

## What of the Future?

ANY man who loves his children will subordinate everything to their welfare. Financial prosperity and social advancement are of little moment, if the children are sickening to death, or if they are lacking in mental or moral power. So, too, is it in the case of a nation. The good citizen will not be concerned chiefly about industrial and commercial conditions. He will rather have regard to the morality, the happiness and the unity of the people. He will think of their future rather than their present. He will distinguish between those things which are transitory and those which have permanent significance.

In Canada we are beginning to think of ourselves as a nation. It is well that we should enquire if there is anything in our social and economic conditions which might threaten our unity or prevent our full development. Immediately we are forced to consider the question of race and language, and it would be well for us all if we could forget our differences in matters of religion. Unfortunately these religious differences are magnified, until it would seem there is no possibility of reconciliation. The advice of the apostle seems to be nothing less than a mockery when he says: "Let brethren dwell together in unity." Though it is impossible for The Western Home Monthly to discuss the religious problem, there is nothing to prevent a frank discussion of the related problems of race and language in so far as they apply to the country west of the Great Lakes.

The Indians were the first people here. Then came the French explorers and fur traders, and the early British settlers. Afterwards there came the flood of immigration—settlers from Bruce and Huron and from the other eastern counties, from the Motherland, from the United States, and from the countries of northern, southern and central Europe. There was a babel of tongues, and it is in some parts a babel to-day. It was inevitable that there should be confusion at first. It takes time even when people are doing their utmost, to make their native language secondary, and the language of the country primary. Unfortunately there was no national effort put forth to help the incoming people to learn the national language, while determined efforts have been made by most races to retain as the medium of communication the tongues of their native lands. Though the younger generations when they have an opportunity to learn English, are in most cases only too ready to take advantage of it, even despite opposition from parents or others in authority, there is no denying the fact that unification in many parts of the west has not been effected, indeed, not even begun. This is, indeed, a serious condition, as it foreshadows misunderstandings, ruptures, and civil strife. If settlers are necessary to the industrial development of the country, they must be taught a common language in order to work together in unity.

Of course no one could expect adults from the non-English countries of Europe to learn our national tongue at once, but they should consider it a first duty toward their children to put them in a position to speak and read English. Unfortunately for the children and the country, the parents are not always aiming at this. School legislation has made it possible for them to take an opposite course. It would seem that the time has come for a change. While families and races may attempt to preserve their native tongues by every means in their power, and while they should be praised for making such attempts, the duty of the state is to teach only the national language—which in this case is English.

## Editorial

This is not unfair in any sense. The school does not pretend and has never pretended to teach everything. It leaves to the families and to churches and trades their own share of responsibility, and teaches only that which is regarded as a common necessity, a national necessity. Look for example at what is taking place in Scotland. The native tongue of the Highlanders is Gaelic, but Gaelic is not taught in a Scotch elementary school. Nor is Indian taught in any elementary school in Canada. Much less then should recent additions to our population clamor for state teaching of their own tongues. There is a wide difference between the function of a state school and a private school, and some do not appear to be able to sense the distinction. It is fundamental.

The interest of the individual and the state may often clash severely. That has been the case since early times, but the true way out is never to have the state assume the duties of the individual. The teaching of the national language is a state duty. The teaching of any other language is a private duty.

The day will come when races will coalesce by inter-marriage. Until then Canada will not be a nation, but a collection of clans and tribes. The only way to ensure inter-marriage and unity is the teaching of a common language in the state schools.

