

# THE CANADIAN COURIER

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## Lost Business for Canada

**R**USSIA AND FRANCE wanted steel rails the other day. Russia required three hundred and fifty thousand tons; France asked two hundred thousand tons. By the arrangement among the Allies the first chance to supply these goods was to be given one of the Allies—Canada. It came and was refused because all but one of our steel mills is making other things than rails, and that one had already too much to do. The order went to the Americans.

The moral of this episode is this: favoured treatment by the Allies of the Allies in trade matters will do Canada no good so long as orders like the one referred to can slip past us so easily. What we require and what our statesmen must seek to obtain for us is a scheme of preferential duties among the Allies so that Canadian goods entering Russia, France, England or the other parts of the Empire would enter at a lower rate of duty than goods from the United States; and Russian, French, British and other colonial goods would have similar preference in entering our home market.

It is impossible to exaggerate the good such an arrangement would be to Canada. The future is very problematical for us. The question of employment after the war will loom very large. But if American manufacturers and exporters find that a factory in Allied territory will get better terms in shipping to great foreign countries than from the United States they will be forced to locate their factories in Canada. Surely the importance of this fact cannot be over-estimated. If we don't get this actual preference the Americans will as usual draw trade from our industries. The present courtesy of getting the "first chance" is not enough. There must be "preference." The Allies owe this little treat to themselves.

## An Insincerity

**F**RIENDS OF MR. LIONEL CURTIS and the Round Table repudiate the suggestion that Mr. Curtis stands for any definite policy or definite tendency in discussing the organization of the relationships of the parts of the Empire. They seem to insist upon posing, and on Mr. Curtis' posing, as perfectly open-minded. This is a touch of insincerity unworthy of the general character of Round Table discussion. The average Round Table man has an open mind—until his opponent speaks against Imperial centralization. It is perhaps unconscious, but, nevertheless, true, that the average Round Table man invites the fullest discussion, the frankest statements—and then is hotly indignant at the mere notion of Canada becoming a self-contained, self-complete, self-reliant nation. He is filled with amusement at the thought of such a state. He is merrily ironical. The truth of the matter is that while the Round Table is placing all of us in its debt for its collection and distribution of data on the great subject of Imperial organization, the very fact that it exists is due to the desire of men at the "centre"—London—to bind the parts of the Empire together. One has only to observe the care with which, in Round Table writings, the one-time project of American representation in the British House of Commons is discussed and argued feasible, to see where the heart of the Round Table men lies. With their desire to preserve the Empire we have nothing but agreement to offer. But the method is wrong. Absolute centralization is wrong. A good bridge is not built on a centre pier and allowed to "depend" from both sides to the banks of the river. That would be useless, dangerous and unnecessary.

## Limitations of Governments

**V**ISCOUNT BRYCE, in a recent scholarly address in England, expressed a doubt as to the wisdom of extending the range or a single government too far. In effect his words were: One is sometimes led to doubt whether the limits of efficient government have not been reached—even

surpassed in some cases. He recalled the efficiency of the small Greek states and the fact that the collapse of one of them affected only a small area and a small number of people, whereas under our highly centralized forms of government the fate of tremendous areas and huge populations was bound up with the success or failure of a single government.

Viscount Bryce sees clearly. Though he was not apparently referring to the British Empire, his words may fairly be turned against the people who advocate centralization of the British Empire. There is indeed cause to doubt the ultimate success of such a scheme, not because it would in itself be undesirable, but because it is unworkable. It would indeed be stretching the range of a single government too far. In the very government of Canada the ill-effects of our tremendous size are to be seen in the too common indifference of scattered parts of the country to the affairs at Ottawa or to the interests of other remote parts. New Ontario long complained of neglect on the part of the Ontario Government—and rightly so, because it was next to impossible for the average provincial prime minister and his colleagues to keep all parts of their territory evenly, or even fairly in mind. Canada is practically a geographical unit, and, therefore, has many reasons for enduring the faults of Confederation until they may be outgrown. But to centralize the Empire in London—or anywhere else—would be to stretch "government" too far—and without compensating advantages. Viscount Bryce's observation is true and pertinent. Better ten strong independent states than a cumbersome structure, top-heavy and slow to move, like one of Philip's Spanish galleons, offering an easy mark to a smaller vessel like the little Revenge.

## From Pericles to the Present

**M**AN ALONE SEEMS, individually not to have advanced so much as a hair's breadth in all the centuries he has encumbered the pleasant earth. Collectively he is much better—though the present war revealed surprising opportunities for improvement. The mean average of human conduct and thought is higher. The race has accumulated a certain amount of knowledge of one sort and another. But the shining moments of great men are still no brighter—and often not as bright as the shining moments of men who lived two thousand years ago. The ancient nobleman may not have known as many facts, but, judged in the light of his own age he rose as high as the modern. Indeed, there was more idealism and less striving after sordid realism among the thinkers. Take for illustrative example that age-worn funeral oration of Pericles, which not all the ages nor all the lisping of half-comprehending school boys can diminish in its fresh beauty. With but a few words omitted it could as fittingly be read to-day over the graves of our heroes:

"... so they gave their bodies to the commonwealth and received, each for his own memory, praise that will never die, and with it the grandest of all sepulchres, not that in which their mortal bones are laid, but a home in the minds of men. . . . Their story is not graven only on stone . . . but lives on far away, without visible symbol, woven into the stuff of other men's lives."

