

and where no "kust of whistles" desecrates the sanctuary. The minister of the latter, the Rev. R. McLeod, B.D., is a native of the Island of Harris, off the west coast of Scotland, a graduate in Arts of Edinburgh University, and of Theology of Pine Hill College, Halifax.

A Gaelic service in this church on a Sabbath morning impresses a stranger because of its quaintness. It is one of those Sabbath mornings when there is that calm stillness in the air inseparable from the Day of Rest in the country. The hour of worship is 11 a.m., and by that time there are many buggies in the shed at the side of the church and the church is well-filled with a waiting people. The minister takes his place in the pulpit and opens the service by giving out the 46th Psalm. After he has read the Psalm over, a little man, shaved like General Havelock, wearing a dark suit, tennis shirt and red neck-tie, who has been sitting in the body of the church, goes up to the front, and holding in his hands a small well-worn, leather-covered book open at the place, chants the first line. After the line has been chanted, without a break in the melody, the people sing the line, many of the old white-haired folk holding the book close to their eyes on account of the light growing dim. A few voices are raised in praise at the beginning of the line, but when the lower notes are reached, a great volume of sound, like the onrushing of a flood, comes forth from the aged members, and the melody is swung along to the end of the line. The second line is chanted by the little man and then sung by the congregation, and so forth to the end of the Psalm, each line first chanted and then sung. The little man who chants wears spectacles and never lifts his eyes from his book from beginning to end. Of course the congregation has remained seated all the time, and the writer could not help thinking as he sat listening to the sweet melodious singing of the Psalms in Gaelic, with the rising and falling of the tune and the long-drawn sweet notes, that an organ or any other musical instrument could only have a spoiling effect upon the congregational singing. He has heard no sweeter music in the church for many years, and can quite appreciate the jealous determination of these Highlanders, who keep instrumental music outside the church.

Prayer follows the singing of the Psalm, and for this act of worship the whole congregation stands. As you look across the church, there is something pathetic in the sight of the bent forms of the old men and women. These old, plainly-clad people who are stooping so heavily are not rich in this world's goods, but they are rich in another sense, in character. These are the men and the women who have borne the heat of the day; who have transformed the country from a dense, primeval forest into the broad agricultural lands; who spent their strength in the battle with nature,



The Gaelic Presbyterian Church at Ripley, Ont.

and whom we have to thank for the prosperous condition of the country. They are the pioneers who endured the hardships incidental to the opening up of a new country, and it is largely owing to their lives of self-sacrifice that the Province of Ontario to-day owes its premier position. They are types of a character fast disappearing.

As the prayer is long (can you blame the writer for thinking such thoughts whilst it is in progress), one old form after another sinks on to the seat through sheer exhaustion, and when the "Amen" is pronounced only the younger folks are left standing. After another Psalm has been sung, the text is given out, and for the information of a visitor,

in English also. This latter innovation at once causes the congregation to look round at the Sassenach who has been curious enough to attend their service, but the diversion is only for a moment, for the people are soon listening to the discourse of the preacher. In the course of his sermon he takes occasion to reprove the little man for chanting the 46th Psalm to a minor tune when it should have been chanted to a major, but the offender has some sense of music and humour left in him.

At the close of the service more than one worshipper says to me: "You missed a great treat to-day. I'm sorry you haven't the Gaelic." I agree with them but assure them that I have enjoyed the singing. How strange the whole service seemed, how quaint! Here was the Scot, far from his native heath, preserving those forms of church worship which were dear to the heart of his fathers, singing the Psalms as they had been sung for generations in the Highlands. Here indeed in this church among this people glowed another fire than that which glowed on the altar—a camp fire which was well calculated to warm the love of the Scot for his homeland far across the sea, to kindle strong devotion for old Caledonia. Although most of those people are Liberal in politics, in church life they are most conservative. Once the Celt takes up a position it is hard to dislodge him. In one Gaelic congregation an organ was to be introduced, and Dugald and Donald were bitterly opposed to the innovation. They found themselves in the minority however, and in order to get even with the minister they agreed that when the organ began to play on the opening day that they would go up to the front of the congregation and begin to dance. The opening day arrived, both Dugald and Donald being in their appointed places in the church. Immediately when the opening notes of the organ sounded forth the one signalled over to the other and both went up to the front and started dancing. In a moment the minister had his head over the pulpit rebuking the pair for their desecration of the day and the house.

