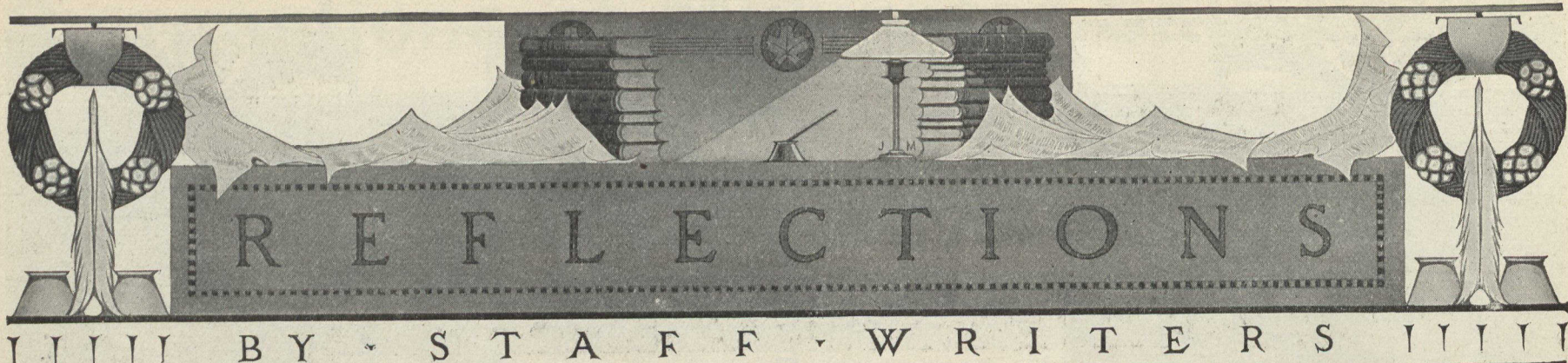




HIS Excellency, the Governor-General, is arousing public opinion here and in England by his proposal to acquire the Plains of Abraham as a feature in the celebration of the tercentenary of Quebec, our most picturesque city. The King has made a donation, and others are coming in, including £100 from the London "Tele-

THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM

graph." The movement has the approval of both races in this country. A national park at Quebec, on this historic ground, would be a permanent monument to the heroes of both armies and a permanent reminder of the unity and concord which is one of the marvellous and striking features of Canadian national life.

While these British donations manifest a magnificent spirit on the part of the King and the people, there seems to be no valid reason why the total expense should not be borne by the various Canadian governments. If such a precedent would be unwise, then Canadians should be willing to respond generously to Lord Grey's appeal. It is a splendid chance to prove that we are patriotic as we claim to be. Now that His Majesty has set the example, every citizen should feel a certain measure of responsibility, as well as an appreciation of the privilege which presents itself.

AT a meeting of the Canadian Club of Toronto last week, Mr. W. T. White, manager of the National Trust Company, coined a new phrase. The question of the advisability of creating a civic plant to distribute Niagara power through the city was discussed by two speakers, one in favour and one against. Mr. White took the ground that before a government or a municipality entered into the control of a public monopoly, it should purchase the plants of existing companies. He argued that since a government or a municipality could borrow money on the general credit at a low rate of interest, say four per cent., while a private corporation must pay five or six per cent., the competition would be unfair, unjust, un-British. To emphasise his point he told of what he termed "the first expropriation" on record, the taking of Naboth's vineyard. King Ahab wanted to buy it and offered to give value for it or a reasonable exchange. Naboth refused. On the advice of Queen Jezebel, King Ahab took the vineyard without paying for it. Naboth was stoned to death on a false charge, and the rest was easy. For his wickedness, Ahab came under the Divine displeasure and was ultimately destroyed. Mr. White ended his speech by saying, "Pay for Naboth's vineyard."

