(April 29, 1907.)

Civil Service Reform.

By Mr. J. S. Willison, LL.D.

ADDRESSING the annual evening meeting of the Canadian Club on the subject of Civil Service Reform, Mr. J. S. Willison, LL.D., Managing Editor of the Toronto *News*, said;

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Canadian Club,—At the outset I may perhaps be permitted to congratulate the President on the Club's great success and increasing influence during his term of office, and also to congratulate the Club on the tact and judgment and dignity with which he has presided over its proceedings. While I have belonged to the Club for only a few months it has been my privilege to attend at least one or two of its meetings every season and to know that it always has been fortunate in its Presidents. You will agree with me that in the choice of Mr. Irish it was not less fortunate than in the choice of his predecessors.

It is doubtful if the Chairman's estimate of my work and character would be generally accepted by my fellow countrymen or that portion of my fellow countrymen who are aware of my existence. Possibly the attitude of many persons towards me would be fairly described by a story which is credited to Charles Dickens. This story I have told so often that it has become very worn and feeble, but I venture to press it into service once again before it goes to its long home and its last sleep. In a certain parish in England there was an Anglican clergyman who was likewise an active politician. His chief antagonist was the editor of the local newspaper, who, as is the privilege of the craft to which I belong, had the last word in every controversy in which they became involved. This was a cause of deep annoyance to the clerical politician and of profound satisfaction to his opponent. But at last a fair opportunity for revenge presented itself. A near relative of the editor died, it fell to this particular clergyman to conduct the burial service, and as they knelt together at the coffin he said, "Lord, overrule his affliction to the welfare of all assembled, including the reptile now sprawling in Thy presence, who has often abused Thy servant in the columns of his beastly publication." Possibly if a fair opportunity offered

some of you would echo that prayer for my comfort and admonition.

In our business we have what is known as fillers. A filler is an item in which the consideration of time is not important and which may be used to-day or to-morrow or a week or a month hence as convenience or necessity may require. It occupies the relation to a newspaper which the "general purpose" class does to a stock show. It is our custom always to keep two or three columns of this material in type and to draw on the supply from time to time in case we run short of fresh news-matter. So I have noticed that during the last five or six months this Club has been addressed by distinguished persons from various parts of the world and that as the season has advanced you have been reduced to fillers, in which lowly capacity I am acting at this moment.

But my serious business to-night is to discuss civil service reform and the evils connected with direct Government control of public patronage. It is not a subject which is popular with practical politicians, and nothing is more certain than that political reforms seldom make headway during seasons of great material prosperity, when men's thoughts and energies are absorbed in trade and finance, and the affairs of Government are of very secondary concern. In the day of prosperity Governments reap where they have not sown. In the season of depression they suffer for the barrenness of the land, however clearly nature and circumstances may be responsible for the lean and hard conditions which prevail. It is just as true that political evils flourish more luxuriantly during seasons of great prosperity, and that Governments are exceptionally alert and vigilant in seasons of commercial depression.

There is a curious notion that the direct distribution of patronage by Government is essential to the maintenance of the party system and that only the expectation of reward will induce men to interest themselves in public affairs. If this notion were well founded democracy indeed would be, as it was defined by Talleyrand, "an aristocracy of blackguards," and we must despair of the future of free institutions. But it is not so in Great Britain, or in Germany, or in Italy, or in France, or in Belgium, or in Switzerland, or in Norway, and even in New Zealand the State railway service is absolutely protected against political interference and appointment from outside is practically impossible. In Great Britain, outside such strictly personal posts as private secretaryships, no shred of patronage remains in the hands of politicians. In all the Departments admissions and promotions are through rigid tests and examinations. Generally even permanent heads

