

A HINT TO THE MARITIME PROVINCES

By AN EXPATRIATED BLUENOSE

THERE is something the matter with the Maritime Provinces—something radically the matter. This is certainly not due to geographical location or to natural endowment. It would be hard to find a section, of Canada at least, more favourably located, with the sea and its wealth and opportunities on the one hand, and the rich New England States on the other. No one province, or combination of provinces, possesses greater or more valuable natural assets. Nova Scotia, with an abundance of coal, iron and gold, with a wealth of forest land, with its fruitful valleys and fertile marshes, and with its abounding sources of water-power, has within its boundaries every qualification for prosperity; and yet it has not grown as fast as Ontario or the western provinces.

The trouble, then, does not arise from location or natural sterility. No more does it arise from the character of its inhabitants. The people of a country that can produce men of vision like Haliburton, Roberts, Carman, Parkin and the many others, cannot lack imagination and fire. Provinces that can produce heads for universities all over the earth, men like MacGregor of Edinburgh, Falconer of Toronto, Grant and Gordon of Queen's, and Schurman of Cornell, cannot lack intellect and capacity. Their huge contributions to federal governments ever since Confederation prove indisputably that they do not lack executive ability. The success which their sons achieve all over the continent, in every trade, calling and profession, indicates clearly the real worth of the people. And yet they have not grown as fast as they should.

After considering all these things it is no wonder that sometimes Maritime Province people are led to think that our political system has something wrong with it; that in some vague way Confederation is the root of all their evil. It is no wonder if often they feel that their interests have been sacrificed, and themselves neglected by the other members of our federation. They are more prone to think this when they consider their prosperity prior to 1867. But considered fairly, no thoughtful person can truly believe that confederation is the trouble. The Maritime Provinces have always had more than a proportionate weight in directing the policy of Canada. That department which is most closely connected with the prosperity of the country—the Finance Department—has been continuously in their hands, Sir Leonard Tilley, Mr. Foster and now Mr. Fielding, all Maritime men representing Maritime constituencies.

Confederation cannot be the trouble. Grumbling over the extension of the boundaries of Ontario and Quebec is just as idle, just as foolish. The addition of those thousands of square miles, away north, to the Province of Quebec can never have the slightest effect on the ultimate weal or woe of Nova Scotia. The Maritime Provinces have produced their Tupper, Tilley, Foster, Davies, and Fieldings, and so long as they do produce men of that stamp their interests can never suffer by reason of numerical representation; or lack of it.

The trouble with the Maritime Provinces is not geographical, physical, mental, political, or any of these. It is more subtle and is less serious than any of these because it is temperamental rather than organic. Simply and bluntly stated, the trouble is this: The men of means are industrial and commercial cowards so far as home resources are concerned. It is an exodus of gold and not the exodus of humanity that is sapping the life-blood and killing growth in the Maritime Provinces.

Take a glance at a list of the holders of bank stock, railway shares, bonds, gilt-edged securities, and what-not, and then figure out the proportion held in the Maritime Provinces and you will be astounded. Consider all the money invested in banking companies in Halifax alone, or better consider the wealth of Halifax itself and the manner in which this wealth is invested and applied. Figure out what Maritime capital has done for Mexico, Cuba and other far-away places. When the boom was on in the West, say in 1906, had you followed a western real estate agent to St. John or Fredericton, or to Halifax or Yarmouth, you would have seen how eagerly men and women gobbled up the craziest propositions of investment. Yet those same men and women would have turned cold-footed, to use a western phrase, in an instant had you tried to scrape up sufficient cash to start some paying enterprise at their own door.

I repeat again, the people of the Maritime Provinces are commercial and industrial cowards so far as home development is concerned. Gilt-edged investments, bank stocks, and railway shares are all

very good, but the province that invests only in such, and which is afraid to take a long shot at home, cannot develop. The pioneer in every case, whether it be agriculturally or industrially, has to take chances—and big chances at that. There is not, nor can there be any gilt-edged investment until some courageous man has staked his all and won. The people of the Maritime Provinces will support everything, develop everything, and contribute towards everything, unless it happen to be something within their own boundaries. Yet could he but see it, all three provinces offer every inducement to the man of wealth, who has the courage to risk his coddled thousands.

What I have said does not apply to all Maritime towns or to all Maritime people. Amherst, Nova Scotia, and St. Stephen, New Brunswick, are good examples of what commercial courage can do; but the people of wealth that have that courage are mighty few. There is a reason and an excuse for this spirit of commercial cowardice. The decline of wooden ship-building struck the Maritime Provinces a blow that they have not yet recovered from. The crash that followed was so great that people lost

their nerve commercially and industrially, and they have not yet regained it. Those that were left with means, and there were not a few, began hunting for "safe investments"—and the hunt still proceeds.

