

with the additions which the genius of a free and democratic people demanded. If the present low state of our civil service be but the repetition of evils paralleled in the history of British politics, and already remedied by our English cousins by radical measures of administrative reform, which have proved the possibility for us of just such a reformation as Mr. George William Curtis and the civil service agitators are advocating, it would seem that our thinking and voting masses need only to be made acquainted with English experience to force their representatives to the point of giving up their cherished patronage in order to bring it about. Under our present system, the civil service is a hierarchy of office-holders, in each State largely dependent upon the senator who, by "the courtesy of the Senate," controls the nominations, and uses this great organized body of "workers" as a "machine" to forward the party interests and perpetuate his own power.

Mr. Eaton finds the first hint of civil service reform in *Magna Charta*, which made the king promise that he would not "make any justices, constables, sheriffs, or bailiffs but such as know the law of the realm"; but this was quite too high political morality for the times, and for centuries offices were bought and sold in open market. When King Richard II removed the sheriff of Lincolnshire, the place was put up for sale, and bid off by Archbishop Geoffrey, who outbid the Lord Chancellor by fifteen hundred marks. Such prostitution of public trusts was not conducive either to good laws or the honest enforcement of such as existed; and, after the popular uprising led by Wat Tyler, Parliament enacted that "none shall obtain office by suit or for reward, but upon desert; and that gift or brokerage, favor or affection should have no influence over appointments." But these were the days of the power of the crown, when a Tudor queen could send a message to Parliament "to spend little time in motions and make no long speeches"; and a sovereign who viewed the offices as the perquisites of the royal prerogative, and the legitimate means of strengthening it, was not likely to heed such advice. And so it happened that, under the Tudors and Stuarts, official bribery and venality were as rife as ever. James II, who insisted that none should have a license for selling beer but such as supported his policy, of course did not hesitate to command officials, high and low, to the same purpose. A certain custom-house officer notified his submission to the royal will by remarking: "I have fourteen reasons for obeying His Majesty's command: a wife and thirteen young children." One's smile turns to a blush at the thought of how many of our public servants have exactly the same grounds for their enthusiastic support of their candidate. The Com-

EATON'S HISTORY OF ENGLISH CIVIL SERVICE REFORM.*

OUR people differ from the Germans and even the English in this: that they are quick to recognize the superiority of a rival, and ready to imitate the points in which they are excelled; while they generally improve upon the copy. This is often remarked of our progress in the arts, and the same may be said of our constitution, which is, for the most part, the fruit of centuries of English constitutional reform,

* Civil Service in Great Britain. By Dorman B. Eaton. Harper & Brothers. \$2.50.

mons was not free from the general taint; and one of Charles the Second's ministers declared that, "to pocket the bribes, members flocked around him like so many jack-daws for cheese."

The reign of William of Orange marks the first era of real administrative reform. The Act of Settlement itself gave us that grand palladium of judicial impartiality, the tenure of judges until impeachment for cause; and the king signed bills excluding certain executive officers from the legislative body. The undue influence of the crown over the members was not, however, finally curtailed till long after; for Burke is said to have complained that a certain measure had failed "because the king's turnspit was a member of Parliament." The Cabinet was a creation of William's, resulting from the failure of his plan of having opposing elements represented in the Privy Council. Resigning, as the members of the Cabinet do, on a vote in the Commons indicating a lack of confidence, the actual power of administration came, in the end, into the hands of Parliament. Henceforth the tremendous patronage belonged largely to that body, who had so much to do with the setting up and putting down of ministers, and could condition their support on the bestowal of places on their favorites. So that from Parliament—as to-day from our Senate, exercising the power of confirmation—came thereafter the stoutest resistance to reform in the system of appointments to the service, civil and military; for it is but fair to say that, as to the latter, we have not followed the example of England, who up to this decade allowed offices in the army to be bought and sold.

Under the Georges, with Robert Walpole, Lord Bute, and Lord North in the premiership, the corruption was notorious; but a higher public opinion was forming outside of official circles; and Swift, Atterbury, Bolingbroke, and Prior, of the Tories, Addison, Steele, and Defoe, among the Whigs, lent their talents to political literature. Poor, debt-incumbered Goldsmith refused to take a pension in exchange for partisan services. The spirit of renovation at last expressed itself in political circles through Burke and the two Pitts; the whole body of subordinates in the executive department were disfranchised, and remained so till the completion of reform in our own day; removals except for cause ceased under the fourth George. The vast illegitimate influence of members of Parliament arising from their control over original appointments still remained, and a regular official, known as the "Patronage Secretary of the Treasury," was found necessary, to stand between the executive department and the representatives clamorous for places for their friends and "workers." Finally, the executive department, which felt severely the degeneracy of the service, led by Peel,

Aberdeen, Palmerston, and Derby, and supported by the people, brought in the new era of appointments and promotion by competitive examination, and superannuation pensions, in the face of parliamentary opposition. The grand result, the perfect working of an administration "machine" in the best sense, made up of sixty thousand clerks, honest and independent, because certain of their tenure till removal for cause; working for less wages, because sure of a pension in old age, and exempt from political assessments,—which are only an indirect form of making the government pay the campaign expenses of administration party,—is enough to awaken the envy and the shame of every intelligent American; especially when we remember that England is in this respect more democratic than ourselves, offering, as she does, to the humblest and least influential of her citizens a place in her service if they will but prove a capacity to fill it. All the objections now urged against civil service reform were made and shown false in England long ago, and we refer to Mr. Eaton's book for further details of the working of the system. No one can deny the practical value of the principles urged by our civil service reformers after a perusal of this volume, which we commend as invaluable to every citizen who is interested in the future of the republic.

In the present state of divided opinion among our public men concerning the remodeling our civil service after the English plan, it may be interesting to know that among the friends of the movement, judging from their public declarations and official acts, are Senators Hoar, Dawes, Christiancy, Burnside, Lamar, Gordon, Booth, and Sherman (now Secretary of the Treasury), and Representatives Kelly, Shellabarger, and Cox, of Ohio; among the opponents are Senators Blaine, Morrill, of Maine, Cameron, Conkling, and Representatives Peters and Maynard, of Tennessee. The original advocate of the cause in Congress was Mr. Jencks, of Rhode Island, now deceased, who first aroused the attention of the public to the subject.