reach their positions through regular and orderly promotions in the service. In the Post Office Department no outsider has been introduced since the time of Rowland Hill. In the more important appointments in the Post Office and Revenue services, men are selected from the entire service, and thus Customs collectors at such great ports as Liverpool have had varied experience at other ports in the Kingdom. The clerks of the Treasury Board are appointed by open competition. No candidate for promotion makes application except through his superior officer in the Department. In the Revenue Boards and the Post Office there are even stringent regulations against recourse to political influence. In the Post Office it is directly intimated that applications through members of Parliament are calculated to injure rather than promote the candidate's interests. In one of the Revenue Boards it is stipulated that if application for the advancement of any official is made through a member of Parliament, the candidate for promotion will earn the severe displeasure of the Board unless he can show that the application was made without his knowledge. The President of the Board of Trade cannot grant an appointment in the Excise, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as Mr. Gladstone once declared, has no more power over the clerkships in the office of the Treasury than has any one of his constituents. In New Zealand, where the doctrines of social democracy have been carried further than anywhere else in the world, and where the political arena is so restricted as to invite fierce faction quarrels and bitter personal rivalries, appointments to the State railway service are made at fourteen years of age, promotions are made solely by service and by merit, and it is almost impossible to obtain relaxation of the rules even when it is essential to introduce an outsider for some particular post or some special service for which no one with the necessary training and knowledge can be found in the department. But no one will contend that in Great Britain or in New Zealand or in the continental countries there has been any decline of popular interest in public affairs, that the party system has perished, that the zeal of party adherents has been lessened, or that the efficiency of the public administration has been impaired. It is far otherwise, and probably nothing could induce the public men of Great Britain to resume the control of patronage, and to submit to the intolerable vexations and tyrannies which are inseparable from its distribution and management under the direct authority of Parliament.

Moreover, the emancipation of the civil service from partizan control has been necessary to the eradication of ancient

abuses and the efficiency of free parliamentary government. A century ago the King controlled Parliament by the corrupt exercise of patronage. Later corrupt and despotic Governments controlled Parliament by an unholy traffic in the public offices. Responsible government and free institutions reached their full development only with the relinquishment of official plunder, and the concentration of Parliament upon the legitimate problems of government and the unembarrassed administration of public affairs. So in the United States, political corruption never was so bold and flagrant and the moral sentiment of the nation so shamed and so outraged, as when the offices were held to be the legitimate spoil of faction. During the first half century of the Republic there were few removals from office and a singular freedom from the corrupting traffic in spoils which forever disfigures the Administration of Andrew Jackson. Under Jackson two thousand office holders were removed in twelve months as compared with only seventy-four removals during the previous forty years of the country's history. We are told by Jackson's biographer that most of the officials of over forty years of age whom Jackson drove out of office were ruined, as it was too late for them to change their habits or acquire new trades. The evil which Jackson introduced took deep root in the soil and even yet has not been wholly eradicated. We are told that under Grant's Administrations competitive examinations were almost abandoned and even the pretence of reform was not maintained. Mr. James Ford Rhodes, in his History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850, declares that "the high water mark of corruption in national affairs was reached during Grant's two Administrations." George William Curtis, a stalwart champion of civil service reform, who had resigned the chairmanship of the Civil Service Commission in protest against the attitude of the Administration, in an address to the New York State Republican convention in 1876, said: "Plain words are best. . . . The corruptions of administration exposed in every direction and culminating at last in the self-confessed bribery of the Republican Secretary of War, the low tone of political honor and of political morality that has prevailed in official Republican service, the unceasing disposition of the officers and agents of the Administration of this country to prostitute the party organizations relentlessly and at all costs to personal ends, has everywhere aroused the apprehension of the friends of free government and has startled and alarmed the honest masses of the Republican party." George F. Hoar, also a Republican, and a statesman whose name is honored and revered in Massachusetts and throughout the whole Republic,

told the Senate: "I have heard in highest places the shameless doctrine avowed by men grown old in public service that the true way by which power should be gained in the Republic is to bribe the people with the offices created for their service and the true end for which it should be used when gained is the promotion of selfish ambition and the gratification of personal revenge." These were the conditions in the United States thirty years ago and out of these conditions came a determined and aggressive movement for civil service reform. Complete success has not yet been achieved but enormous progress has been made towards the abatement of the wretched traffic in spoils and towards the establishment of a permanent non-partisan civil service throughout the Republic and its dependencies. Reform of the service was begun under Hayes. It was one of the chief issues in the memorable Presidential contest between Blaine and Cleveland, and Cleveland gave powerful aid to the movement. There was a lesser degree of advance under Harrison and McKinley, but again under Roosevelt, who gave fine service on the National Commission before his election to the Presidency, there has been steady and substantial progress in the application of the civil service regulations to the public offices and in the elimination of the evils of patronage from the administration of national affairs.

