

REFLECTIONS

BY THE EDITOR

EVERYBODY is asking why Sir Henry Mill Pellatt is taking the Queen's Own Regiment to England. It is a tremendous undertaking which has occupied much of his time for a year or more. It is an expensive undertaking and will cost him somewhere about a hundred thousand dollars. A financier like Sir Henry doesn't spend a hundred thousand and a year of his life for nothing—then, why is he doing it? Some have answered, "Love of the militia," but few accepted that solution. It wasn't a big enough motive. Some have said, "Desire for a title; wants a step up in rank," but people laugh at that answer, too. It doesn't seem sufficient, for Sir Henry already has his knighthood, though it is of the junior order. The third explanation is that he desires to get even with Sir James Whitney. The Whitney Government, through the Hydro-Electric Commission, was at pains some time ago to hint that Sir Henry and his associates were stock-jobbers, selfish financiers and conscienceless vendors of high-priced electricity. When the vote on the government power scheme was taken in Toronto, the people took the side of Mr. Beck and Sir Henry was turned down. Now, that was not a result which would please a man like Sir Henry, who is quite ambitious, exceedingly tenacious, and a firm believer in his own code of morals. To have himself branded as lacking in public spirit is something he was unlikely to bear with grace. Hence, his desire to do something spectacular, and to beat the Beck crowd with the public. This third explanation seems the more reasonable, but even it may not be correct. If any person can give a better explanation, there are several columns of the Toronto newspapers at his service.

PEOPLE from Great Britain cannot understand the Canadian attitude on national affairs any more easily than people from Canada find an explanation for certain British characteristics. General Sir John French is no exception to the rule if we may accept as accurate the forecasts of his criticism of the Canadian militia. He has fallen into grievous errors made a dozen times in the last half century by British military men.

He finds us unprepared for war and says that this is deplorable. But is it? Why should Canada be prepared for war to-morrow? Why should our forces be ready to take the field forthwith? Canada does not propose to be in the first firing line in any war which the Empire may have in Africa, Europe or Asia. She would be first in the conflict if the war took place in America, but such a contingency is most remote. No country on this continent could possibly have a quarrel with us except the United States, and we smile when war with that country is mentioned. To maintain an army in Canada ready to take the field at a moment's notice would be downright nonsense. We do not live in Europe; we live in America.

AGAIN, he says we should have more effective staffs in command of brigade divisions. What does this mean? For military purposes, Canada is divided into thirteen districts in five commands, each with an Officer Commanding and a staff varying from four to six officers. All these are officers in the permanent militia. Therefore, General French says the "Permanent Force" of Canada is badly officered. Many people will agree with him to a limited extent, but his criticism is probably no better based than a similar criticism of the corresponding officers of the British army. It would be hard to find a set of thirty officers in any army, in which there were not a few "dubs." In Canada, where the appointments are mainly political in the beginning, a few men have got into the service who were failures elsewhere. On the whole, however, the average is fairly high.

Under these commands, there are a large number of brigade commanders most of whom are volunteer officers. That these men are as efficient as similar officers in the regular British army is not to be expected. They are mainly intelligent citizens who have had a long experience as volunteer militiamen, and who have qualified by service and examination to take the rank of brigadier. They get little experience in brigade work, and if Canada keeps her head they never will get very much.

GENERAL FRENCH'S third criticism is that the annual training is inadequate. Quite true. You cannot transform a citizen into a soldier in twelve days per annum. However, twelve days is as much as the average citizen can spare for military training, though he may add a few Saturday afternoons for target practice. The militiaman who puts in twelve days each year for three years may not be a good soldier, but he is a better citizen and in case of national emergency he can be counted upon to furnish the raw material out of which an army might be made.

What General French does not point out is that the weakness

of our militia is that only a small percentage of our citizens ever get three consecutive annual trainings. Here is where reform is needed. Nor does he insist that the time of most Canadian militia officers is spent in getting recruits rather than training them. If we had some system of compulsory recruiting and compulsory training, Canada would get three times the value she now gets for the money spent on annual training.

