

Editorial

The National Bond

THE ties that bind men together are many. They may be racial, religious, industrial, national, and social. In every nation are to be found some who emphasize the importance of the racial bond. In Western Canada there are evidences of this every day. In the press and out of it there are at work those who would convince us that we, in Canada, should not be a nation with British sympathies and British ideals, but rather that we should be a composite people in which all racial differences should be accentuated, and all the varying tongues equally recognized. Then there are those who think that the religious bond is all-important; that if a man is true to his church it matters comparatively little if he is luke-warm in his devotion to king and country. There are around us many who are to-day preaching and living this very view. Again, there are some who put the trade brotherhood before everything else. To such, nationalism is lost in internationalism. A strike recognizes no boundary lines. The trades union or industrial brotherhood is of more concern than church, race or nation. Taking these cases as illustrative, it is no wonder that it is difficult at times to develop a strong national sentiment in a country settled like ours. Yet when it comes to a time like this it requires no demonstration to prove that it is one of the first duties of a nation to develop a feeling of loyalty to king and country. Other forces may be at work developing loyalty to other institutions, but the nation as such should be true to itself above all things. To put it plainly: the nation, while sympathetic to all forces that make for the happiness, intelligence and morality of the people, must make its chief concern its own solidarity and perpetuation; and it must discourage all forces that make for disunion and disintegration. With this thought in mind, it is not difficult to determine the state's attitude to such problems as bilingualism and multi-lingualism in education, class legislation, protection, ecclesiastical preference at public functions, the settlement of strikes, cases of unemployment, compulsory military service, women suffrage. The first duty of the state is to be true to itself. It should not be expected to build up within itself forces that may work for its own disintegration.

The New Teacher

ACHANGING civilization demands a changing form of culture. For this reason the elementary school of the future cannot be patterned on the school of the past. Everybody sees this. Yet all are not agreed as to the exact nature of the changes that should be made. A few men on the other side of the line have worked out a scheme for training young lady teachers to be community leaders. Needles to say there are men and women on this side who are ready to echo the sentiment—indeed ready to out-Foght Mr. Foght. These men have clearly not thought the thing through. Their intention is good, but their judgment hopeless. How many young girls would be able to train as community leaders? How many so trained would be accepted as community leaders? A girl of twenty years who came into a rural school district, labelled as leader in social and agricultural effort, would in most cases be laughed out in less than a month. The public willingly accept a young lady to lead their children, and are willing indeed that the leadership should be along new lines, but in social matters they do not care for dictation and in agricultural matters they are not ready to be taught by a school girl. Mr. Foght and others of his class are good as a tonic, but they are useless in matters of practical guidance. The agricultural colleges and schools working together can do a great work that neither alone can accomplish. True reconstruction will aim at linking up all the forces in the community so that each may have its own responsibility. It will not think of placing the complete burden of education and civilization upon an over-worked class of young people. Perhaps some day there will be encouragement for men to enter the teaching ranks—married men who will settle down in rural districts. Then it will be in order to talk of leadership. Just think what a capable man and his wife might do if as farmers, social leaders and teachers they were able to lead the district in which they were located. This, however, is another question.

Prohibition

IN Winnipeg the saloons have been closed for three months. The result is a diminution in drunkenness of eighty per cent, and of crime about sixty per cent. In the province the result is even more pronounced. This proves two things—first, that the saloon rather than the home is the parent of drunkenness, and that drunkenness is the parent of crime. A gentleman just returned from the coast cities was comparing life there and here. The comparison did not favor the western towns. It was the saloon and all connected with it which created the bad impression. A city cannot make a good impression on a visitor when the bloated face, the noisy brawl, the fumes of alcohol are ever in evidence. It does seem, indeed, that Canada is on the way to respectability. From all that we can learn British Columbia is likely to follow the example of the other three western provinces, and Ontario, after her own fashion, will fall into line in September. Verily "the world do move." Who would have prophesied this three years ago?

