

But he knew right well that he needed a managing editor. He remembered that the best man the paper ever had was John W. Dafoe. He sent for Dafoe. It was a plain proposition. The Free Press needed a man to manage it, so that Mr. Sifton might stay in Ottawa and feel sure the job was being well done.

Each probably sized up the other. But whatever temperamental antipathy there may have been, if any, neither showed it. Sifton was the sphinx. Dafoe was the tame lion—not too tame. Ordinarily Dafoe would have been the machine worked by Sifton touching the button at Ottawa. But it was not so to be. It was writ down in the mentality of John Dafoe that it could not be. But he got to work. He had plenty of it. Winnipeg was the crude simulation of a melting-pot. To a man of over imagination it would have been just the place and the job to start him thinking all sorts of idealistic guff about the making of a nation.

Dafoe was not addicted to poetry. He was too solid in his boots to lose his head over expansion and ideals. He knew honestly how rotten were many of the activities on foot to Canadianize the immigrant; for he was considerable of a fighting politician himself. Having been through the mill as aforesaid, he was the tool of no man's whim and the slave of no mere movement. Some movements always incite Dafoe to a certain hostile suspicion. He resents most of them. But there are others.

Well, the one sure thing was that he was a Liberal and that too many other men even in that country were Tories. That simplified a lot of things. Tories, to John Dafoe, are people who've simply got wrong notions in their head and who persist in refusing to have their condition treated by the ordinary Liberal remedies. Furthermore, Tories, according to Dafoe, have a habit of doing all sorts of tricky little

things to win elections—in Winnipeg. John Dafoe would feel sorry for them if they showed the faintest signs of regretting their condition. But in the face of their callous indifference to the truth—he seems to say—there is no time to be sorry or sentimental. Exterminate them.

It used to be, whenever there was an election, Provincial or Dominion, in Winnipeg, that the Conservatives would arrange to have John Dafoe arrested on the eve of the polling. He had fought so hard and cracked so many heads by this time that even the patience of the Conservatives was exhausted. Of course, as soon as the election was over, the charges would be dropped and nothing more heard of the matter. But in the election of 1908, Dafoe surprised them by insisting on being tried—he was charged with criminal libel. His opponents, the polls being closed, tried to dissuade him and almost plead with him not to be so foolish. John Dafoe would have a trial. And he was acquitted.

But all who differed from Dafoe were not Tories, any more than all who agreed with him were Liberals. Something got wrong with Liberalism. Dafoe, supposed to be agent, was not always amenable. It is quite reasonable to suppose that when the Free Press differed with its reputed owner on the question of reciprocity there would have been another managing editor found if Dafoe had not somehow made himself the Free Press to such a degree that to take him out of it would have been like cutting off a head. Dafoe had been plugging away at this transformer job in all its details. Sifton had been short-circuited at Ottawa. It was not possible for even Liberals to decide which of the two meant more to Liberalism in that part of the land.

In short, there was a radical type of Liberalism on the prairie. It is coming to a huge temporary head just now in the monster convention of grain-

growers at Winnipeg to lay down platforms for governments in the matter of wheat, railways and rural credits. There are Tories among those grain growers. There's the rub. Wheat and things like it are bigger sometimes than political traditions. Dafoe knows it a little more broadly, perhaps, than any one else in that country.

There may or may not be an election soon. Whether soon or late, makes no difference to Dafoe, who is prepared to show cause why first of all the old line parties are pretty well defunct on the prairie; second, that there is possible a radical wing of the Liberal party; third, that the West does not hero-worship political leaders; fourth, that you cannot business manage an Empire by sitting at a round table and electing directors.

There are others. These will do just now to epitomize John W. Dafoe, who has come to the point in his variegated plugging career where he can stand up to any men with any sort of measures for nation-building and discuss them till the last of the argument—then blow out the light, tousele his mane once again and go home knowing that he is of the same mind now that he was then.

It is sometimes asked why Dafoe does not leave the sanctum and go into politics direct. It is even rumoured that should Laurier win another election he would be offered a seat in the Cabinet. It would be a wise choice to get the transformer down to Ottawa. But he is not likely to move. The West suits him. Besides, as the balance of power in politics sometimes goes to radical wings, so the centre of influence in Canada is steadily creeping westward. Winnipeg is more than sixteen years nearer the centre of things now than it was sixteen years ago, when Dafoe became managing editor of the Free Press. In ten years more—

But we must leave that prospect to Dafoe.