"Whatever do you mean, Dugald," he said, "dancing on this day in this house?"

"Promptly came the answer from Dugald, "Well, minister, doesn't it say in ta Bible that we are to praise the Lord with organs and with tancing?"

The Symbol of our Subordination

A Discussion of Flags and the Future

By L. R. HUNTER

IN an article entitled "The Canadian Flag—A Suggestion for Canadian Clubs," which Mr. Ewart has had reprinted and distributed freely, he asserts: "Canada's self-respect requires that her acknowledged right of independent self-government, her accession to national rank, and her admission to a footing of equality with the United Kingdom itself, should not only be amply recognised at Imperial conferences, but should be evidenced by her flag, the flag of the Dominion of Canada."

As he admits our right to a "Canadian" flag, that is a flag with the Union Jack in the left-hand corner and the heraldic arms of Canada as a badge upon the fly, and goes further and acknowledges that we may now fly from our own flag-staffs what we will, and also quotes to us the British admiralty's warrant of sixteen years ago, namely: "We do by virtue of the power and authority vested in us hereby warrant and authorise the red ensign of Her Majesty's fleet with the Canadian coat-of-arms in the fly, to be used on board vessels registered in the Dominion," nevertheless Mr. Ewart naively calls his article "a suggestion." What is it that he suggests?

Admitting that Canada has the right of admission to national rank, she would at the present moment be rated as possibly a fifth-rate power and it would be presumptuous to expect Great Britain, even with her mighty magnanimity to put her rebellious child immediately on a footing of equality with herself. After a time, yes, when we had succeeded in climbing to her lofty eminence, looking up to which has apparently made Mr. Ewart dizzy. Would he venture to prophesy what would happen in the dark interlude?

Let not those desirous of independence, cut prematurely the umbilical cord (to quote Mr. Ewart); let them not make too hasty an effort to discard our British bridle, but rather let them do everything in their power to retard the severance until such time as we have become a more homogeneous people, so that we shall no longer need, as at present, the restraining power of the motherland.

Unhappily it is the honest opinion of many people in Canada that she will eventually become independent of the mother country, but of those people few would be traitorous enough and, at the same time, courageous enough, to deliberately hasten the denouement, while the remainder are given to the usual "laissez-faire."

But the large majority of the people of Canada would rather die than entertain or encourage such hopes. To them it is an insult to hear the Union Jack described as "the symbol of our subordination." The thoughtful reader might bear that in silence (though he sees the insidious suggestiveness of it) were it not for the fear that what I choose to call Mr. Ewart's subconscious wilfulness of misrepresentation might harmfully influence the young, whose love for the Union Jack would otherwise increase with their love of the Canadian flag proper. Rochefoucauld has truly said that more men are guilty of treason through weakness than any studied design to betray. Why this chatter about independence?

Mr. Ewart says there is no symptom in Canada towards a separate republic (why suggest it?); no symptom towards separation from the British Crown. We infer that he would not have that, yet he wants emancipation from the Colonial Office!

Since when did the Colonial Office cease to be an integral part of the British Crown? Are the two unrelated? What does "complete emancipation from the Colonial Office" imply?

Again, Mr. Ewart speaks of the ambiguity of our political status. Wherein lies the ambiguity? In theory, he says, we are a part of the British Empire; in fact, we are an independent nation. Well, facts are stubborn things and not easily to be discarded and, to quote Burke, "a thing may look evil in theory and yet be in practice excellent."

He also justly says that the Union Jack is the flag of the greatest and best of all historic empires. Could such a flag be a symbol of subordination to us who have not been conquered, subordinated in any way, but whose ancestors have merely changed their place of abode from one part of the Empire to another? They and we their descendants are the Conquerors of Canada, not short-lived conquerors of people like the old Celts and Normans, but Anglo-Saxon conquerors, who conquered by absorbing the conquering elements. We living French, we living English-speaking men and women of Canada have not been conquered, are not subordinated in any way. We are the conquerors of this most glorious land, and daily we continue our triumphal conquest. Our own British flag, our flag, cannot justly be called the symbol of our subordination. So on our Houses of Parliament (is that the rub?) floats that symbol of Freedom, the Union Jack (for we are in theory as in fact), of Great Britain; and elsewhere throughout Canada floats the Canadian flag, the symbol not of our independence, but of our individuality.