

THE CANADIAN COURIER

SUBSCRIPTION RATE, \$3.00 IN ADVANCE

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY

BY

COURIER PRESS, LIMITED

181 SIMCOE STREET

TORONTO, AUGUST 19TH, 1916.

Punctured Psychologists

AS PSYCHOLOGISTS THE war-makers of the Central Empires have failed. Go back over the various events in this war. Observe how the first plan was to shatter the morale of the French by one swift blow at Paris. Note how, at a dramatic moment, they employed poison-gas machines at Ypres. Consider the effort to break down the spirit of the French by the assault on Verdun; then how they hoped to detach Italy by the fierce Austrian offensive. In everything it is the grand stand play that the Germans seek to put over. They have shown unquestionable capacity for steady, sustained, dogged work, too. But it is psychological effect the Teuton counts on. Just as he sent the Deutschland to Baltimore on a not-very-profitable errand just to "impress" the German-Americans.

But all these thunder-strokes of psychology have won him nothing. He bellowed "Booh!" to frighten us, and to tell the truth we did jump a little, but it frightened nobody that mattered. Now the German has come to the end or very near the end of his box of tricks and the last great surprise he promises us will be his own collapse. Laboratory psychology fails in the open test of war. The German empiricists should note this in their next books.

Ross Advocates Failed

GENERAL ALDERSON made no bones about the Ross rifle and its shortcomings. His pronouncement against it was made known to Canadians only a short time before it was announced that the then commander of the Canadians in France was to be succeeded by General Byng, himself proceeding to England to become Inspector General of the Canadian forces. Although nothing was actually said to the effect that General Alderson had been "removed," the impression was fairly general throughout this country that such had been the case. This impression seemed almost to receive encouragement from our Militia Department. It sent out announcements of the change so briefly worded as to seem almost sinister—as though their very brevity were intended to cover up some unpleasantness.

As a matter of fact, the special promoters of the Ross rifle were unable to secure anything more than the appearance of a de-motion for General Alderson. That Officer was too well known to the British War Office and his record not only in France but in other campaigns was entirely too good to allow the peeved advocates of an inferior weapon for our soldiers to wreak full vengeance on the man who had condemned the rifle. The result of their wire-pulling was simply to secure a change of position for General Alderson, who is now Inspector General of our forces in England.

While Canadians cannot but regret that no Canadian seems qualified to lead our men in France, the fact remains that General Alderson was the next best kind of officer to be desired. This may be said without fear of any contradiction. Canadian soldiers—except, perhaps, those with peculiar reasons for supporting the Ross rifle, have all agreed upon that point. They express regret for the loss of the man who commanded them at Ypres, but satisfaction with his promotion to a field of still larger influence. Ottawa's belated repudiation of the Ross rifle, like its more recent abandonment of the ex-"Hon. Colonel" Wesley Allison in another connection, is complete vindication of General Alderson's position.

Bridge Building

MR. LIONEL CURTIS came, saw, spoke—and went. And the cause of Empire centralization which he came to advertise lies where he found it, as far as Canada is concerned, sleeping. Of course, there are some people very active about it, and when the war is over it is not unlikely that the centralists will give us much trouble, rallying round them two kinds of people: first, those so-called Canadians who feel that to live in Canada is a sort of martyrdom suffered only because they

can't live in England, and softened only by the thought of beating down any British independence of mind that may show itself in Canada; and, second, that simple-minded, sentimental class which exists in every country and which can always be stampeded by flag-waving.

But for the present even these two classes of people are too busy to lose sleep over Mr. Curtis's propaganda. As for the real feeling of the country, the sense of the thoughtful Canada-loving Canadians who believe in building whatever Empire is to be built, on sound nationalism rather than unsound rhetoric—these people are for the most part too much interested in the war to interest themselves in the scholarly jingoism of the Curtis school. But after the war this vital element of Canadian public opinion will surely check the exuberant folly of the centralists.

And let no one say that these anti-centralists are not the better Imperialists. They are to the Empire what taciturn masons are to a bridge-in-building. They are concerned deeply with the work in hand to see that it is solid, sound and truly laid, and when invited to quit this work to join, let us say, a spree of speech-making in the offices of a director of the bridge-building concern—they become properly annoyed. These are your true Imperialists.

A Nomination

JUST 700 MILES south-east of the Island of Ascension, 1,695 miles north-west of Cape Town, and 1,200 miles from Mossamedes (an African port) there lies an area of 47 square miles of the earth's surface. It has a good climate ranging from 68 degrees to 84 degrees in summer and 57 degrees to 70 degrees in winter. It is picturesque and healthy, having hills that run as high as 2,704 feet above the sea. It has an unfriendly coast, offering a landing place at only one point, and having no real harbour of any sort, but it has plenty of streams of fresh water and a number of pleasant walks. In short as a residential island far from the worries of world politics, St. Helena is as ideal to-day as ever it was. We venture, therefore, to nominate it as a residence for certain persons: to wit, Kaiser William, his sons, and all his advisors, military and otherwise, save only Von Tirpitz, for whom some more distinguished end should be devised. We read that St. Helena has been losing trade and population since the introduction of steam vessels made it unnecessary for ships to call there for fresh water and food. The Germans mentioned, might, with a good garrison, help restore prosperity.

