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CANADIAN COURIER

TORONTO - - - - - ONTARIO

EDITOR'S TALK

MARKS OF THE CANUCK

THERE was a time when it was difficult to tell a Canadian from an American. It is still no easy matter—but it is infinitely easier than it used to be.

What makes a people is, firstly, the land. Americans and Canadians, coming originally of the same stock, and of the same restless strain in that stock, tended to develop along similar lines. One point of difference was reached in the American War of Independence. The Americans developed then the tradition of "Independence." The Canadians developed the tradition of "loyalty."

But in the last few prosperous decades even that difference in character tended to disappear. We were all individualists and materialists. The same language and the same—or much the same—business interests tended to make us daily more alike.

AND THEN----

And then came the war. Nothing could have had so profound an effect on Canada, Canadians and Canadian life, unless it had been a direct assault on Canada. Once more a point of departure had been reached. The Americans chose one way: The people of this country chose another. The Americans will go down in everlasting history as "Neutrals" with a capital "N." We shall at least have the honour of being belligerents against Germany.

All of this has an effect even on so seeming small a thing as the publishing business in this country. A mere three years ago the fiction in the average American magazine suited Canadian readers comfortably enough. A girl in Toronto felt thrill-for-thrill with a Philadelphia heroine in the arms of a Texas lover. What was the difference? None. To-day there is a difference. Canadian feeling has been sobered, mellowed and exalted by the touch of suffering. The piffing town of Blank, Sask., has a new dignity since Bill Brown, the former livery-stable driver, won a D. C. M., and the widow Perkins got her lad home minus an arm. Men's notions of conduct have altered and women's ideals of manhood have been upset. The Americans continue to be amused with sentimental heroes with fine figures and smooth manners. They are no longer the kind Canadians want.

A BIG TASK

This then is the task of Canadian papers: to reflect the changed spirit of Canada and to give it the kind of periodical literature this new spirit demands.

It is not easy. The change of spirit has yet to affect all the Canadians who write—the people on whom we are dependent for a large part of our supply of material. This is to observe that we want this new material and are looking for it.

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