

EDITORIAL

WE are hearing a good deal nowadays about the regrouping of human interests after the war. A vast deal of portentous twaddle is being unloaded upon the public.

Tirpitz, for instance, fumbles his whiskers and says the general alignment hereafter will be continental Europe against England and America. He assumes that Germany will completely corrupt and disintegrate Russia, without destroying her nationality, making Russia the vast eastern protectorate of the Kaiser. Italy will, of course, come to some reasonable terms with Austria and re-enter the old Alliance. France will be so thoroughly smashed and disheartened that she will never dare raise a national head again except by the expressed consent of swollen Germany. Belgium, of course, will be Germanized. The small neutrals and the Balkans will all be disposed of seriatim, and won't count for much anyway. With a huge central organization redrawing the map of Europe, what will it matter about the national aspirations of any country not big enough to back up its nationalism by heavy guns?

So this Rhine-oceros seems to think. Well, megalomania Teutonica is a marvelous thing. It has done a lot to get Germany where she now is on the war map. But its work is only beginning. This malady had to work itself out first on the rest of the world. It will take its last contortions out of the people that first created the germ inside Germany. We know now that it wasn't put there during the lifetime of anyone present. It is an ancient disease. Bismarck had no idea that even he was the boss of the laboratory when that germ was invented. But it was Bismarck who said after a long, studious time ambassadoring in Russia—that by all means Germany must keep that Russian door open. We know why. The door seems to be fairly well ajar now. But one of these days something will arise in Russia bigger than Trotzky, Lenine and Co.; greater than the game of Quitoff and Repudiation. There is a national spirit in Russia which Germany can't organize her own way. And if the Rhine-oceros were not so thick-headed around the eyes he would observe that any nation, no matter how small, has something at the core that it doesn't care to swap for anything else.

LOOKING over ourselves, what has Canada evolved nationally that is worth the while of seven or eight millions to fight in order to preserve? Suppose the ethnological expert should put us under his glass, what would he find that was truly Canadian which the people of this country should fight to the last furrow to defend against all others? Judging us by many of our present symptoms he might find a great deal that is not Canadian any more than it is some-part-of-European, or British, or American. Looking at most of our towns and cities which are supposed to be characteristic, he would not find that many of them could not be transplanted a thousand miles or so without making much difference in the looks. When we speak of something being really Canadian we must rule out a good deal that has been done since Confederation. Much of it is not Canadian except that it was done under the Government of Canada and by the laws of Canada. But laws do not make a country. Flags do not make a nation. A map is not a racial expression. Laws, flags and maps are being jumbled up just now in Europe as never they were even in the days of Napoleon.

Yet no doubt the furthest-north inhabitant, not counting the Eskimo, could discover something deeper down than a flag or a statute, something bigger than a map that he could think of as really and vitally Canadian, for which he would fight; something that he wants to see kept in the world after the present upheaval is over; something that the world needs as never before if it is to keep the spiritual side of life on even a par with the material. There is no province in Canada where such a life cannot be found. In some provinces it is more

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A Letter to the Editor

Port Arthur, Ont., Jan. 12, 1918.

Editor, Canadian Courier:

In your recent article, "The World Its Own Doctor," there are a few more things that want saying in addition to what you have so well said. I agree with the spirit of the whole of what you have written, but after all how are we to heal ourselves?

"Are we all to become slaves of the State?" you ask. Autocracy and Militarism has not its home alone in Prussia, and it behoves us, as citizens of a free Dominion, which is part of a great and free Commonwealth, to see to it that the hideous negation of free life is not allowed to again secure a footing in Canada. I say "again secure" because, surely the municipal, political, and social history of Canada, for the past fifteen years, will give the lie to us if we assert that we were not fast becoming slaves to a State of municipal speculation, political graft and social vanity, where getting into debt was considered a virtue, supporting a political party to get a pull, was the cleverest thing in commercial life, and gambling in land was looked upon as a social distinction.

The war came. Germany thought we had got sufficiently entangled in these snares to become an easy prey to her diabolical ambition. Thank God Germany was wrong. We shall fight till we kill this evil that threatens us, but, as you rightly say, the war will not do all the great work that is to be done.

What remains? We have just returned to power a Union Government. You say: "Let us get together as never we have." Yes, let us; that is the first step. Then you go on: "And being assured of the Government's wisdom, based upon the will of the people, let us submit ourselves as partners with the Government in working out this great business of making the world a fit place to bring children into."

How can we be assured of the Government's wisdom, and how can the Government base its wisdom on the will of the people, if the people do not enlighten the Government as to what its will is?

