

# REFLECTIONS

BY THE EDITOR

## Anglo-Saxon Patience

**A**S examples of national patience, Great Britain's slow, deliberate dealing with Ireland and the United States policy toward Mexico must ever be notable. The coolness of Asquith, Balfour, Grey, Law and others is almost beyond belief. The patience of Wilson is quite on a par. In some countries there would be cabinet crises and bloody revolution if the issues were as important as the Irish question is in Britain and the Mexican question is in the United States.

The race lacks much of excellence, but it has certainly developed legislative and administrative calmness and tenacity. Not that the common-sense democracy of to-day is entirely a matter of race. It is largely a matter of education. Three centuries of noble political leaders have been needed to carry us even to our present level of administrative placidity.

But the breeders of discontent in Ireland and the fomenters of rebellion in Mexico should not trifle too far. When the Race shuts its teeth hard and goes forward, there is no resisting its courage and determination. In three centuries, it has made not a single failure. In three centuries, it has not turned its back on an enemy.

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## Georgian Bay Canal

**O**NCE more, a deputation has visited Ottawa on behalf of the Georgian Bay Canal, or on behalf of the men who hope to profit by its construction. Boards of Trade representing every town, village and city touched by the canal were represented. The play was fairly well done, but it was not impressive.

This is a bad year to talk about a new two-hundred-million proposition. Someone of sense in the Quebec Board of Trade made that point, when it was asked to send representatives to Ottawa. Canada's transportation burdens are now as heavy as it can bear.

Even if the scheme were feasible, which is not certain, there are other problems of equal importance. There are sixty million acres of land in Alberta and Saskatchewan held by speculators which must be transferred to settlers. That will cost the Government of Canada a big sum of money and years of effort. Our forests and water powers have been alienated and must be repurchased. Ontario is now buying back its lands and forests, and the same must occur in other provinces. Our harbours must be deepened to meet the growing bulk of ocean vessels, now reaching toward the forty-foot draught. The Georgian Bay Canal must await the carrying out of those public works which are absolutely essential to the country's economic development and vital to the country's progress.

Let the matter be studied and investigated. Let those who believe in it spread their faith. Let us all think it over earnestly and seriously and in relation to all the other great problems before this growing Dominion. The Suez Canal is to be deepened to forty feet, which shows what must be met in this case.

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## Influence of C.M.A.

**A**SSOCIATIONS like the Canadian Manufacturers' Association have influence in proportion to the skill of their leaders and permanent officials. Time was when these men were highly regarded. To-day the factory knights seem to have fallen on a day of ineffectiveness. The men who hold the highest offices in the Association are not the wisest men in that body, and are more or less self-selected. The permanent officials are neither politicians nor philosophers.

Ever since the C. M. A. started to publish an "organ" of their own, the influence of the Association has declined. They have lost touch with the press of Canada, and have gained the secret opposition of some of the trade papers. Their propagandist work is not at all equal to that of the labour interests. Further, when they meet the latter before a legislative body, they show much less skill than the labour leaders. In the recent negotiations with the Ontario Government over the Workmen's Compensation Act, the Labour leaders scored a great victory. The Ontario Act, which will be passed this week, is one of the most advanced in the world.

If the C. M. A. desires to retain any of its ancient

influence in the community, it should set its house in order. Eleventh-hour conventions, such as the one held in Toronto recently, indicate the need for such action.

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## Reckless Toronto

**D**ESPITE the hard times, Toronto has granted a raise in salary to all its employees, totalling nearly two hundred thousand. The money is being distributed with lavish hand, despite the fact that the city will pay this year \$3,700,000 in debt charges. Next year this will be increased to \$4,500,000, making an increase of about sixty-five per cent. in two years. Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton

## A WHITE HOUSE INCIDENT



A Rough-rider discovered under a Professor's gown.  
—Drawn by N. McConnell.

and Winnipeg must take off their hats to Toronto—the most prodigal community in Canada.

Toronto's tax rate is four mills higher than Montreal's, although its funded debt is lower. This proves that Toronto is not as well financed as its eastern contemporary. The present funded debt is \$61,000,000, and this will be increased within two years by twenty or twenty-five millions of expenditures already arranged for. This will mean an increase in less than three years of about seventy-five per cent.

