a man is at work or play or worship, he may be always living the higher life? Are not the reformers preaching against the effect when they should be battling with the cause?