## The Rural School

RECENT discussions of educational aims and methods have brought into prominence the rural school. It appears to be settled that there must be a change in its organization and methods of operation. It is too small, too local, and fails to bring the pupil into touch with the great world of which he is part. The cure is not merely to make it more practical in the sense of making it more agricultural, but to make its life richer, broader, more worthy of young Canadians. Two or three things will be helpful to this end. First, the local school board will give way to the municipal board. Second, the small rural school will give way to the larger consolidated school. The school will be the greatest thing in every community, the centre for social, intellectual and vocational culture, the meeting place for adults as well as children. The most important element in school life will continue to be the teacher, but the teacher will be a trained community leader. In Canada we have spent nothing in the preparation of teachers. We have trusted to voluntarism, which was good enough in its way during the pioneer stage. But life in Canada must henceforth be serious, and we must train a body of experts to educate the children for efficiency. We have been playing at the school business too long. Considering what is spent on elementary education, as compared with what is spent on stock or in local improvements, or on courts and prisons, the results even under present conditions must appeal to everyone, but when a comparison is made between what the school is and what it might be, the results are far from satisfactory. The people of Canada have shown themselves in every emergency to be big enough to solve every problem that confronted them. They will solve this problem, too. The problem is to adapt the school to the new life upon which we are entering. The way to all true reform is evolution and not revolution.

On the one hand, we must remember that though very young children learn nothing very definite about agriculture, they can acquire a right attitude through the farm and farm life, while older children under competent teaching can get something of real practical value. On the other hand, we must beware lest we sacrifice childhood to agriculture or any other calling. "The man is more than the trade."

## The Baptism of Fire

CANADA has had her baptism of blood. Now it would seem she is to have a baptism of fire. The losses at Ottawa and Waterloo are undoubtedly only the first in a series. Serious losses they are, and in part quite irreparable, but the effect has been the very opposite to what was hoped for by the perpetrators. Canada is not terrorized, and cannot be terrorized. She is not bankrupt, and is not going to be bankrupt. She is not going to cease her efforts but to double them. Recruiting has already noticeably affected our towns and cities. It will receive a new impetus by reason of these outrages. Canada having given her sons will give everything else without a murmur. The flower of manhood may perish, but the children will be saved from thralldom and the tyranny of despotism. War is a curse, but its by-products are a blessing. We needed iron in our blood, determination, moral courage, power and willingness to make sacrifice. Out of the furnace of affliction we shall come purified. The new Canada will be grander, greater and more gloriously triumphant than the old. Having tasted the joys of service for God and humanity we can never again become mere worshippers of Mammon.

## Woman Suffrage

AND SO woman is coming into her own. Manitoba has unanimously approved of a measure giving full power to women to vote and to hold office in the legislature, and it is reported that other provinces are hastening to follow the example. Why not? Women have as great an interest in good laws and good government as have men. They have just as much at stake. Wrong-doing and mismanagement of public affairs bear quite as heavily on wives as on husbands. Women are just as wise as men, just as human, just as capable of forming judgments, just as sane. Why should they not have the right to vote and to assist in making legislation?

There are some ways in which we may hope for improvement in conditions now that women have a voice in public affairs. Men are such lordly beings that they take pride in dealing with what they term the big things of life, namely, trade, commerce, finance, inter-provincial relations. The greatest thing of all they are likely to overlook—the moral condition of the community. It is here woman will excel. We may expect a new attitude towards education, treatment of criminals, child labor, housing in towns and cities, public libraries and towards social problems in general. Philanthropy, too, will be put on a new footing. In short, a new scale of values will be made out. Prosperity and success will be measured in terms of character and conduct rather than in terms of things and dollars. This is what is hoped. It is for women themselves to see that our hopes are not disappointed. The new responsibility brings to womankind new duties. The first of these is the duty of self-education. It will not take long for the average woman to become as well-informed on civic problems as the average man. The chances are she suffers nothing by comparison to-day.

How did it come about that women in Western Canada were accorded the right to vote, while in England the right is still denied? There are two reasons, one of which the women of the Motherland should heed. Manitoba has had suffragists, but no suffragettes. She has had ladies who by peaceful means of persuasion and argument advanced the cause, but she has had none who offset their influence by the use of physical force. Anyway, Manitoba is to be congratulated for leading in the movement towards higher civilization.

That the women of this Province will, in the exercise of their newly acquired right, prove a mighty power for good, no one can doubt.