One objection only is to be raised. It is the fact that Napoleon spent about six years of his life on the island, and dignified it by his death there in 1821. Napoleon may have been an enemy, but he was also a great man. It has been said that the British authorities of those days dare not land their captive in England for fear the British would cheer him! St. Helena, since Napoleon, seems too honourable for the Germans we have in mind. Possibly one of the Aleutian Islands would do.

Counting Up

EVERYTHING CONSIDERED we have more to be thankful for than the Americans. We have the bi-lingual problem and the Orange-Catholic problem, and our economic position isn't what it might be. But the Americans have the negro problem, the German-American problem and the Mexican-American problem. What is worse, the Americans as a whole don't worry half as much about their problems as we do. When a country starts to worry about its worries it is on the road to getting rid of them.

Two more points:

We have still a few natural resources left and—we have a hand in the European war. The latter is especially worth the having.

The Social Quality

WHOEVER RECKONS that the farm labour problems of our future are to be solved merely by dumping ship-loads of the earth's riff-raff on the shore at Halifax and spreading them roughly over the country—is a heavy sleeper. The sooner we recognize that farming is a highly skilled affair, and that farm labourers, to be efficient, must be trained for the work, the sooner we shall leave haphazard methods behind and begin to get maximum returns from our farms. Another point is this: the personality of a factory worker or a bookkeeper count for very little in the factory or office. But on the farm the personal qualities of the "help" are of paramount importance. The average Canadian farmer eats at the same table and sleeps under the

same roof as his hired man. We require, therefore, hired men who won't debase the metal of our rural society.

Why?

HAS WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST, of New York, any friends in the Ottawa Government?

If he has that friend ought to be routed out. If he hasn't why is the New York American allowed to circulate in Canada?

It is rabidly anti-ally and pro-German. It has no business on this side of the line.

Killing Curiosity

WONDERFUL HOW WE admire the Greeks of old and how profound is the respect given them by our scholars. Yet Gilbert Hamerton—whose writings deserve more respect than they get, even though he was a bit of an old maid—reminds us that Alcibiade's education consisted of three things: to swim, to read and write, and to play the guitar.

Think of it!

And with such a general education for her "best" youths the Greeks produced books to which this mimicking age still must needs refer.

The Greek boy, thus learned, found out other things by experience. Habits of observation were forced upon him. His day to day problems provoked—Plato and Socrates.

Let no one suppose that swimming, music and the art of reading and writing are enough for our present-day youths. The case of Alcibiades is interesting only for contrast. Our wholesale educational methods glut the intellectual curiosity of the child before that curiosity has a chance to make itself felt. It is only the miraculous survival of natural curiosity that leaves us any original thinkers at all.

Poets and Politics

WHEN POETS CLIMB THE FENCE into politics, somebody is made miserable. Usually it is the poets.

There are two examples of this: the first is that of the poor Irishmen who led the Irish rebellion—three at least were poets. The second is the case of the Germans. The Germans are not, strictly speaking, poets, but they had acquired a sort of intellectual hyper-sensitiveness allied to the sensitiveness of the poet. They abandoned the fields of music and science in which they had achieved no small distinction, to enter world politics. True their weapon was well forged and bid fair to achieve victory for them, but in countless little ways they erred. And now they face certain defeat.

So with Patrick Pearse, Thomas MacDonagh and Joseph Plunkett, the Irish poet-rebels. They are dead now and deserve only our pity. Like the Germans, they had hyper-sensitive natures. They were egotists as the Germans are egotists. As a famous German remarked, after counting over the virtues of Germans, as he saw them: "Is it any wonder that politically we are asses?" The success of the English in world politics and home politics is not a little to be attributed to an element of stolid, almost stupid, common sense. The English are not poets, but they do wonderfully in their own field so long as they stick to it.

Why No Poet?

HAVE WE NO CANADIAN poet to sing the song of our Canadians, our men who spend their lives not for a neighbour, as England is to France, but for an ideal. Is there no one to write the epic of our brothers, sons and fathers as Kipling, and Brooke, and Masfield have written for the sons of the British Isles, or is "Good Luck to the Boys of the A-a-l-eyes" the nearest we can come to it?

Masfield's "August, 1914," makes us think of this question:

Yet heard the news, and went discouraged home,
And brooded by the fire with heavy mind,
With such dumb loving of the Berkshire loam
As breaks the dumb hearts of the English kind.

Then sadly rose and left the well-loved Downs,
And so by ship to sea, and knew no more
The fields of home, the byres, the market towns,
Nor the dear outline of the English shore.

But knew the misery of the soaking trench,
The freezing in the rigging, the despair
In the revolting second of the wrench
When the blind soul is flung upon the air.