

NEW PROBLEMS OF THE NEW ERA

*A Speech delivered by Sir John Willison before the Canadian Club of
Winnipeg, on Sept. 5th, 1918.*

It is a privilege to speak in Winnipeg, which perhaps, more than any other community within the Confederation, expresses Canada. You are of the West with intimate and extensive social and commercial relations with the older Provinces. Any national policy which would command the support of Winnipeg probably would be supported by a majority of the Canadian people. There is at least one respect in which Winnipeg and Toronto have common ideals and have had common experiences. From here as from the City in which I have lived for a third of a century, thousands of young men have gone out to fight for freedom and democracy, and in very many homes there is mourning for those who will not return. But if they fell, as Trevelyan said of the heroes of Cawnpore, "they bear in their breasts the wounds that do not shame."

In a speech a few weeks ago Mr. Lloyd George said, "The less we talk of the theories of the past and the more we deal with the realities and the needs of the present, the better national progress we shall make." He declared that "the country must come first and not the career or consistency of any man or any party." He added "Do not hitch on to past controversies. Let us consider our problems anew." The advice which Mr. Lloyd George gives to Great Britain is the only advice that we in Canada can afford to follow. In consequence of an

enormous increase in the public charges, revolutionary changes in national and world conditions, and the inevitable and tremendous problems of reconstruction, the old political programmes will have to be revised and all our thinking adjusted to the situation which years of war have produced.

In these days no one is fit for the Kingdom who turns back to the old shibboleths and catchwords. "Look not every man on his own things," said St. Paul, "but every man also on the things of others." That is perfect religious teaching and sound economic doctrine. As much patriotism and public spirit, as much unity and co-operation will be required for the era of reconstruction as have been manifested during the era of destruction. In the strain and agony of war East and West have been united. I do not believe that in the anxious and difficult period of restoration they will be divided. I know how often and how shabbily patriotism is exploited in behalf of class and sectional interests. If I emphasize national as against sectional considerations it must be understood I do not imply that sectional feeling is stronger in the Western Provinces than in older Canada. The war has demonstrated that the East has no monopoly of patriotism and nothing could be more presumptuous or offensive than any suggestion or implication that the West owes some special obligation to older Canada or