The advice might be taken to heart by all advocates of public and municipal ownership. Where a company is already in the field, working under a public charter, it has certain rights which cannot be lightly disregarded. For a government or a municipality to wantonly enter into a competition which if successful must ultimately destroy a private undertaking, would be to introduce a reign of terror, a period of anarchy. Few governments or municipalities would dare to commit such an outrage, and no one can believe that either the City of Toronto or the Province of Ontario seriously intends to do anything of this kind.

FOR some time, Canada has been seeking to control Canadian diplomacy and Canadian treaty-making. There was a time when our post-office system and our tariff-making were controlled in Downing Street, but that was half a century ago. It has been said that if Canada had been permitted to conduct negotiations, the Alaskan award and numerous other international arrangements would be quite different. As a result of all this talk, King Edward has been relaxing a bit and allowing us greater freedom in this regard. When he was making his treaty with the Mikado of Japan, he expressly exempted Canada from the provisions of that

document. He told the Mikado that Canada could come in if she wished, but that the question concerning the greatest of all the Colonies must be settled at Ottawa. The question came up at the Canadian capital and the would-be Canadian diplomats decided to be a party to this great Treaty.

Now it has cropped up that we, the new nation of new diplomats, were beaten in our first round in the international game. We find that Japan got the best of us, and that we gave to the Mikado much more than we anticipated. When the discovery was made, the Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux was hurried off to Japan to tell the Mikado that we didn't understand, that Mr. Nosse who represented Japan at Ottawa, had misled us, that the Treaty was not what we intended, and that he ought to let us out. Mr. Lemieux has done his best and is now on his way home. It would appear from the despatches that the Mikado showed him the Treaty and said "Ha! Ha! Your diplomats were not awake."

The situation recalls the story of a very clever young man who graduated from the University of Toronto and Osgoode Hall and went up to London to practise law. His first client was a man who wanted a loan of \$1,000, offering a first mortgage on a splendid farm in West Middlesex. The young lawyer was pleased and he hurried about and got the money, drew up the mortgage, received his little fee and smiled benignly. He was on the road to great things. Life had commenced. Alas, when he went to register the mortgage, he discovered that the farm was owned by another man.

Canada's first attempt in diplomacy may not be satisfactory, but we will learn. The first lesson will be that we are not so wise or so clever as we think we are. Japan has taught us that. The second lesson will be that the diplomats of Great Britain know a few things, though it may be some time before we are prepared to admit that this is true.

PLENTY of artificial light is a necessity in these days—mainly because we are accustomed to it. The average newspaper is not readable by candle-light. The type of newspapers and books is smaller and more compact, the paper and ink are cheaper and a greater strain is put upon the eyes. There is the same condition in other spheres of human activity. Our great halls and churches could not be lighted by candles or coal-oil lamps; our fine machinery could not be operated except during daylight were it not for the special gas-burner and the incandescent lamp. The luxury of life has been greatly increased by these artificial means, and once the world gets accustomed to a luxury it thereupon becomes a necessity.

**THE VALUE OF
ARTIFICIAL LIGHT** In Massey Hall, Toronto, the other evening, one demagogic speaker pleaded for more light and more adequate light for all—for the millionaire, the laborer, the seamstress, and the farmer. He wanted it made available by government and municipal ownership for all the people at the lowest possible cost. The man was right in his ideal. That is the end toward which every provincial government and every municipality should be working. Every opportunity for buying up lighting franchises should be embraced; and wherever municipal ownership and operation of lighting plants is being considered it should be adopted without either doubt or delay. Even were it more costly to operate under municipal ownership than private ownership, the other advantages more than counterbalance.

Every municipality should aim to secure cheap light. To get it, it should not steal and neither should it beg. It need not absolutely own its own plant, for regulation and adjustment may be possible. In Hamilton recently, the Power Company voluntarily reduced charges on electric lighting. In the smaller towns there is less likelihood of oppression by private companies than in the larger places. Every town of over 5,000 population must be careful. Kingston, with