CANADA WILL CARRY ON

WHEN the war broke out British Columbia had already begun to feel seriously the effects of the reaction from an unexampled period of prosperity. I use the word "prosperity" in the commonly accepted sense of quick money returns, expanding revenues, municipal and provincial, flotation of numerous enterprises on the company plan, jumping bank clearings and so on. Large sums of money were being spent by railways, private corporations, private individuals, municipalities, and the government. Speculative activities were very active, and money was very plentiful in circulation.

War accentuated a situation already bad. It cannot be said that British Columbia in all these respects was very much different from the rest of Canada, except that conditions which affected the Dominion as a whole were more pronounced in the western province. Here I want to call attention to a misconception which continuously maintains in eastern Canada. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, when you see "the West" in print, or hear it spoken of, it has reference to the prairie provinces. Of course, if we were to draw a line north and south somewhere about the boundary line between Manitoba and Ontario, you might properly call everything east of that "eastern Canada," and everything west of it "western Canada"; but in speaking of the prairie I have always adopted the rule in the United States of calling it the Middle West. Broadly speaking, "the West of Canada" would include all four provinces, but "in the West" or the "West" should only mean just as in the United States, it means only the Pacific Coast states. There can be only one West.

It is a curious fact the result of geographical position and physical conformation and possibly the

The self-governing Dominion which already as a free-will agent has done so much should not need Conscription. Let us estimate our resources, pull together and finish her work

Editor's Note.—At various times we have published articles showing what most of the other Provinces have done for the war. These two concerning British Columbia and Saskatchewan are very timely just now when the country is undertaking to raise the balance of a half-million army.

BRITISH COLUMBIA AND THE WAR

By R. E. GOSNELL

psychological effect of the Western environment, observable in the same zone south of the line, that in good times in Canada British Columbia has the best times, and in times of depression British Columbia feels the pinch worst. The West breeds optimism, and when the sun shines in business we overdo it in a speculative way. That is true of all the Wests of America. To compare British Columbia with Ontario, for instance, we can make the distinction quite clear. The population in Ontario is a stable one. It is largely born of the soil, whereas of British Columbia's population, which increased over 350,000 between 1901 and 1913, only a small percentage is native born. Most of them are here on account of speculative opportunities. Ontario has a large, old and diversified agriculture and also a highly developed industrial organization. Although British Columbia was, on account of its natural resources in timber, mines, fish, agriculture and horticulture, per capita the largest producer in Canada, her industrial organization is still almost in embryo.

I refer to these matters as reasons for conditions as they existed prior to and since the war in British Columbia and elsewhere. At the outbreak of the war, conditions throughout Canada were very

similar—alarm, impairment of financial credit, unemployment, with consequent distress and money loss.

An essential difference as between British Columbia and the other provinces developed as time went on. The great crop of 1915 in the Middle West, at prices regulated by war demands, lifted the prairie people into comparative affluence again. In the eastern provinces, in addition to good crops, manufacturing has been greatly stimulated by orders of war munitions, and it is safe to say that Canada, from the

Rocky Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean, is more prosperous than ever before, as a result of the war. British Columbia, on the other hand, owing to her distance from the seat of war, has been able to get but very few orders for munitions or supplies of any kind. Had the Panama Canal remained open and ocean bottoms been available, the timber industry, in particular, would have become very prosperous on account of foreign demand; but shipping was extremely scarce and rates practically prohibitive.

THE situation will be relieved as soon as the ships now being built under government aid are launched, in probably six or seven months' time. In the meantime, there are few facilities by which the products of British Columbia can reach their natural markets. We have, in addition, larger overhead charges in taxes and interest than in eastern Canada. During good times real estate went very high and a great deal of building went on. Real estate and land transactions, now unprofitable, represented enormous investment of capital, subject to high taxation. Municipalities, like private individuals, went in for extensive betterments, which have to be paid for in taxes on unduly high assessment valua-