The Civil Service Act of the United States provides for appointmest according to merit as determined by examinations; it orders an apportionment of appointments in the Departments at Washington among the States and Territories; it fixes a period of probation before absolute appointment, and prohibits the use of official authority to coerce the political action of any person or body. The number of positions now subject to competitive examinations is over one hundred and fifty thousand. The classified service has over two hundred and thirty-four thousand positions, and embraces all employees of the Government who are not mere laborers or subject to confirmation by the Senate. The chief exceptions from examination are seventy thousand fourth-class postmasters, four thousand five hundred pension examining surgeons, ten or eleven thousand employees at non-free delivery post-offices, and nearly two thousand deputy collectors of internal revenue. It is estimated that one hundred and twenty thousand persons in the service have been appointed as the result of competitive examinations. There are altogether in the executive civil service two hundred and ninety thousand persons, and they receive an annual compensation of $180,000,000 while the total compensation attached to competitive positions is $130,000,000. Unclassified laborers in the Departments at Wash-

ington are appointed upon competitive tests as to physical condition and examinations are held for certain other classes of unclassified positions, such as policemen and midshipmen in the navy. Within the last few months a form of competitive examinations for Consuls has been established. The employees of the Isthmian Canal Commission have been classified, four thousand temporary Federal employees in the Philippines who had earned recognition also have been classified and provision made for future appointments under the civil service regulations, and as the free delivery department of the Postal service is extended the officials are made subject to the competitive system.

From this examination of conditions in Great Britain and the United States it will be interesting and instructive to proceed to an examination into conditions in Canada. It may be said that we never have had such unsatisfactory political conditions in this country as prevailed in the United States thirty years ago and that the background casts into unnatural shadow any fair presentation of the facts and tendencies of our politics. Some of you, perhaps, would apply to what I have said the language of the Western bridegroom. When he was required to repeat after the clergyman, "I take this woman to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until death do us part," he interrupted with a touch of anger, "There ain't no use makin' the outlook of this weddin' so darn gloomy." But whatever may be the measure of our political evils, and it is not my purpose to denounce public men or to use a word which can have any partizan significance, there is a crying need for reform of the civil service in Canada and for the protection of honest and efficient public officers from the spoils element which corrupts and bedevils the administration of public affairs. This much is true, that during the last ten years, as the result of a change of Government at Ottawa, there have been more dismissals from the Federal service than ever before, and that during the last two years, as the result of a change of Government at Toronto, many public officials have been removed. But it is true that while we have had a general recognition of political considerations in appointments to office we never have had any general application of the spoils system, that is, any general removal of office holders for purely party reasons. It is said to have been the view of Sir John Macdonald that a Government was weakened by dismissal of office holders inasmuch as every official who was turned adrift was certain to have many friends and relatives amongst Conservatives, that he became a centre of disaffection and a vicious opponent of Ministers and with the strength and persistence which are bred by a sense of grievance, curiously and powerfully influenced local opinion to the injury of the politicians by whose action he was robbed of his means of livelihood. On the other hand, every Conservative appointed to office was withdrawn from the fighting forces while the zeal of perhaps a score of applicants was diminished because their claims were overlooked. At least it was not the practice of Sir John Macdonald nor of Sir Oliver Mowat to dismiss public servants on partizan grounds, although it is clear that each set a high value upon the control of patronage, and generally reserved public appointments for the adherents of the party to which they belonged.

The Canadian civil service is established on a basis of nominal permanence, subject to a qualifying examination by a Civil Service Commission, but appointments to the service are obtained mainly if not exclusively through political influence. This is tempered by the necessity for technical qualifications, as in the Geological Survey and the Post-Office Department, by the fact that only able and energetic officers can guarantee reasonable efficiency in the management of the public business, and that the concern of deputy heads for the successful working of the departments partly offsets the influence of the political element. The qualifying examinations are too low to constitute any bar to political appointment, and ordinarily twice as many candidates succeed in the examinations as can receive appointment. Theoretically, promotion in the service depends upon examination, seniority and selection, and nominally the qualifying examinations for promotion from third to second class and from second class to first class clerks are controlled by the Civil Service Commission, but the examinations are qualifying, not competitive, and as there is thus wide room for the exercise of political influence, in the inside as in the outside service, the politicians are eternally busy, to the serious injury of the service and the demoralization of the public life of the country.