Preparedness

"IN time of war prepare for peace." This is a reversal of the old maxim which read: "In time of peace prepare for war." And it is a much sounder maxim than the old. Such evidently is the belief of many of the English journals. These are now considering seriously the problems of social and industrial reconstruction. It seems to be taken for granted that the system of land tenure and the control of railways must be completely changed, and it is just as certain that the workers in industrial concerns have to be more closely identified than formerly with the success of the undertakings with which they are connected. In Canada the after-war problems are even now shaping themselves, and we shall do well to have solutions ready in advance. There will be the problem of the soldier incapacitated for work. Are we ready with a scheme for re-education? There will be the problem of finding places in industry and commerce for the men who are able-bodied. Shall they take the place of girls and women, and if so what provision shall be made for these? Can we trust to luck in a matter of this kind? There will be the problem of industrial readjustment. Are the forces in munition factories to be thrown out or has some provision for them been made? There will be the problem of the unemployed, a problem brought about chiefly by our wild system of land-tenure and land speculation. Is anyone seriously facing such a problem? The natural tendency of successful business men is to do nothing in advance. Present conditions suit them all right, and the threatened trouble is a long way off. Yet, the man who can render the greatest service to Canada at this time is the seer—he who is able to foretell the future and outline a programme that will prevent discord and promote peace and prosperity. Anybody can be a practical politician. The seer requires to have great mind, and a loving, unselfish heart. Unless the future of the race, not only in Canada but in all the nations of the world, is planned for now, carefully and wisely, there is a possibility that the greatest war in history will be, "the war after the Great War."

Change of Opinion

THERE is an old Japanese story of a famous shield which was silver on one side and gold on the other. When any one undertook to describe the shield his hearers could always tell from which side he had viewed it. There is living in this city a man who a few years ago owned a farm a few miles out. This man was never done complaining of the low prices received for vegetables and grain. At the same time he was continually railing at hotel-keepers and keepers of boarding houses because of the prices charged for meals. Why, to his mind they charged a dollar when they should charge only about eight or nine cents. Now this man has moved to the city, and his chief complaint is the cost of flour and vegetables. He keeps a boarding house, and is loud in his complaints that it does not pay. The farmers he describes as robbers. In all of this he is far from inconsistent. He has moved to the other side of the shield. That is all. In North Winnipeg a few years ago, an eccentric individual with anarchistic or socialistic views, was accustomed to hold forth every evening on a certain street corner. When he was through with his discourse each evening there was little place left in this world for private ownership. One day he failed to come to his accustomed stand. A week passed, then a month, and still he did not come. One day we saw him on a lawn in front of a little cottage. He was attending to some pretty flowers. On asking him why he was not speaking any more, he said with a smile which explained everything: "Oh, you know, I now own this little home." He had moved to the other side of the shield. Is it not so everywhere? The strongest union man, when he becomes employer, is often the strongest opponent of the union. The strongest party politician is often the renegade. The fanatic in religion is often the man who has come over from another camp. It is pretty hard for most people to get away from the personal viewpoint. After all, the first personal pronoun is about the biggest word in the language.

The Cost of Living

ONCE again there is complaint that food prices are unreasonable, and once again it is demonstrated that the middlemen are partly responsible for the excessive cost of common commodities. Yesterday a lady on the street car said she had gone to the city market to buy red peppers from the market gardeners. She paid forty cents a dozen. The price asked at the home store was ten cents each. To-day green corn costs thirty cents at the store and twenty cents at the city market. The price out at the farm a few miles away will be from five to ten cents and there are no buyers at that. At some times it does seem as if we had the poorest, meanest way of getting goods from producer to consumer that could be devised. It is not necessary to condemn the grocer in saying all this. Rent, taxes and the like cost a great deal. But it is still true that the spread between farm and city home is altogether too great. A little more research and wise action in a matter such as this would be more in order than some public investigations that have been made. Of course the cost of vegetables is but a small thing, but an investigation here would reveal the reason for excessive cost of many other necessities.

