

Canadian Citizenship

By J. S. WOODSWORTH.

"*Romanus sum—I am a Roman Citizen*", was the proud boast of the man who was fortunate enough to belong to the select group of those who claimed a share in the glories of the ancient Roman Empire. "*I am a Canadian Citizen*"—what does that statement mean to me? What does it mean to the world at large? Am I proud of the fact? Will my children prize the citizenship which I transmit to them?

In my own boyhood days the phrase was not used; the idea had not been fully developed. Some of my school mates were English—and they were not slow in asserting it. Others were Scotch—and they were proud of it. Still others were Irish—and they were prepared to back their country against the world. The rest of us felt ourselves somewhat at a disadvantage. We could not claim to be anything in particular. We had been born in Ontario. It was true that our grandfathers were English and we were proud of that. But when the English boys insisted that we were not "*the real thing*" we were confessedly somewhat at a loss for a reply, and could only demonstrate that we were as good as they were anyway.

But time have changed. The Canadian school-boy of today is apt to consider himself as "*the real thing*" and to look down somewhat condescendingly at the children of the immigrant-Canadian—especially those whom he calls "*foreigners*". This changed sentiment means that almost unconsciously a great change has been taking place in our Canadian life. A national consciousness is being developed; a new nation is coming into being.

At our banquets we all drink with enthusiasm the toast to "*Canada*". But who and what is Canada? After-dinner speakers usually begin by enumerating our great material resources—Canada occupies half a continent. Its "*Dominion*" extends "*from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth*". It has splendid harbors, great forests, fertile valleys, rushing rivers, island-dotted lakes, wide-spreading prairies and mighty mountains. Within its boundaries we can pass from the grape vineyards and peach orchards of the south through pleasant pastures and limitless grain fields to the vast pine forests and rich mineral deposits of the North. Yes, Canada possesses all these things; but this is not Canada.

We review the history of Canada. We think of the Indians who paddled up the rivers or roamed the plains; of the French explorers, the hardy *coureur-du-bois* who penetrated the trackless wilds; of the English settlers who hewed out for themselves homes in the forest; of the United Empire Loyalists, who trekked northward into unoccupied British territory in order to maintain their liberty and ideals; of the pioneers, who with splendid faith endured privation and hardship and opened up the great North-west. We think of the long procession of immigrants who have come during more recent years—peoples of many lands—all having their place in the worthy succession of nation builders. These later arrivals have not the rights of prior possession; they have not the rights of conquerors—they share with us the higher rights of nation-builders. We pay our tribute to all who have helped to lay the foundations of our national life.

But Canada does not stand alone in the world. All Canadian citizens are now British citizens. We gladly claim our place in the Empire. We do so, not merely because of our historic connections or because of any material advantage, but because British ideals are our ideals and we hope to contribute our part in the development and realization of these ideals.

The British ideal is that of liberty, of home-rule, of unity of spirit rather than that of uniformity of institutions. The Union-Jack itself is formed by the union of three flags. It represents the union of many peoples. At its best, the British Empire stands not for coercion but for toleration and justice. It seeks not to force all to conform to one type, but rather rejoices in the richness of life that finds expression in so many and in such diverse types. It incorporates into itself the best that the nations bring, and, in so doing, it becomes more Catholic—some universal—more equal to its ever-enlarging mission.

World organization must one day be effected. The British Empire—the Mother of Parliaments—may well be expected to take the lead in the establishment of "*The Par-*

liament of Man, the Federation of the World". If the accomplishment of this task involves the surrender of her predominating position—if it involves even the breaking up of the existing Imperial group of nations, she must not flinch. The Empire will not be lost. The British Empire will have conquered the world. True World Imperialism is Universal Brotherhood.

But Great Britain has not always lived up to her professed ideals. The existence of the United States is evidence of her faith at a critical period. The colonists who insisted on home-rule was more British than the stupid administrators who could not see the point of view of their brothers who had crossed the Atlantic. Now that the bitterness of conflict is past we can shake hands with American cousins and even thank them for helping to maintain the best British traditions. Perhaps, indeed, it may prove that absolute political separation was necessary in order that the New World might be free to develop its own distinctive institutions.

Here, then, on this North American continent two sister nations live side by side. They are bound together by a common language and common ideals, yet each is free to work out its own destinies in its own way. They react on one another, stimulate one another and co-operate with one another.

Into this New World are being poured streams of immigrants from every country in Europe. In America the European nations are being given a second chance. What the Old World has failed to do, the New World must attempt. Peoples diverse in origin, in language, in religion, in social customs, must somehow learn to live together in peace and good-will. From these diverse elements we must somehow build up a unified community life. On this American continent must be worked out a great experiment in democracy—an experiment which if successful, will go far towards solving the world problem.

It is at this critical period of the world's development, it is at this tragic point in world relationships, that Canada develops a national consciousness. Again we ask who or what, then, is Canada, and what is to be her part in the world's work?

Canada is greater than her history. She is more than her resources; she is a part of the far-flung British Empire. But "*While daughter in her mother's house*" she is "*mistress in her own*". She shares with the great American Republic the tasks of the New World but she will work out these tasks in her own way. Canada's destiny—as that of other nations—will be determined by her ideals which, sooner or later, will create her institutions and mould her character.

The emblems of Canada perhaps reveal something of the ideals of the early Canadian pioneers. Our fathers chose as the symbol of the new national life, not the lion, not the eagle, but the beaver. After an orgy of speculation and in the midst of the fierce passions of wartime, dare we mention the beaver—the symbol of patient industry? For the time, the lion's whelp or the bull-dog has taken the place the beaver in the popular imagination. But when the war is over and we settle down again to productive enterprises, the braver must again be given his rightful place. The triumphs of the future must consist not in overcoming other nations, but rather in overcoming the forces of nature. Rather let us put it—if we can possibly get away from military language—the progress of the future is dependent upon an understanding of and co-operation with the forces of nature in providing for the needs of the nations.

We have selected still another emblem—the maple leaf. In Canada, beauty must co-exist with industry. Man does not live by bread alone. To the Eastern Canadian, the maple recalls the sugar-bush and the tang of spring winds, the grateful shade in the heat of summer days, the rich coloring of the Autumn woods, the clear moon-light winter nights when, through the lofty arches of nature's own cathedral, we looked up to the stars. On our windswept Western plains we must not fail to cultivate the maple tree, with the art and poetry and music, with the hospitality and aspirations, which it symbolizes.

Canada is a child of the future. We do not despise the