When we consider that the Government controls appointments to the Intercolonial railway service, to the Postal service and to the Customs service, controls the vast patronage of the Interior Department, controls appointments to the Supreme Court and to the Provincial Courts, and appoints to the Senate on strict grounds of party service, we get some idea of what powerful influences it possesses to compel obedience within the party, to hold in subjection Senatorial aspirants who look for a life refuge with social dignity and a re-

spectable annuity; to command the support of legal members of the House of Commons and of members of the legal profession outside who may aspire to places on the Bench; and to discipline other members of the House by withdrawing their control of patronage in their own constituencies. When we consider all this we see how difficult it is under such conditions to have responsible government and a free Parliament, and we get at the very root of many of the influences which make the House of Commons and the Senate the servants of the Ministry, and paralyze independent action in the constituencies. The Prime Minister is an autocrat and few resist when he commands. Over and over again members have been held in subjection to the Ministry and bad measures forced through Parliament by the power which a Government possesses to take the control of patronage out of the hands of members, and by the dire certainty that the Bench, the Senate and all offices of honor and emolument are closed to those who desert a Ministry in its extremity, or refuse to bow the knee to the whip and the caucus. Worse still, these men who surrender their honest judgment and deny their conscientious convictions at the demand of an arrogant and it may be a corrupt Government by the very fact of this abasement and treason establish a stronger claim to judicial and Senatorial appointments, and to all the favor and consideration which it is within the power of ruling politicians to bestow. It may be that judicial patronage must always rest in the hands of Government. It has been suggested that appointments to the judiciary should be made by the High Court Judges and the Benchers of the Law Society, sitting as an appointing body, or we could adopt the American system of popular election, but it is doubtful if either method would commend itself to the public judgment, particularly as the character of the Bench is preserved by its very traditions, and the public mind is keenly intolerant of improper judicial appointments. It is fair to add that few such are made, and that upon the whole the character of the Bench is well maintained and that justice generally is administered without fear or favor in Canada.

But appointments to the Senate are made upon sheer grounds of partizan service, and it is wholly mischievous that the power to create a co-ordinate legislative body should be vested in the leaders of a particular party who for the moment control the House of Commons. We have the result of the system in the Senate which now exists at Ottawa, and it is neither better nor worse than that which has existed since Confederation. Nothing more closely resembling the abode of eternal rest can be found on this side of the grave. It is

more proficient in the art of adjourning than any other parliamentary body which ever existed. It is feeble, impotent, lazy and weary. There is a story that a young woman who was visiting the Parliament Buildings was conducted by her escort to the Senate Chamber on the pretence that it was a museum and that she gazed at the venerable collection for a few moments and then gravely observed, "One would almost think that some of them were alive." But it is fair to say that age is not necessarily a disqualification for service in the Senate, nor does previous service in the House of Commons constitute an objection to appointment to the Upper Chamber. Moreover, it is doubtful if the Senate can be abolished. The smaller Provinces seem to demand the protection which their more equal representation in the Senate was intended to afford, and we can hardly force abolition except with the assent of all the Provinces. We have therefore to consider whether it is possible by the system of election in grouped constituencies, by the transfer or partial transfer of the power of appointment to the Provincial Legislatures, by appointment for a term of years only, or by such a reorganization of the business of Parliament as will vest special and well-defined duties and responsibilities in the Senate, to create an Upper Chamber which will perform a useful function in the scheme of government. But, as now constituted, the Senate is the direct creation of party, its members are appointed by the party and for the party, and they serve as the docile agents of the appointing Government. More and more the Senate becomes an absentee body. It sits only for a few weeks during each Parliamentary session. Its members exhibit no public spirit. They are indifferent to their duties even when they make their occasional visits to the Capital. They consult only their own convenience. They worship only their creators on the Treasury benches. They degrade the representative position, and furnish generally an example of indifference, sloth and cynical neglect of duty and responsibility which is discreditable to the Senatorial body and demoralizing to the whole public life of the country. Still, as a poet has said:

"Regardless of their doom,
The little victims play.
No thought have they of ills to come,
Nor care beyond to-day.

