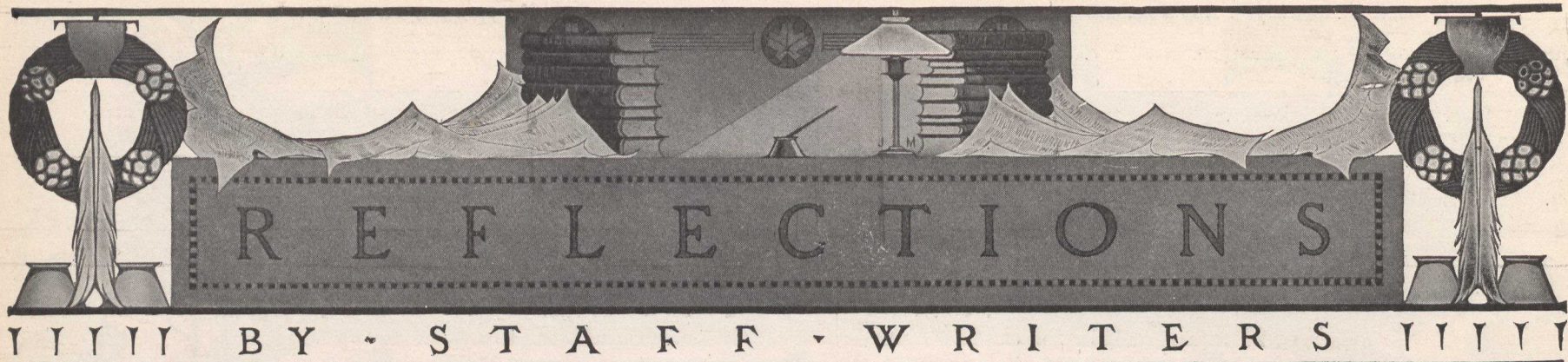




REFLECTIONS

IIII BY - STAFF - WRITERS IIII

THE STRENGTH OF IMPERIALISM.

HE who is constructive accomplishes more than he who is purely critical; the strength of Imperialism lies in its constructive tendency. Nearly every day there is an additional proof of this, one of the latest being the founding of "The Standard of Empire," a weekly edition of one of Mr. Pearson's London dailies. Its object is simple and clear: it is to be an organ of Empire in the weekly field as The British Empire Review, Britannica and The Empire Review have been organs of Empire in the monthly field. It will contain the news of the Empire and will inculcate "the wider patriotism" as Lord Milner discusses it.

What will be Canada's attitude toward this advanced Imperial movement? So far as officialdom is concerned, the answer is simple: Officially Canada supports the movement. In the pages of this new journal are to be found the advertisements of the Dominion government and of most of the provincial governments, of the three great railway corporations, of the larger banks and other big institutions. The answer of the unofficial classes will come later, when the subscription canvassers have set out upon their rounds.

The South African War had an adverse influence upon the Imperial movement. It made many people hesitate. Now that period of doubt seems passing away, and Imperialism is again gaining ground. This is especially true in Great Britain where the popularity of preferential tariffs and other Imperial movements has greatly increased during the past two years. Whether the present movement will go far enough to lead to Great Britain giving a preference to colonial products remains to be seen. If Mr. Balfour becomes premier after the next general election, the preferential trade wing of the Unionist party will undoubtedly endeavour to introduce some measures along this line. As that general election is at least three years distant, it is too early to prophesy with any degree of certainty. Nevertheless, the present indications are that the political pendulum is swinging towards a unionist success.

Whether they live in New Zealand, Australia, Canada or Great Britain, the British imperialists are active and constructive. Their ideal may or may not be visionary, but to them it is real. They are working for it in season and out of season. They are enthusiastic and untiring. Moreover, they are patient and hopeful. They may not succeed in their commercial aims but they are certainly succeeding with the sentimental and military portion of their programme. The other success may follow.

ACTIVITY AT OTTAWA.

