



THE WESTERN HOME MONTHLY

Vol. X. No. 5.

WINNIPEG, CANADA, MAY, 1909.

PRICE { 5c. per copy.
50c. per year



Current Comment

The Naval Scare

England has been for centuries the mistress of the seas. Mistress she will remain for centuries to come. That is what the people of the tight little island say. That is what we in the greater empire affirm with equal confidence.

There may be an anti-British alliance but the land which stands for freedom will see that freedom is possible to the end of time for every man who accepts the shelter of the good old flag.

It is no lip loyalty, this of ours. We are not part of the Empire by compulsion, but by choice. We are not subjects of England's king, but of the King of Greater Britain. He belongs to Canada just as surely as to the mother land.

What price shall we pay because we are members of the greater family? We shall give our love and devotion, all our means and talents. And if it ever comes that the war-drum beats in our ears, we shall gladly lay down our lives for the cause we stand for in this big world. It will not be the first time that we have joined hands with our mother. Maybe it will not be the last.

Of course, there is no rumor of war just now, but everybody knows what might happen if the Empire ceased its vigilance and neglected to protect itself against possible encroachments.

What is Canada's duty? That is the first question to answer. Shall she furnish a Dreadnought? Shall she say to the world that the Empire is one and must not be divided. Most certainly, she must take this stand. No wishy-washy platitudes as to willingness to perform will take the place of bold, outstanding action. The world must know that in reckoning with England she must reckon with her greatest son. It were base ingratitude and rank disloyalty for Canada to be half-hearted in this hour of necessity—for surely it is necessary to give to the world just now an exhibition of the strength and solidarity of the Empire.

Making Canadians

There is a second thing Canada must do and do speedily, and that is to Canadianize the foreign speaking peoples. We must have a care to our immigration. We must exclude the undesirables. We must make room only for those who are willing to become thorough Canadians. A Frenchman or German or Pole, a Scandinavian or Russ or Italian on coming to our broad prairies must forget the past and become a loyal citizen in the land he has adopted as his home and the home of his children. We do not want a single soul who is yearning for the affiliations of past years. Even if belonging to a national society makes one less loyal to the land of his adoption, he must forego that pleasure.

The churches, the schools and the press must join in the effort to Canadianize all those who come to dwell amongst us. If we admit a soul within our borders we must extend to him all the privileges of citizenship—this so soon as he loyally accepts the standing of citizen, and so soon as he can intelligently exercise the functions which he must perform. As it is now, we are accepting too many who will never be good Canadians, and we are extending to them citi-

zens' rights, while they are as yet enemies at heart to all that is Canadian.

Again let it be said that we do not compel people to seek a home here. If they come of their own accord it must be on the understanding that they are loyal to our ideals and our institutions. Affiliation with Britain is part of the game. If any man does not like the game he need not play it. That is all.

Compulsory Education

The assimilation of the foreign born population suggests that the church, the state, and the school assume important responsibilities. The school must stand for the unification of all races, creeds and classes and must inspire all its pupils with respect and loyalty for Canadian institutions and Canadian laws. That these ends may be accomplished, all the children must go to school. This at the present time is a national necessity.

It is held by some that the individual and the family have sacred rights and that these must not be infringed upon. The answer to this is that the state has rights which are just as sacred as those of the family or the individual. One of these rights is that of protecting itself against ignorance, vice and crime; another right is that of insisting upon the elimination of everything that makes for national disintegration. It is not difficult for any one to see that these rights cannot be guaranteed without compulsory education.

It is not right that any section of the community should grow up apart from the rest of the state, in isolation and with totally different ideals. Yet the immigration policy of Canada has been so mismanaged that this is the very condition of things in the Canadian West. It is altogether unfair that the Dominion authorities should heap up trouble for the provinces by having the nationalities. The problem of education is almost insuperable. Yet each province must face the problem with a determination to overcome it. Let the first move be a protest against the bunching of kindred people in large areas; and let the second be an insistence upon compulsory education. It is absurd for any public man to boast of his patriotism if he neglects to exercise the most potent means of making the citizens patriotic.

You're Another

Talking of legislature leads us to reflect upon the conduct of our public men in transacting the affairs of state. That passage of words between the leader of the government and a leading member of the opposition last month on the floor of the Commons was about as humiliating a spectacle as could be imagined. Surely we have had enough of partisan politics, and jockeying for position. A member of the House has no right to make veiled insinuations against the leader of the government. He has a perfect right to make a definite charge and to demand an investigation. And the government has no right to deny the right to investigate. On the other hand, a member of the government side, whether it be the Prime Minister or one of his

followers, has no right to answer an implied charge by a statement to the effect, "You are a thief yourself." If the Premier has made nothing for himself or his political friends, all he requires to do is to say so, and to proclaim himself quite ready for an investigation. It may be quite true that his critic has not too good a record, but a statement affirming that fact is no answer to a charge. Yet this seems in the House and in the party press to be the sole line of argument today. The duty of the electors is quite plain. They must relieve from office every representative whose conduct is unbecoming to a Canadian citizen. They will do so.

A Good Example

A good example of what ought to be done by parliamentarians is furnished by the recent action of the Saskatchewan government. Certain charges were made by the opposition. Immediately a commission was appointed to inquire into these charges, and the opposition was permitted to state the character of the commission. Probably if the government had not had a very good case it would not have acted as it did, but this is what every government should do every time. Who are the members of the government, after all? They are only ordinary men like ourselves appointed by us to do our work, and we have a right to demand that they explain to the minutest detail how they have exercised their stewardship. After this let us put it down as a certainty that when a definite charge of wrongdoing is made against a government and the government refuses an investigation or proceeds to quibble, there is jobbery of some kind.

Athletics

The spring is opening, and all over this land bands of young men are organizing for purposes of sport. Just a little word! Let the sport be clean. It is not necessary for all clubs to win, it is necessary for all to play a clean game. Last season in one of our cities a church league was formed. Things went fairly well until near the close of the season; then one of the churches which was near the lead filled up its team with rank outsiders. Well, it won the cup, but it lost its good name, and brought disgrace on the denomination.

That is just what will happen in any country town if the club is dominated by a certain element. Play the game, men! Be so straight that you will give your town and your country a good name. You are not alone in this business. Your action affects all your countrymen. Above all, it affects the character of the growing boys, who accept you as their models.

Public Play Grounds

It is well that play is not confined to young men. It is needed by all. More particularly is it a necessity for children. It is pleasing to note that an agitation for public play grounds is being put forth by the Mothers' Association of Winnipeg who have enlisted the sympathies of many of the leading citizens. Thousands of children now run wild on the streets, without direction and without care. With a system of public play grounds these would all be under supervision, and they would be provided with all necessary tools and apparatus. In other words, they would be educated to right habits, trained in good manners, and prevented from acquiring that knowledge of sin and crime which is often the possession of the street-trained urchin.

Why not have supervised play grounds in every city and town? It must be remembered that play is neither good nor bad. The method of play determines its value. Supervision is everything. The best police officer a town can have is a strong, clean supervisor of sports.