

REFLECTIONS

BY THE EDITOR

GREAT BRITAIN has again proved that she leads the nations of the world in religious tolerance. There was a time when Great Britain was as religiously intolerant as any other nation in Europe. The Protestants of that country treated Roman Catholics in much the same way as Roman Catholics have always treated Protestants when opportunity offered. However, the world grows wiser and both Protestants and Roman Catholics are progressing with the times. To a Protestant and a Britisher it is gratifying to feel that the spirit of tolerance, sympathy and good-will has grown faster among the British Protestants than among any other class of people. During the past hundred years Catholic disabilities have been removed one by one until to-day there is practically none remaining. Last week by a vote of 225 to 52, the House of Commons amended the King's religious declaration to such an extent that there is no longer any objection to it on the part of the Roman Catholic Church.

Civil and religious liberty seem to go hand in hand. In spite of her monarchical government and the relics of mediaevalism in the House of Lords and other institutions, the people of Great Britain have greater liberty than the people of any republic. Individual rights are more carefully considered and more jealously guarded, while law and order are more strictly enforced. Great Britain has now added the keystone to the arch of British liberty by eliminating the only expression of her public policy to which possible objection might be taken.

GREAT BRITAIN'S position in this regard is made more magnificent by a comparison with the conditions which happen to prevail at the moment in Spain. A short time ago the Spanish Ministry, with the supposed approval of King Alfonso, decreed that all religious bodies should have full liberty of public worship. Hitherto this privilege, in a public sense, had been more or less curtailed. The Head of the Roman Catholic Church, so far as one may gather from the despatches, is seriously displeased with the Spanish Government, and demands that this and other extensions of religious liberty shall be withdrawn. The Protestant world is stirred by the reports of possible trouble in Spain as the result of the attitude of Rome, and even in Canada enthusiastic Protestants are making statements in the pulpit and the press which are little less intolerant than the action of the clerical party in Spain.

These Protestants would do well to remember that the principle of religious liberty was established in England only after a tremendous struggle. If they will read again their English histories, and especially those portions of them which tell the story of the struggle, they will find that there was just as great opposition to reform shown by the Protestants of England as is now being raised by the Roman Catholics of Spain. They will find that George III blocked Pitt's ambition to admit Catholics to Parliament after the Union of 1800, and that nearly thirty years of agitation were required before the Test and Corporation Acts were repealed at the instance of Lord John Russell. Even then the motive seems to have been desire for civil peace rather than religious generosity. In 1829, after Daniel O'Connell's spectacular struggle to gain a seat in the House, the Emancipation Bill was passed amidst much popular opposition. Then for the first time, English Roman Catholics gained the franchise, and the privilege of holding any of the higher offices of the realm. But it was forty years later before the Irish State Church was disestablished and Catholics relieved of the burden of contributing to the support of the Anglican Church. That was only forty-one years ago, and yet great public meetings were held to consider this "ungodly, wicked and abominable" legislation initiated by a "cabinet of brigands."

The world advances toward higher ideals at a pretty slow pace and always with tremendous effort. Roman Catholics do not differ in their human instincts from Protestants and the two sects share with each other the disabilities of mankind. It is therefore impolitic for journalists and clergy to emphasise that while Protestant Great Britain is extending more and more liberty to the Roman Catholics within her borders, that the Roman Catholics of Spain are refusing elementary privileges in that country. They should rather rejoice that they have their citizenship in a country which has travelled so much farther towards the highest form of civilisation than some of the other nations of the world.

WHEN President Hays of the Grand Trunk undertook to fight a certain section of his employees, did he anticipate that the whole force of the Dominion Government would be thrown in the field against him? Did he anticipate that the mayors of most of the cities and towns of Ontario and the presidents of the Boards

of Trade would also rise up on the side of the men? Did he anticipate that every large Canadian newspaper which circulates widely among members of the trade unions would also join the rebel forces? If he did anticipate all these things, then his courage should command general admiration. If ever a man was subjected to considerable pressure from the general public in order that he should be induced to do what his best business judgment told him not to do, that man is President Hays. Through it all he has borne himself with remarkable poise and dignity and shown himself to be a man of superior character. Even those who are not inclined to say that his judgment in the matter was of the best must admit that he has shown himself possessed of statesmanlike qualities. Whether he wins or loses in his struggle with the men he has probably enhanced his reputation as a gentlemanly and courteous administrator of a great public service. And this is something.