Have we outgrown Pericles? Has the modern produced anything nobler in spirit, more beautiful in form?

## A Canadian Theatre

**S**OME DAY WE ARE going to have a national theatre in Canada. The folk whose interest in the dramatic art stops with vaudeville may not agree, or may not even be interested in the idea. But it stands, nevertheless. To-day our theatres are supplied from New York, Chicago and San Francisco. The jokes are American made, so are the actors and actresses and most of the plays. But when a nation begins to have a character of its own it will appreciate plays and players of its own. Than the theatre there is no greater educating influence. Ideas can be placed before popular audiences in a theatre, which, if put in even the best of novels would be skipped by the popular reader as being stodgy. Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Italy have their national theatres. France is peculiarly devoted to the histrionic art and her playwrights are among the most brilliant. Yet we continue to absorb Broadwayisms.

There must be many failures before the real theatre will be started. In Ottawa there have been feeble efforts, but very feeble and lacking in any touch of intelligent comprehension of what the situation demands. In Toronto an older and wiser movement has shown bright moments. The first step towards a national theatre will be a series of

little theatres, where amateurs or semi-professionals will present the better class of poetic and intellectual plays that are never shown by the Yankee-fied commercial stage. These plays will be chosen not as means of showing off ambitious amateurs to their friends, but as exhibitions, in acting, of the writings of great or interesting minds. Finally we may hope for a national subsidy for approved theatres—possibly under a department of Beaux Arts at Ottawa. The theatre could be made an instrument of Canadianization.

## Strongbow and Casement

**A**BOUT 1170 HENRY II. licensed the impetuous "Strongbow"—Richard de Claire, Earl of Pembroke—to try to redeem his fortunes by adventures in Ireland. To-day Sir Roger Casement awaits his execution for his puerile schemes to oust the successors of Strongbow. One could feel happier in contemplation of such an event if it signified the courageous end of a wise man. Instead it signifies the courageous end of an unwise man, and folly and courage make poor companions. The one robs the other of what credit he might have.

## "American-ism" in Canada

**A**UGMENTED AMERICAN INTEREST in Canada and Canadian investments does not necessarily mean increasing American influence in this country, notwithstanding the querulous doubts of some people. The up-to-date American investor has, it is true, been sending a great part of his extra war profits to this country in return for Government, municipal and other securities. He has had a certain influence over our book-keeping methods in a few cases: certain of our municipalities have changed their accounting systems slightly so as more nearly to approximate the systems understood and approved by American investment houses. We may look forward with satisfaction to the prospect of more Americans coming here to build factories or to become Canadian workmen. These things will not in the least jeopardize our Canadian character.

## A Power Merger

**T**HE MONTREAL Light, Heat and Power Company, capital (bond and stock) \$28,930,300, proposes amalgamation with the Cedar Rapids Manufacturing and Power Company, capital (bond and stock) \$19,367,000. The total capital of the two concerns is therefore \$48,297,300. The concern which is to acquire these securities is the Civic Investment Industrial Company, and its authorized capital is \$75,000,000, of which \$65,300,000 is to be issued. Thus \$48,297,300 becomes, for the present, \$65,300,000 and possibly \$75,000,000. Does the Minister of Finance call this stock watered?

## Ottawa Generosity

**W**HAT REASON, IF ANY, exists for the recent payment by our Ottawa Government of a full half year's interest on the \$106,000,000 domestic war loan floated last fall? The loan was not made until November and the payments were spread over instalments, yet the full six months' interest, amounting to \$2,650,000, is paid. If the Minister of Finance does this in order to please the lenders and encourage them to buy further war loan bonds from his department, he takes, one might suggest, an unbusiness-like way of doing it. Such a bonus might better have been estimated beforehand and added to the interest rate. No buyer of bonds, of course, will refuse the money, even though he knows that the country needs it more than he does himself. Those of us who did not buy might perhaps be stimulated to buy on the next loan in anticipation of a sure thing. But we don't need that stimulus. We believe the Canadian war loan is a sure thing on general principles, that the second one will be as sure as the first, and good enough to let those of us who wish go on investing the interest.

## The Seed of Greatness

**D**EATH IS OFTEN the means by which the great men of the earth reach their true fruition. The memory of such men blossoms in the minds of younger men, bearing fruit in many lives instead of one. Of tangible achievements Kitchener's life was more than full. Now, if it was as great a life as we think it was, comes its second and more pulsant work—a potent memory coupled with the ever-present need for more great men! More great men! Those who yesterday admired the great soldier, are to-day conscious of the need for new men to fill his place. Admiration, giving way to effort, may now produce many Kitcheners.