

REFLECTIONS

BY STAFF WRITERS.

DURING the past few weeks, some compliments and some adverse criticism have been showered upon the gentlemen who are responsible for this journal. Some of these will be found on another page. Many of

COMPLIMENTS AND OTHERS

them cannot receive attention. The other evening Professor Cappon told how, during the fourteen years he has been editing "Queen's Quarterly," he always squared political criticisms. If an article or editorial appeared in one issue bolstering up one set of political opinions, the next issue would contain one giving the other side of the question. It will not be that way with "The Canadian Courier." We do not propose to apologise for anything we say, whether it meets with public approval or disapproval. Any man who has anything to say that is worth while will find the opportunity here, and what the staff writers say may be answered by anyone who thinks they are deserving of attention—but there will be no apologies. Nor will we be found facing both ways.

The Quebec "Telegraph" refers to our "thoroughly national and patriotic tone," and describes the article on the use of the French language as "a telling rebuke to the narrow and hurtful spirit of race prejudice and sectionalism." Perhaps the compliment is undeserved, but we should like to deserve it. The sub-title, "a national weekly" was not put on the paper as a catch-penny device; it was intended to represent our aim. It is our banner and we hope not to disgrace it on any occasion.

Special attention may be directed to the admirable letter from Mr. Rivet, member for Hochelaga. As a prominent French Canadian, his remarks should receive deep consideration.

THE superiority of the Canadian constitution over that of the United States is a favourite theme of publicists in this country. The separation of executive and legislative functions is particularly regarded as disadvantageous to the United States.

CABINET SLAVERY

The visit of Mr. Root, the United States Secretary of State, to Canada serves to remind us that freedom from legislative duties and its consequential political responsibilities is not without its good features. Mr. Roosevelt is free to choose members for his cabinet regardless of their ability to carry the political support of any district with them. Sir Wilfrid Laurier has not the same freedom of choice. His ministers must be political leaders, and unfortunately a good political leader is not always a good cabinet minister, and vice versa. Even if a man be mentally capable of both positions he may not have the proper geographical locations for leadership. The required combination of cabinet and political responsibilities is one reason that our ministers do not travel more freely throughout this country and other countries. When a cabinet minister is freed from attendance at Parliament or the routine of his department, he must go into his district and hob-nob with the local leaders. As a matter of fact they are his first consideration, the foundation of his success. The system is bad, but it is difficult to suggest a way out of the difficulty and at the

same time retain for Parliament a direct control over the administration of the affairs of the country.

UNIVERSITY professors and authors seem to be synonymous terms in the eyes of the Canadian Society of Authors. If a man is a University professor—whether of mathematics, physics or mineralogy—he is

entitled to be enrolled as a member. This is certainly reducing it to the absurd. It is strange that Mr. B. E. Walker, president of the society, and a man to whom we are accustomed to look for leadership, has not recognised this absurdity.

Now that the University professors have captured the Society of Authors they propose to issue a university quarterly which shall give Canada a true idea of what Canadian literature should be. The McGill Magazine, the Queen's Quarterly and the University Monthly are to disappear and this new literary publication is to take their places. The Society held a banquet the other evening presumably to discuss Canadian Literature, but it was adroitly made the occasion of a boom for the new quarterly. Such tactics are rather cheap. Even the Lieutenant-Governor was taken into camp and made to do service in the advertising game.

No one doubts the quality of our university professors, but they are ill-advised if they intend to ignore the literary publications already in existence. If they desire to raise the literary standard they should seek to improve the contributions to "The Canadian Magazine," "The Westminster" and other publications rather than isolate themselves and issue something which will be good but which the public will never see. Canadian literature will develop best when all classes of the community are working together with a common object.

So far as the writer is aware, no university publication in Canada has ever been able to pay expenses. They have been buttressed with endowments, contributions and advertising, but even then have had deficits. Surely this indicates that the country is yet too small for specialised publications, and that our efforts should not be dissipated over a wide field.

THE great war is on—the struggle for the control of Canadian electrical franchises. What Rockefeller and Carnegie did in other lines in the United States, certain capitalists in Montreal and Toronto are aiming to do with electricity in Ontario and Quebec. Electricity is the coming fuel and must play a most important part in two provinces which have no coal. It will not only light these cities, but it will operate the street-cars and all the machinery of the factories. The men who can control the supply of this necessary commodity will be powerful men.

It does not necessarily follow that if the supply of electricity is controlled by private individuals that the public will not get it as cheaply or more cheaply than if it were controlled by a government of some kind. It all depends upon the individuals. Toronto gets cheap gas from a private company and gets cheap water under municipal management. It is a question of men rather than methods.

The men who are floating these electrical companies