

REFLECTIONS

BY THE EDITOR

SIR EDMUND WALKER has given us much advice in the past ten years. Giving advice is almost as popular a pastime among bankers as it is among journalists. A banker is never a boomster—on paper, and a journalist is always a boomster—on paper. This is the difference between the two. But it is a difference more apparent than real. Who has boomed the price of real estate like the banker anxious to own the best corners in the growing cities and towns? Who has in private life been a more thorough-going pessimist than the average journalist?

Sir Edmund Walker, better known to us as Mr. Byron E. Walker, has been preaching conservatism for ten years and practising the opposite. However, it is interesting to find that his Dominion Day message bears a new appeal. The accustomed flavour lurks among the words and sentences, but there is a tremendous difference in the general tone. The new Knight rises over the purely material plane as becometh one who has advanced another step in the aristocracy of democracy. Not that Sir Edmund has ever been a materialist. His interest in education, in civic beautification, in authorship, in music and in art has stamped him as a financier with ideals and a deep appreciation of the finer things of life. But this latest message is of finer fibre, more delicate texture and more elusive colouring than any previous dictum. It is an argument on behalf of "the supreme importance of character."

ONCE Sir Edmund was speaking of certain fellow financiers in a somewhat free and easy way, and he described one as a "vulgarian." It was not so much the term used as the manner of speech and gesture which surrounded and accompanied the epithet. In describing his contemporary as a vulgarian he was but epitomising the difference between his contemporary and himself. As one servant differs in character from another, as one merchant differs from a fellow merchant, so there are differences between financiers. In the spending of their gains, these differences show more clearly than at any other time. One spends his money on vulgar show, another on art, literature and music. One gives his spare time and spare energy to selfish pleasure and gaudy parade; another devotes his time and brain to the elucidation of the problems which affect the community, the nation or the world of humanity.

Sir Edmund does not disapprove of money-making, but he distinctly states that "too much devotion to money-making" has made the United States a "nation of discontented people ruled by a few plutocrats." He believes that the man who cannot read books, appreciate works of art, or indulge in sport is a failure even if he be a millionaire. Industrial prosperity will not alone make a nation; there must be intellectual prosperity also.

EARL GREY is to remain another year as governor-general, and the announcement has given considerable pleasure. His Excellency has done admirably as the appointed ruler of a democratic people. If he has insisted rather strongly on imperial duty and imperial obligations, his attitude is condoned because of his evident sincerity and his impersonal enthusiasm. He hath not vaunted himself. Moreover, his keen intellectual interest in Canadian affairs, his sympathy with Canadian ambitions and aspirations, have been so marked that he has seemed less like an outsider and more like a citizen. While attempting to swing our judgment to his, he has done it in a mild, argumentative, persuasive way which aroused no antagonism. He has the qualities of true leadership, and he is reaping the rewards which are the due meed of him who shows consideration for the feelings of those who differ from him.

IF John Howard, prison reformer, could come back from the spirit world to the city of Guelph and see the new Ontario Reformatory Farm he would marvel. The idea of putting prisoners to work on the land, living in ordinary houses, wearing ordinary clothes, and under the guidance of guards without weapons, is startlingly novel. A prison walled by the ordinary country road and domed only with the blue sky of heaven seems to change the old order with a vehement suddenness. The basis of it all is that a man who has done wrong and is sentenced to serve a term under surveillance is not necessarily an unreformable criminal; therefore it is the state's duty to reform him while punishing him by a certain amount of confinement. Under the old system there was punishment without reform; under the new there is little punishment, much physical development in the open air, reasonable training and a general social reform.

The labour unions have long complained that it was unfair to have prisoners, not earning wages, make goods in competition with men who were trying to earn decent rewards for their labour. After September, no prisoner in charge of the Ontario authorities will be employed in making factory goods of any kind. They will produce only stone for road-making and agricultural produce. They will in

the main be farmers. There will be schools for such as need it, and technical education for those whom it would benefit, and all the secondary aids which a philanthropist and an educationist could devise for erring boys and men. There will, in short, be a daring system of commonsense for the purpose of turning bad citizens into good citizens, for the creation of a new opportunity for the individual who has gone temporarily astray.