The Government asked the people to return it to power to win the war. The will of the people, as expressed at the ballot box, was unmistakable. The people has said: "Go ahead with all speed and power and win the war." So far so good. What will the Government do to win the war? What do the people want the Government to do to win the war? You say the people must "wish the Government all wisdom, based on the will of the people," and advise the people then, "to submit as partners in working out this great business of making the world a fit place to bring children into." A noble object to have in view, but "submit" seems rather a bad word to use to a free people. Have we not submitted to being partners as spendthrifts, grafters and gamblers, in the past too readily. "Submit," yes! it's easy to submit, but submission begets the servile spirit and the servile spirit spells autocratic or bureaucratic government.

Rather, let us turn over a new leaf, or begin an entirely new book. Let us show our sincerity by scrapping the old party political machines. Let us establish, in every constituency, a people's party to stand at the back of and advise the people's representatives at Ottawa. Let every representative, in this way, know definitely what the will of the people is, so that his wisdom may be based upon it, and if he bases on it his own self-interests, or his own incompetence, foolishness, or vanity, then the people surely will have moral courage sufficient to correct the disease before it spreads to other members of the legislature.

The old system of party politics has been in vogue too long. The system almost caused our undoing, and yet, there are those, who think, that after the war is

won, we ought to go back to the old game once more. God pity us if we do!

If we are to make this old world—"a fit place to bring children into" our real work will only begin when peace comes, and there, Mr. Editor, I think you and I are at one. That, I take it, is the message to go to the heart of the people in your article. You want them to prepare themselves for that great day. I think, if I divine your spirit aright, not in this article alone, but in many others you have written, that is your object. You want your paper to become one of the instruments to accomplish that great purpose, if I interpret you aright. That is a noble aim and a worthy ambition and may you and I, and all of us, have the satisfaction of seeing it come to pass.

FREDERICK URRY.

vivid than in others. The Quebecker understands it a little better than anybody else, because he has not been invaded by un-Canadian influences like the rest of us. The westerner, if he looks back far enough can see western Canada as plain as a caravan of Red River cars creaking over the trail. The British Columbian can look back to the great days before even the C. P. R. came there. The Maritime provinces have a peculiar character and history that could belong to no other land or nation than Canada. Ontario has never become so sophisticated with un-Canadian ideas that even a member of the Toronto Club could not dig around and find within a block of his dinner table something absolutely Canadian that he would like any son of his to fight for.

MRS. HUMPHREY WARD opppses women suffrage. She believes that women are too excitable to do politics any good, that they are too easily influenced by men and that the Labor party is working for suffrage because labor wants to line up women to enforce its demands on the country. She fears that with the normal feminine majority in population increased by the ravages of war, politics will soon be dominated by feminism. She declares that suffrage States are less well governed than others; that while British men by their sacrifice and sufferings at the front have earned the franchise, women workers in munitions, and in many forms of public service are not entitled to the vote because of what they have done for the very good reason that they are getting big wages for doing it, and are working for the interests of their husbands and sweethearts anyway. Women in other belligerent nations are not claiming the franchise because of anything they have done in the war; why should Englishwomen? Moreover, women should be given the vote right and left for all matters concerning local legislation, for the thousand and one things that have to do with public health, children, education, sweatshops, etc.; but not for conducting the affairs of a nation. The novelist's logic is unassailable. But votes for women is not a case for logic. It is a sentimental issue.

A BIG man for a big job. No job ever created by war conditions in this country ever called more imperatively for the biggest kind of man than the business of Food-Controlling. Time and again we have pointed out the almost gargantuan scope of this department of public service. Before Mr. Hanna was appointed we published an article describing what that kind of official has had to do in other countries. Mr. Hanna tackled it bravely. In Canada it was a different problem from that of any other country. We are over-producers—and we incline to become over-consumers. The business of balancing our consumption against our production was the first clear programme that Mr. Hanna chalked out.

And that job still remains. On another page a contributor makes it quite clear how the West might prefer to act on the contract of getting Canada's share of exportables exported. He intended the suggestion for the first controller. It applies equally to his successor. And Mr. H. B. Thomson as Canada has begun to know him is the big man for the big job. The little finger of Rehoboam may prove to be thicker than the loins of Jeroboam as in the days of the Israelites. Mr. Thomson may give us a contract in national service based on individual sacrifice far more drastic than anything that Mr. Hanna proposed. Well and good. The country is with him. Because H. B. Thomson is the big man for the job. He is physically big. He is an iron-thewed giant in physique, as big a man as Magrath, the Fuel Con-