

*A Canadian Flag*

new nation of "The North." The resolution may be considered from two angles of reality, first the thought back of it and, second, the clothing of that thought in suitable form. Structurally, the resolution is but a single sentence, a sentence so concise, simple and plain that he who runs may read and understand. Creators in every realm of artistic thought will readily understand what these words mean, since throughout the ages the problem relative to the production of high class art, whether in the sphere of prose, poetry, sculpture, philosophy or economics, has always been one of a twofold nature: first, the marshalling into the realm of time and space, a noble, splendid and enduring thought, and, second, the clothing of that thought in suitable form. The problem before the house in regard to a distinctive national flag is somewhat similar.

First, we must come to a conclusion with regard to the subject matter back of this undertaking or problem. Then we shall have to take the subject matter and give it external form or symbolize it in such a way that the flag created will appeal to Canadians from ocean to ocean. Naturally the subject matter must not apply to merely any one province; it will have to be broadly national, that is, comprehensive enough to include within its fold the many geographic belts of territory which make up the dominion.

After the subjective part of the problem is solved, the next thing to be done—as we have explained—is to give to the subject matter a suitable form, thus symbolizing Canadian justice, Canadian civil liberty, Canadian ordered freedom and Canadian soul and honour, not only at home and on the continent but throughout the world. First, then, there must be settlement by hon. members of this chamber of the subjective side of the problem of a distinctive national flag. After that is done, the subject matter will have to be so symbolized that a national emblem will come into being that will preeminently stand for Canada at home and abroad.

The resolution is made up of or determined by four essentials. It will be observed that the first essential is that the opinion of parliament shall be obtained, by debate or discussion, so that the matter of the adoption of a national symbol may be fully reviewed. The second essential is that a special committee, made up of members of all parties and groups, a committee representing the combined opinion of the house, shall be appointed for the purpose of considering the advisability of adopting a distinctive Canadian flag. The third essential of the reso-

[Mr. McIntosh.]

lution is that the flag adopted shall be representative of Canada as a whole. The fourth essential is that the national emblem shall symbolize the equality of status of this dominion among the self-governing dominions of the empire.

It will be observed that we have said nothing in the resolution with regard to a particular design. We believe that the question of design may very well be left to a committee of the house. During the last ten years in which this resolution has been before parliament and the country we have received hundreds of designs. However, we believe the house as a whole is not the place to settle any particular design. That can better be done in committee. However, there is no reason why this flag question should not be discussed in a general way in the debate that will take place on this resolution. We should fully discuss the general principle behind the adoption of a distinctive flag for our country. The details can come later.

It will be observed also that the resolution is singular and not plural in meaning. That has been decided upon deliberately. My opinion is that when we settle the question of a national flag for the dominion, a national flag should provide a key to all other departmental flags, the national honour flag, the national memorial flag and other flags that a young nation like Canada should adopt as soon as possible.

Perhaps it might be well in discussing this flag problem to outline the history of the resolutions which have been placed before the house during the last ten years. In 1929 a resolution calling for a distinctive flag for this dominion was placed on the order paper by myself. That resolution was not reached during the session and consequently there was no debate. If we remember correctly, that session ended in June and at the end of the session the flag resolution was in consequence found in the file of unfinished business.

In 1930, a resolution of practically the same meaning and intent was placed on the order paper. However, that being an election year, the resolution was not reached. There was no debate and the matter was not discussed or analyzed or reviewed in any way. At the end of the session, like its predecessor, it too was found in the file of unfinished business.

In 1931, another resolution was placed on the order paper, and a brief debate thereon took place on May 25, which was empire day, a very good day upon which to bring up and debate such a resolution. The present official opposition were then in power, and at six o'clock the then Prime Minister, the present