Every other province in Canada should immediately send a representative to see the good work that is being done under the authority of the Hon. W. J. Hanna, and upon the advice of a provincial commission of which Mr. J. P. Downey, M.P.P., was chairman. To abolish enforced idleness, the competition of prison labour with free labour, the dark cell and the cropped cranium, should become the immediate aim of every provincial government. As to whether the system is applicable to Dominion penitentiaries, that is another question.

WHEN the Earl of Crewe, secretary of state for the colonies, goes so far as to admit that Canada's independence now extends to international negotiations and treaties, it indicates a new stage in colonial history. Slowly but steadily for a hundred years, Canada has been gaining more and more of self-government. Every advance was greeted with alarm in certain quarters. "You will smash the Empire" has been the cry of the pessimists for half a century, and yet the Empire withstands every assault upon its integrity and cohesiveness. The central government has handed over more and more of the local work to the local body—and the local body grows stronger and more grateful. It is a simple proposition, simply worked out.

The writer once tried to explain this to the Boston Canadian Club and the audience were convinced that he was a man who was trying to break up the King's Dominions. The lessons from history were clearly set forth, but the auditors didn't care about history. With the true American spirit they said, "History be hanged." He was followed by another Canadian speaker who, in more eloquent if less logical periods, predicted that the Hon. Joseph Chamberlain's policy would soon glue the various parts of the Empire into one indistinguishable and indivisible mass. And the cheers that followed rocked the electorates of one of Boston's finest dining-halls. That was ten years ago. Perhaps they know better now—perhaps they have forgotten.

Also there are many Canadians who are like these Bostonese; they fear every move forward in colonial development. They would prefer to see the colonies remain undeveloped rather than see them advance and expand into mighty nations. They would sooner see the people of the colonies remain ignorant and unambitious than to attain autonomy and equality. They shudder every time a Canadian Prime Minister expresses an opinion on a matter of importance outside the boundary lines. They wept when the British garrisons left our shores; they trembled when Canadian ministers carried on negotiations with Washington, Paris or Berlin; they paced the floor when General Hutton and Lord Dundonald were "affronted"; they wring their hands because Canada is to have a navy of its own. Yet, for their comfort let it be widely proclaimed, that Lord Crewe, speaking for the British people, is absolutely satisfied that Canada is sound to the core.

CANADIANS who refused to be stampeded by the German war scare which roused a certain section of the British public attention last year are finding much comfort in the recent despatches from the German capital. If the English and American correspondents resident there are to be trusted, Germany has lost confidence in her navy and its fighting capacity. The Germans are in a greater funk in this respect than the British were last year. An impression has got abroad in the Fatherland that Germany's early Dreadnoughts are decided failures. As proof they point to the fact that the German admiralty is arranging to sell two of these to Turkey. They also add that the cruiser *Blucher* is a rank failure.

Of course, it is very unpatriotic of the Germans to speak so slightly of the great navy which was expected to crush the British Empire in one swift battle. When these men go so far as to point out that Germany has only eight submarines as against Britain's sixty-three and that the German fleet is decidedly inferior in torpedo craft and other small boats, they should certainly be indicted for lese majeste. Nevertheless, this is the attitude of a certain portion of the well-informed German public. They publicly proclaim that the much vaunted German fleet would have little chance against the British fleet if there were an early meeting of the two.

Canadians who have refused to follow the naval agitators of Great Britain would be equally wise to refuse to believe these pessimistic reports from Berlin. It is not likely that the German fleet is in as helpless a condition as the correspondents would have us believe. German designers, armament manufacturers and shipbuilders have proven by a half century's success that they have a fairly good grasp of their business. The German fleet may not be as strong as the British extremists have declared, but it is certainly a fair fighting force. That it is half as strong as the British fleet no well-informed person, unbiased by political necessities, has ever believed. The German war scare was invented largely for political reasons. The