IN connection with the discussion in this column last week as to whether Canadians were prejudiced against goods made in Canada, a Montreal manufacturer writes a most interesting letter. He points out that American manufacturers having branches in this country are using the "Made in Canada" slogan "for all it is worth." He instances such manufacturers as Coca-Cola, Shredded Wheat, Waterman's Fountain Pen, Gillette Safety Razor, and others. He then rather facetiously asks whether those who control these industries are mistaken in believing that "Made in Canada" is as valuable a cry in this country as "Made in U.S.A." is across the border.

So far as this manufacturer's knowledge of the Canadian public goes he apparently does not agree with the correspondent quoted last week. He believes there is not a distinct prejudice against Canadian-made goods. However, he makes this modification and it is probably inspired by wisdom. He believes the "Made in Canada" label will appeal in a greater degree to a second generation who will themselves be made in Canada, "than to naturalised citizens with their home prejudices thick upon them."

All this but confirms the opinion that the "Made in Canada" agitation should be revived and extended. If Canadians once get the habit of preferring Canadian-made goods to those of foreign origin, the Canadian manufacturers will have less need to worry about reduction in duties and possible reciprocity treaties. Like the people of Great Britain, Canadians form their habits slowly, but these habits, once formed, are as tenacious as a ripe Canadian burr.

WIRELESS telegraphy has scored another notable triumph in the Crippen case. It has long been possible to cable across the ocean and have a fleeing criminal apprehended at the end of his journey, but the cable could not disclose the fact of his being on board a certain vessel. Wireless has come in as an adjunct to international police regulation and henceforth fugitives from justice will confine their trips to vessels not so equipped. In future, we may expect the captains of all large vessels to be supplied with daily information of missing criminals and regular requests to look over the passengers and see if such can be found. Indeed, we may also expect that steamship companies will shortly demand increased subsidies from the leading governments on the ground of the services they will be able to render police departments.

Despatches tell us that the young lady who travelled as Dr. Crippen's son gave her case away when, one day, a sudden breeze blew aside her coat-tails and revealed the secret that her trousers were fastened with a safety-pin. There is a lesson in this for all young women who don male attire. They should remember that men do not use safety-pins. When he loses a button, a man may use a nail to maintain the connection between his suspenders and trousers, but a safety-pin never. Further, the habit of tightening his clothes around the waist-line is a habit which he has not yet acquired.

THE Rt. Hon. Mr. Birrell seems to have created a new discussion in Great Britain by suggesting Home Rule for all four portions of the British Isles with a supervising Imperial Parliament. The idea is not new by any means, but it has hitherto been discussed by theorists and detached observers of public affairs. This is the first time that a minister of the Crown has publicly declared for a policy which has worked well in the United States and in the Overseas Dominions. Mr. Birrell's great argument is the foolishness of forcing England's local troubles upon Ireland, Scotland and Wales and vice versa. This, he thinks, is neither just to England nor just to the other members of the British Union.

Canadians have long wondered, if they considered the subject at all, how a British Parliament could possibly deal with the affairs of a great Empire and at the same time transact business which in Canada and Australia is given over wholly to subordinate provincial legislatures. They can easily imagine what dissatisfaction would arise in this country if the people of British Columbia had to wait upon the Parliament at Ottawa before building a colonisation road, a new traffic bridge, or appointing a few new police magistrates.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Editor Courier,

Sir: Cheer up! Canada is rising from the fog and coming to clearer skies along journalistic lines.

The Courier is helping materially and that which helps Canada or anything Canadian helps me.—From a Collingwood Subscriber.