GENERAL BADEN-POWELL'S visit to Canada is drawing attention to the Boy-Scout movement. Some people look upon this as one of those "imperialist" movements which should be condemned. There seems to be little justification for this view. The basic idea is to teach boys character, and the North American continent needs character as badly as they do in England. The Scouts' creed is as follows: A Scout's honour is to be trusted; a Scout is loyal to king and country, parents and employers; a Scout must try his best to do a good turn to somebody every day; a Scout is courteous; a Scout is a friend to animals; a Scout obeys orders; a Scout must be cheery under all circumstances; a Scout must have a savings bank account.

What better creed could a father devise for his sons? The boy who lives up to it will make a good citizen, bring gladness to his home and general benefit to the community in which he lives. He learns to discipline himself—a wonderful asset. He learns to be unselfish and generous—two grand qualities.

Much depends on the scout-master, of course. But the underlying principles are good, and if no one with perverted ideas interferes there can be little doubt that beneficial results will ensue.

TORONTO is trying to develop a good roads movement which will improve all the thoroughfares radiating from its boundaries. Under the leadership of the Motor League, the Board of Trade, the City Council and the County Council have been working out a co-operative scheme which will make the 111 miles of outside roads a credit to all concerned. The cost will be about \$6,000 a mile, and the money is to be provided by the City, County and Province. There is to be a Commission of three, one from each of the contributing bodies, and this Commission will administer the funds.

The idea is excellent and it is to be hoped that it can be worked into actual practice. It is not fair that the County should bear the whole expense of maintaining the main roads leading to the larger cities. It is also reasonable that the Province should contribute to the up-keep of the leading provincial thoroughfares. In these matters, Ontario is far behind the leading states of the Union, and hence this movement should receive immediate and generous support. Bad roads means a higher cost of living in the cities and a lower rate of profit for those who are sending their produce to these cities. Therefore good roads are essential to the general welfare. Because they are essential to the economic collection and distribution of its products, the country should improve them.

IF all that is being said by British investors is true, the Rt. Hon. Lloyd George is one of Canada's greatest benefactors. By his ingenious and extensive system of taxation, he is driving the investors of Great Britain to send more of their capital abroad, and Canada is to get a large share. The courts have also decided that income from abroad which is re-invested in foreign securities is not taxable. This coupled with the Lloyd George Budgets with their taxes on unearned increment is causing many people to look to Canada as a desirable place for investment. Lord Hindlip, Lord Dunmore, Lord Clinton, Lord Vivian and Lord Brassey are in Canada at present and if their impressions are good, they will probably be the means of sending another hundred millions of British capital this way. Just now most of them are in the West, and will travel as far as Proctor, British Columbia.

What a change is coming over the scene! A few years ago, the average Britisher had little faith in this country and it took extraordinary persuasive powers to induce him to send a small percentage of his money to Canada. Now he is getting keen and shortly Canadians will be hard put to find opportunity for him to invest his capital. Canadian development and the Lloyd George Budgets seem to have reached conjunction, as the astronomers would say.

AMERICAN newspapers are trying hard to stem the northward migration. This is only reasonable. When the movement of population was southward, Canadian journals tried the same tactics. It only goes to show that most journalists have the best interests of their country at heart. However, when American journals, like the New York Times, try to prove that there is a large movement southward of disappointed American farmers, they are simply making themselves ridiculous. This also is quite understandable. Most newspapers make themselves ridiculous by over-zealousness at some time or other. Canada is but getting back from the States the million citizens loaned in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

MOST CHEERING

A subscriber at Cochrane, Alta., writes as follows: "I do not wish to lose a single copy of the Courier, as it is easily the best of its class in Canada, and I thank you for continuing the paper after my subscription had run out. Enclosed find P.O. Order for \$3.00, being my renewal from May 15th."