What right has any Government so to deny the very genius of our representative system as to seize the recurring vacancies in the Senate and fill them with partizans whose chief claim is partizan service, who are sent there to continue such

service, and who are simply the private agents of Ministers, maintained at the general expense? Is it wise for the country to maintain a system under which the chief posts in the Customs service, the postmasterships in cities, the office of Deputy Minister, the heads of the great outside Departments, are the natural inheritance of untrained politicians, to the cruel detriment of the experts of the Civil Service, who perform the actual business of the country and become the teachers of the very politicians by whom they are supplanted? What right has any Government to penalize civil servants because of their political opinions, and to make political faith the test of admission to the service or of promotion therein? They are appointed to serve the whole people, their promotion should be governed exactly by the principles which prevail in great financial, commercial and educational institutions, and they should receive proportionate remuneration.

We should remember, too, that it is as cruel to dismiss a lock-keeper on a canal or a door-keeper in a public building as to disturb the higher officials in the service. The workman can seldom command either party or personal influence, and he is therefore ruthlessly turned adrift, and his family plunged into poverty and distress. In a speech made in 1832, protesting against "the inquisition for spoil," which prevailed in his day in the United States, Daniel Webster said: "When did any English Minister, Whig or Tory, ever make such an inquest? When did he ever go down to low water mark to make an ousting of tide waiters? When did he ever take away the daily bread of weighers and gaugers and measurers? When did he ever go into the villages to disturb the little post-offices, the mail contracts and everything else in the remotest degree connected with Government? A British Minister who should do this, and should afterwards show his head in a British House of Commons, would be received by a universal hiss." I recall also a sentence spoken by Bayard, who was Secretary of State in Cleveland's first Cabinet: "Sentences to beggary and distress," he declared, "to which death would be almost a relief, have been not infrequent under the form of dismissal from minor offices, for no other cause than to carry out the system that converts public trusts of power into the spoils of party conquest." More than once in Canada we have witnessed this crucifixion of helpless minor officials when the fear of public opinion operated at least as a measure of protection for the higher branches of the service. We have been very careless of the interests of these obscure servants of the country, who had no mouthpiece in the press, and no influence with patronage committees, and there is nothing which so reveals the spirit of our politics and the meanness and heartlessness of "the inquisition for spoil," which Webster so sternly denounced.

Appointments are often made upon the recommendation of a patronage committee and dismissals in the outside service almost always upon such recommendation. Very often these committees manifest a strange malignity and seem even to rejoice in the losses and distresses which they inflict upon neighbors who have the misfortune to be in public employment. "Take ye heed," said Jeremiah, "every one of his neighbor and trust ye not in any brother; for every brother will utterly supplant and every neighbor will walk with slanders." Of such is the spirit of the Patronage Committee. Like the red Indian, it feels a savage exultation in the scalps at its belt, and its joy is in the trail and the knife and the faggot. One thinks of the ferocious person in the ballad of whom it was said that:

> ". . . the hearse was always a-standing
> Somewhere anigh his door."

The very existence of the Patronage Committee proves that public office is regarded as the property of party, that it is the natural reward for party service, and that the public interest is subordinate to the party interest. To my mind, the member of Parliament who acts as the agent of a Patronage Committee is a figure repugnant to the very genius of British institutions, and the fact that a Patronage Committee can exist is an amazing revelation of the vicious conception of State service which prevails in this country. And as the Patronage Committee in the constituency canvasses the applicants for minor positions in the public service, and names the candidate who has the best record as a party worker, and whose appointment will give the most satisfaction or cause the least dissatisfaction within the party, so the great Patronage Committee which sits in the Privy Council Chamber at Ottawa canvasses the applicants for places in the Senate, if not even upon the Bench, and, like the Patronage Committee in the electoral division, decides with a single eye to party service and party interests.

A strong and independent civil service makes for honesty as well as for efficiency in the public administration. It cannot be disputed that the system of purchase by contract is often disregarded at Ottawa,, that favoritism has often obtained in many branches of the service, that supplies have been handled by greedy and unscrupulous middlemen, and extortionate prices exacted. All this is facilitated by feeble or dishonest

Ministers and by a dependent civil service. Much of this would be impossible under a permanent, non-partizan service, independent of Ministers, fearless of political brokers, and responsible to a Civil Service Board for the honest conduct of the public business. It has been said that competitive examinations candidates who entered the service through competitive examcannot test integrity of character. But the facts prove that in the United States the cases of official dishonesty among candidates who entered the service through competitive examinations are few compared with the number of such cases among those who obtained appointment through political favoritism. Carl Schurz has shown that in the recent post-office scandals at Washington, not one of all the officials who were indicted for fraud or other malfeasance had entered the service by regular competitive examination. Originally they had all obtained their appointment by political influence or personal favor, and as Schurz says: "It is to be noted as peculiarly significant that in several cases the positions to which they were appointed were excepted from the competitive rule on the ground so solemnly insisted upon by the patronage monger, that they were places of a confidential or fiduciary character, requiring a peculiar degree of integrity and trustworthiness, of which no competitive examination could furnish adequate proof, and the ascertainment of which must therefore be left to the enlightened discretion of the appointing officer—that is, to the recommendation of some influential politician."