NOW that the two provincial elections are over, activity at Ottawa will be resumed. Last week there was a series of conferences between the leaders on both sides relative to the deadlock over the Manitoba lists. At times, Sir Wilfrid would walk across the floor of the House and have a chat with Mr. Borden; later on, Mr. Borden would return the visit. At the top of the Government side, a group of half a dozen chairs would be likely to contain a number of Western Liberals with Hon. Frank Oliver in the centre. It was then rumoured that in return for a generous concession of territory to Manitoba, Premier Roblin would agree to allow the Conservatives to withdraw all opposition to the modified election-list bill. The developments of this week will tell the public whether or not that rumour was correct.

While these negotiations were proceeding last week, and both parties were waiting until the elections were over, Dr. Sproule, Mr. Taylor and other Conservative speakers pounded the air in the monotonous way to which we have become accustomed. The Hon. G. E. Foster increased his reputation as a wordy critic—if that reputation can be increased. The House presented a most unedifying spectacle, quite unworthy of itself and unworthy of the country which it represents.

The ultimate gain in all this to the Conservatives is doubtful. The Government in the end must get credit for the Manitoba extensions, while the Opposition will be charged with having delayed public works and prevented public servants from getting their wages. The latter is a serious offence in this country; when the housekeeper's weekly allowance runs short, the business of the country is sadly interrupted.

However, the waiting is over. The battle must now be keener, with the two armies more aggressive. The time for parleying is past; activity is absolutely necessary.

THE PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS

THAT the Conservative Party is gaining ground in provincial affairs is shown, not only by the recent general election in New Brunswick, but by the two general elections which were held this week. Ontario has materially increased the number of Conservative members supporting Mr. Whitney in the Legislature and has also increased their electoral majorities. In Quebec the Conservative Opposition has been more than doubled in spite of the excellent record of the provincial Liberals. The result will probably have the effect of postponing the Dominion general elections for some time. Business is not so good as in previous years, and the effect of the prospective bumper crop cannot be fully felt before December next. These recent Conservative successes will probably give encouragement to the Conservative cause generally, and the Liberal Government will not care to face opponents rendered enthusiastic by what they consider to be great victories.

So far as the Quebec results are concerned, Premier Gouin and his associates have every reason to be pleased with their reasonable majority. The Opposition is larger, but it was previously too small. The Liberals have still a large working majority, quite sufficient to enable them to carry out any prospective programme of legislation which they may have decided upon. The ministers have been returned with possibly one exception. Mr. Bourassa's victory over Premier Gouin in St. James Division of Montreal is the one feature of the campaign which the Government will seriously regret. Mr. Bourassa carried both seats for which he stood, and with his friend Mr. Lavergne will undoubtedly put fresh life and colour into the legislative chamber in the Citadel City.

In Ontario, Premier Whitney and his colleagues have received an endorsement which is too enthusiastic to be comfortable. The size of the bouquet is so tremendous that the ministers will be inclined to examine themselves to see if wings and halos have not begun to be visible. Mr. Whitney undoubtedly deserved a victory; a decided victory; that the victory was too great, can only be charged up against over-enthusiasm. The Opposition were critical only, and offered no constructive programme. It was not a time for criticism, and hence they went down to a defeat which while unfortunate was to some extent deserved. During the three and a half years Mr. Whitney has been in power he has been progressive; he had a policy in view and he hewed fairly close to the line. That his Government made mistakes is true; yet on the whole, the legislative and administrative record is such that the public decided to renew and extend its previous support. That both the liquor and temperance interests supported the Government is also quite evident. Mr. MacKay was not in a position to detach either.

The lesson of the two campaigns, if there be a lesson, is that the people are looking for honest and efficient administration in provincial matters. The issues are mainly questions of administration, not policy. A provincial government should be a body of business men, managing the affairs of the province in a non-partisan, common-sense manner. It should in a large measure forget that it represents a