The crimson streak betokening the dawn of a new day is beginning faintly to redden the east. The launching of a modern vessel at New Glasgow is one of the signs; the aggressive tone of the associated Boards of Trade is another. Much, however, is yet to be done, and the newspapers could help along "the good time coming" if instead of railing at the exodus of penniless youth, they railed at the exodus of gold; if instead of grumbling at Confederation and a diminishing representation, they preached the sound doctrine of Home Progress by means of Home Investment. If newspapers, politicians and especially the men that have money became filled with this creed, and became possessed of some of that optimistic self-confidence without which no land, however blessed, can prosper, the stagnation would end, the exodus would cease, and the Maritime Provinces would rapidly become what Nature has intended them to be—the New England States of Canada.

Quebec's Greetings to Nova Scotia

Speech of the Honourable W. A. Weir, Representative of the Province of Quebec at the Celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Granting of Representative Government to Nova Scotia, delivered at Halifax, August 19th, 1908.

May it please Your Honour, ladies and gentlemen:—

On this auspicious and historical occasion, I am happy to be the bearer to Nova Scotians of the hearty greetings and congratulations of their fellow Canadians of the oldest of the sister provinces of the Dominion.

The people of Quebec have always greatly admired the character, the customs, the institutions and the work of the citizens of this province, and, personally, I may be allowed to say that my visit here at this time has greatly increased my admiration of Nova Scotia and its people.

The past history of Quebec and Nova Scotia possess much of common interest. Both were the scenes of the adventurous efforts of the dauntless Champlain, the Huguenot De Monts, Pont-Grave and other pioneers to found permanent colonies under the fleur-de-lis of Old France; and both to this day in their population and geographical nomenclature bear evidence of the enterprise and activity of those old heroes. Subsequently, the same French governors, De Courcelles, Frontenac, Denonville, and others, ruled over these territories; and members of the same group of pious missionaries laboured for the immortal welfare of the inhabitants of Acadia and Quebec. In this connection, I recall the incident that the good Bishop St. Valier, who succeeded Bishop Laval in the time of Frontenac, was shocked to learn on his assumption of office that the Acadian settlements had been for some years without the benefit of the presence of any missionaries. He hastened to come hither and found to his surprise that in spite of this disadvantage, the people were well-behaved, loyal, God-fearing and attentive to their duties. The good Bishop, if he were alive to-day, would be glad to see that the same qualities still characterise in a marked degree the people of Nova Scotia.

I am sure that it was the presence of these sturdy qualities, known and recognised in Great Britain in the year 1758, that brought to Nova Scotia the distinguished honour of having an elective representative Assembly, long before it was dreamed of for Quebec. The privilege was a priceless boon to the sturdy and independent men of those days and you do well to honour the memory of your fathers who achieved this great step in the development of the liberties of Nova Scotia. With equal pride in their civic virtues and manly independence of character, Quebec and your sister provinces join with you in reverence of their memories and their deeds.

It is gratifying to know that the success of the men of 1758 was not accepted as a finality by their sons. Inherent in their minds was the strong conviction that they must never rest satisfied until all the priceless blessings of the British Constitution belonged to them as fully as to the inhabitants of the British Isles. An outpost only had been gained in the struggle for free government. It was necessary to capture the citadel itself. And so, having achieved representative institutions, the fight went on for government administration, wholly responsible to

the people. Nothing less than the absolute control of all the revenues of the province and of the manner and mode of their administration would satisfy the liberty-loving people of Nova Scotia. The men of 1758 had secured to you a grip on the lever and it is to the credit of the province that it was dexterously and skilfully used. These struggles for representative and responsible government were far-reaching in their effects. They taught the statesmen of Britain the only principles upon which it was possible to create and maintain a British Empire. The existence and glory of that mighty fabric to-day is thus due, in great measure, to the courage and perseverance of colonial statesmen, among whom Nova Scotians are entitled to the first rank.

In the present, with our government on a thoroughly representative basis, with our industrial, financial and commercial interests flourishing, it may be asked what more is there to struggle for? The danger may come from the very sentiment of satisfaction we feel with our personal and local advancement. Immersed in what may most interest us individually or sectionally, and content with our surroundings, we may neglect to take that deep and abiding interest in the great principles underlying national government, that was so characteristic of the men who achieved representative and responsible government in this country. It must be remembered that a nation is never at a standstill. It is either developing strong and lofty public characteristics, or evil customs and decay are creeping in. In times of prosperity, as in times of peril, it should ever be kept in mind that eternal vigilance is the price of sound growth and welfare. It may not be impertinent, at this moment when we are considering the work of the founders of representative government in Canada, to ask whether or not our citizens all give that careful attention and study to public affairs which true patriotism requires of them; whether or not the local and sectional question does not at times shut out the broad view of the general or national interest.

Do we realise sufficiently the essential interdependence of the Provinces of Canada in the work of building up a strong and enduring democracy in the northern part of this continent? Each province necessarily is interested in the welfare of every other province and only by the acknowledgment of this fact can we grow together in common sympathies, common ideals and aspirations. Without a strong national spirit, we can never succeed in Canadianising the different elements that immigration brings to our shores, and such a process seems to me to be of primal importance.

It must be patent to all that the rise of our country to a place among the powers of the world will depend in large measure upon the strength and purity of our national, as distinguished from purely local, patriotism. May the Canadians of to-day so realise their duty to their country that their children may praise their acts and ideals, as we pay homage now to the men who achieved representative government here a century and a half ago.