The civil servant is entitled to the same personal independence, the same security of employment, the same chance of promotion which the rest of us enjoy in our various pursuits, and that he cannot have until the whole service is made subject to the system of competitive examinations and rescued from the clutches of spoils hunting politicians. The reform is demanded in the interest of the service, in the interest of public morals, in the interest of national efficiency. It is true that all the evils of our politics will not be eradicated by the establishment of a permanent, non-partizan civil service and the disappearance of patronage as a stimulus to political activity, but at least there would be a great increase of independent action in the constituencies, public men would be relieved from dependence upon the mercenary element which now exercises a baneful auhority in the political organizations, the civil service would be greatly strengthened in character and efficiency, the independence of Parliament would be materially enhanced, and the great and serious problems of administration and high political debate upon broad questions of policy and principle would become the chief business of

statesmen and the people. But reform of the civil service will come slowly in Canada as it has come slowly elsewhere. Governments are reluctant to surrender any of their privileges, and public men cling to the control of patronage with peculiar intensity. The notion that the offices are the natural property of a governing party is deep seated and the vexatious losses and embarrassments of the system are accepted with singular patience and fortitude. A preacher in Great St. Mary's at Cambridge who had William Pitt in his congregation, then a very young man, but already Prime Minister of England as well as member for the University, and wielding a far more valuable patronage than his modern successors dispense, once declared from the pulpit: "There is a lad here," meaning Pitt, "who hath five barley loaves and two small fishes, but what are they among so many?" So it is always impossible to gratify the insatiate demand for patronage and it is in the interest alike of public men and the public service that the nuisance should be abated, and the service thrown open on equal conditions to every citizen irrespective of the party, the church or the race to which he belongs. It was Mr. Gladstone who once said that ideals in politics never could be realized, but he would have been the last man to say that ideals in politics should not be cherished. It is my conviction that in every session of every Legislature and Parliament a vast deal of faithful and laborious and self-sacrificing work is performed and it would be unfortunate if in discussing a specific evil a different impression were created. But eternal teaching and preaching are essential to the purity and efficiency of free government and the reformers and theorists and idealists who "trouble Israel" do the State some service. The pioneers of the world's progress have been the men who would not conform, who had the courage to attack abuses, who dared to plough the lonely furrow, and to face coldness, suspicion and misunderstanding for the faiths which they cherished and the causes which commanded their enthusiasm and their devotion. For all such, the Canadian Clubs are an open forum, and any movement which encourages free speech and independent thinking must make the masses of the people more tolerant and more robust, must tend to steady the public judgment, and must give character to the nation and stability to its institutions.

If you are readers of Stephen Phillips, you will remember that in the Tragedy of Herod, Herod, who is apprehensive of Christ's coming and of the overthrow of his kingdom, says to Gadias, the Chief Councillor:

"Among the people of Jerusalem,
I hear a whispering of some new King,
A child that is to sit where I am sitting;
And he shall charm and soothe and breathe and bless.
The roaring of war shall cease upon the air,
Falling of tears and all the voices of sorrow,
And he shall take the terror from the grave,
And shall still that old sob of the sea,
And heal the unhappy fancies of the wind,
And turn the moon from all that hopeless quest;
Trees without care shall blossom, and all the fields,
Shall, without labor, unto harvest come."

But Gadias answers, "No, no;

"The malady is too old and too long rooted,
The earth ailed from the first; war, pestilence,
Madness and death are not as ills that she
Contracted, but are in her bones and blood."

So it has been; so it will be. The earth still ails. Men are human. Life's problems perplex. The world is full of mystery and of evil. But it is full, too, of charity and of beauty and of goodness. With all our faults and follies, and errors and failures, with all our misjudging and misdoing, we are forever moving towards the uplands. The shining hills come nearer. The constant sun warms a changing earth, and the grace of the fashion of it becomes more perfect and more enduring.