If—

IF Germany had only been content to lead the world in the pursuits of peace, how happy would she have been to-day! She would indeed have found her place in the sun—the warm, friendly sun of admiration that cheers by its rays. But she wanted to get out into the glare, not to be warmed so that she might continue to grow and ripen and fulfil her mission of world service, but that she might glow with pride and self-glory. Surely she is getting enough of it just now! The iron hand that encloses her is steadily squeezing, squeezing. A little pressure on the west, a heavier pressure on the east, and a new and uncontrollable pressure to the south, with ever that great, silent, watching sea-power to the north! Yes, Germany is in a bad way, and the future does not offer her much promise. She may replace able leaders by others not so able—in order to placate the people, but she cannot alter the final issue. She is doomed. One by one her southern allies will fall away, and it does not matter what the order of severance will be. In the end she must depend upon the defence she has made within her own borders—a wonderful defence it is true, but one that cannot withstand the three great forces of steel, starvation and internal dissension. Out of the wreck a new Germany will arise, with nobler ambitions and worthier leadership. To this newer Germany we can even now hold out our hand. If the real German people only knew the truth the war would now be ended, but great care is taken that they shall be kept in ignorance. The other day a German prisoner got into conversation with one of our western Canadians, who had just arrived in France. "When did you get across?" he asked. "Yesterday," was the reply. To this the German said: "You know you didn't, for the Germans control the sea." Then again he asked: "Where are we to go as prisoners?" The answer was: "To London." To this came the reply: "Why, London has been in ruins for six months!" Now, if the truth really becomes known, what will happen? If—

The Harvest

ON the whole we have reason to be grateful. The wheat crop of the whole west will average well. The oats and barley will be good. The roots and hay will be excellent. Though much of the wheat is rusted, the straw will contain the proteins that under ordinary conditions would go into the kernels. This will give straw three times its ordinary value as food. There is something in that. Even if in Southern Manitoba and Saskatchewan the yield of grain is small, the price is good, and the provinces should not lack for money. Alberta has this year been particularly favored. The farmers there will get on their feet. This is very encouraging.

In connection with the rust plague, an idea has been advanced by students of agricultural botany that might be taken advantage of by young people of the west this year. In a field of wheat which is supposed to contain but one variety it is often, and indeed usual, to find a dozen or more varieties. Some of these have greater resisting power to disease than others. If farmers were to go through the rusted sheaves and select the heads that had survived, and plant from these, they might develop a variety of grain not so liable to be affected by rust. Comparatively few farmers have gone into the grain selection and grain-breeding business. Every farmer should do a little. It may be that there are many varieties better than even the Kitchener wheat. This thought is worth considering.

Plebian Extravagance

AFTER all there is a good deal to be said for the aristocracy; that is, for those who have inherited wealth and position. They are not so likely to make a show of themselves when placed in public office as men who are taken from obscurity and shoved into positions of great responsibility. There is no better evidence of this than the history of public expenditure in Canada during the last twenty-five years. Nobody but men suddenly pitched into prominence would have dared to enter upon such extravagance as we have lately been compelled to witness. Why should four or six millions be spent when one or two millions would serve the purpose equally well? Why should two millions be needlessly added to the cost of the Parliament Buildings? Why should the expenses of an ordinary plebian member of a Canadian cabinet cost \$10,000 for a little jaunt? It is the arrogant display rather than the expenditure in money which is so objectionable. As Canadians we should have some dignity. True dignity can not endure ostentatious display. It may be objected that this analysis is altogether wrong, and that the reason for extravagance is not the one we have advanced. Well, there is only one other possible reason. Will any of the public spendthrifts care to plead this other reason?

In one of his court addresses Abraham Lincoln tells of a steam-boat on the Saginaw River which had a whistle out of all proportion to the engine, so that every time the whistle blew the boat came to a full stop. Some of our public men with ten-horse-power ability have a thirty-horse-power swagger, and it is no wonder that when they attempt to blow-off their wisdom, their brains refuse to act.

It is too bad that public journals have to apologize for the actions of some of the peoples' representatives. Verily, democracy is yet but an experiment.