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## Military Extremists

**C**ANADA'S military efficiency is in danger from two men—the one who has a patriotic shudder every time he sees a young man tolerate military discipline, and the other is the man who wants to see Canada have an army. Because these two men are active just now, common-sense military training is suffering.

Strange how the father of a family of boys convinces himself that physical training and military discipline are not good for his boys. One can understand the man from the east end of London coming to Canada, and preaching thus—because he detests all discipline. He desires to avoid work, to have the privilege of beating his wife, and the joy of living on the wages of her and her children. One can even understand the professional socialist, whose living depends upon his condemnation of the capitalist and the gentleman. But how some industrious, intelli-

gent Canadian fathers fail to see the tremendous value of military discipline for young men is almost beyond comprehension!

On the other hand, the present Minister of Militia is in danger of going to the opposite extreme. He is doing good work in organizing cadet corps and in getting young men to drill at the right period of their physical development. But he has not cut down the extravagance of a permanent army or modified the expenses of "headquarters." Further armoured were needed, but the speed is too great. There is a danger of the people being frightened. The Minister should not prejudice the whole military situation by an undue forcing of the pace.

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## Success in Politics

**U**NLESS a party is in power, it feels that it is unsuccessful. Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his lieutenants seem to think that they are disgraced by the defeat of 1911. Mr. Rowell, leader of the Ontario Liberals, asks his followers in that province to put him in power. How curiously absurd this attitude!

This obsession is getting into the minds of all the people. The struggle is for office. Look at Ontario—seventy-odd Conservatives fighting like grim death to keep eighteen Liberals in a hole. What would the public say of a football match in which there were 75 on one side and 18 on the other? Would they think it fair? Yet the Conservatives of Ontario see no unfairness in the situation in the Legislature.

Worse than this even is the absence of an opposition in some of the provinces. British Columbia has none, and its disappearance, has meant an excess of extravagance and inefficiency. So in New Brunswick; government there for many, many years, has been lacking in ideals.

Perhaps there should be "A League to Support Oppositions," having for its chief purpose the maintaining of a fairly strong Opposition in every province. If by accident the League helped an Opposition into power, it would at once turn around and support and foster those it had unwittingly defeated.

What the country should do is to see that its own safety and progress depends upon the maintenance of the theory that a strong Opposition is necessary to the success of parliamentary government. Where one party absolutely dominates, then party government breaks down.

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## Frightened Capital

**T**RADER unionism is not doing as much to frighten capital away from Canada as the antagonistic attitude of the anti-corporation spell-binder. Trades unionists at least believe that capital should have a fair reward. The anti-corporation advocate is a blind robber, and refuses to allow to corporations the rights which he claims for himself.

In the United States, the anti-corporation agitators have stopped all railway progress. During the past years, a quarter of a million railway employees have been laid off. Services have been cut in all directions. Railway stocks have declined in value and business stagnation is the result. Now, when the damage is done, the people are asking the Interstate Commerce Commission to grant an increase of five per cent. in railway rates.

Municipal ownership and public ownership are splendid principles, but they are applied successfully only when they do not frighten away private capital. The managers of the big corporations have themselves to blame for much of the trouble, because they have been too grasping. Nevertheless, there is an equal danger in the other direction.

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## Civic Enterprises

**C**ITIES which indulge in the luxury of municipal ownership are sometimes foolish enough to believe that they are not subject to the same conditions as private corporations. They are therefore surprised occasionally when they find that revenues fall off while expenses increase. Edmonton is an example of the city which has been slightly too optimistic with regard to its municipally-owned utilities. It has four large undertakings, a street railway, telephone system, water-works system, and electric light department. The latter shows a balance on the right side, but according to the Edmonton Bulletin, the water-works shows a shortage of \$100,000, the telephone system a deficit of \$101,000, while the street railway system is more than \$400,000 behind. This makes a total current deficit of over \$600,000.

Edmonton has a splendid system of municipal government. The deficit shown by the utilities is not an argument against public ownership. This deficit is simply an indication that municipal utilities must be affected by financial and commercial conditions in the same way as the business of a merchant, a wholesaler or a manufacturer.