

## EDUCATIONAL

(By Spectator)

The year of grace nineteen hundred and twenty-four has entered and made his bow, and with him his royal retinue of privileges and responsibilities, problems and opportunities. Have we met him with the glad hand and the eager heart, and at the end of his brief sojourn with us shall he go from us invested with honour and glory and leaving with his sometime hosts a cherished legacy of blessing and power? This question no human being can shirk; the vote will be recorded automatically and unerringly; the decision henceforth will be inseparably intertwined with the thread of our destiny.

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The electorate has delegated its powers to the mayor and aldermen, and the same electorate has expressed its confidence in the Board of School Trustees. These two bodies, each independent and supreme in its own sphere, are, by virtue of their common origin, in duty bound to co-operate, to work together for the public good. It is their great privilege to serve the men, women and children of today, and their greater privilege to conserve the interests of the men, women and children of tomorrow.

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The beast of the field will die for its young. In every age we have lauded the sacrifice of the strong for the weak, of parent for child, of him that hath for him that hath not. From this fair seed has sprung Christianity, for nineteen centuries the tree of life in the garden of the world. Only in vital harmony with this principle can we truly live. The Child or the Dollar? Shall we save the dollar that we may be clothed sumptuously, dwell in our ceiled houses surrounded by spacious and fair gardens, far from the crowded tenements of the poor; feast on dainties gathered from the four corners of the earth; roll swiftly and smoothly along in luxurious cadillac or limousine? Or shall we surround ourselves with happy bands of children, and say,—“These are our jewels; these are our true riches; the dollar is precious only in so far as it is spent or invested for these and such as these.”

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More Canadianism in our schools is the cry of one of our public men. Very good; but how much time and energy does our friend devote to the education of our boys and girls? Does he spend so many hours, an interested and welcome guest, within class-room walls that he is able to make a first-hand estimate of the extent to which a spirit of true Canadianism is inculcated and fostered by our teachers in the generation of children committed to their charge. May it not be possible that our teachers as a body do ponder this matter seriously, and in planting the seeds of real patriotism in soil well prepared are acquitting themselves with credit?

But the question is, after all, a very serious one. Our Canadian nation is a nation in the making, and it is of supreme importance that foundations be well and truly laid, and that no enemy or vain person be allowed to build thereon wood, hay, stubble, or other perishable material doomed to swift destruction.

Thus far Canada has reason to thank many faithful builders. Some have not been endowed with the clear-sightedness so much to be desired in dealing with present problems, not to speak of the vision that reveals the distant goal and the paths that must be trodden to reach it. Some have labored with mixed motives,—partly for self-aggrandisement, partly for the public good. Many have thought only of the day, with its particular burdens and rewards. Others have been endowed with clearness of sight, have been gifted with prophetic vision, and, above all, have forgotten self in a consuming love for their fellowmen and for their country. Much progress has been made. Looking back we have great reason to thank God and take courage.

The difficulties have been tremendous. They are still tremendous. Two great races, leaders in civilization, have been placed side by side, out of which to build the nation that is to be. Different in racial instincts, different in language, different in religion, different in political development, different in ideals, they must yet blend in spirit, submit to the guidance of a common aspiration, march side by side, in peace and harmony, as brothers, to a common goal. Together they must welcome to their fellowship the stranger of every clime, of every tongue, of every faith, permitted to shelter within our country's bounds, and by sympathy, by encouragement, by active helpfulness, transform him so that out of his cherished past a more glorious present shall blossom and flourish.

Geography has thrown down her gage, and dared us to make a country out of East and Middle and West. From the Atlantic to Lake Huron the task has been difficult enough, though not so difficult as to discourage the stout of heart of either race. But here nature has almost said,—“Thus far thou shalt go, and no farther.” A thousand miles of wilderness, of lake and rock and muskeg must be overcome before the pioneer sets hopeful foot on the broad and fertile prairie. Nine hundred miles of easy plain bring us to the sea of mountains, intended surely to keep the children of this great Middle from reaching the havens of the calm Pacific.

Yet there has been no failure. On the Plains of Abraham stands a monument to the common glory of Montcalm and Wolfe, and for five generations the Frenchman and the Britisher have dwelt in peace together, have advanced side by side, have co-operated in many a noble enterprise making for a high type of Canadianism. And together, by church and school, by the unselfish ministration of devoted physician and nurse, the stranger in the midst is becoming one with them.

The St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes, a magnificent natural highway improved by the handiwork of man, have been reinforced by the two great highways of steel stretching from Ocean to Ocean, overcoming the barriers of rock and lake and muskeg, and the giant mountains themselves. Nay more, these barriers of separation, these mighty stretches of barrenness, have proved to be hidden storehouses of mineral wealth, destined in future not to separate the rich farming stretches of East and Middle, but to unite them by supplementing their need of those things in which they themselves are poor.

Of the great work of the Church, of the untiring service of the schools, of the effectiveness of many a subsidiary agency operating in harmony with these, there is neither time nor space to deal adequately at present. With all their shortcomings they have been prime architects in glorious achievement.

Of flag-waving Canadianism a little should go a long way. Let us teach our children something of the heritage handed down to us, bought by the toil and sweat and blood of our forefathers; of the duty and privilege of the children to walk worthily of the generations that have lived, and suffered and died for them; of what we owe to the Empire and the nations that compose it, that power under God chosen to dispense the greatest blessings to all the earth; of the spirit of friendship and comradeship with which we should regard the mighty nation to the south of us, one with us in worthy origin and high ideals; of the truth that God has made of one blood all the nations that dwell on the earth; and that we are truly grateful to Him for the blessings He has showered on us only in so far as we see in Him the Father of us all, and all nations and races as His children and our brothers.