

BEAUTY, LIBERTY AND LIGHT



Florence Fair was the prettiest picture at the Ten Allies' Ball and the Russian Bazaar recently held in New York.

the most thoughtful young men in each centre. These groups had but the one object: to study the problem of organizing the British Empire. They were given little preliminary instruction. They were invited to work out the problem as it seemed best to them. And although one may differ very seriously from the trend toward centralization which, for one reason or another, developed in these groups, one could not at the same time fail to observe the generally high character of the men who were attracted to the organization, and the broad lines upon which they were invited to study. Lord Milner, visiting Canada, addressed a number of these groups and met many of the members individually. One observed that here again, the men who were most attracted, were of the best all-round Canadian type. In other words, there was something about Lord Milner and about the propaganda—if the Round Table work could be referred to as propaganda—with which he was undoubtedly connected, that attracted and held the interest of the best of Canadian young men.

That is one way of estimating Lord Milner.

IN October of 1915 I made my way to a certain number on Great College Street, in a quiet little district close by the House of Lords. I had an appointment with Lord Milner for twelve o'clock, noon. The house was one of a number of very simple, narrow-fronted structures much too modest in outward appearance for the average successful salesman in a Canadian city. If I mention somewhat in detail the circumstances in which I met Lord Milner it is from a desire, only, to correct any false impressions that may exist in the minds of Canadian readers with regard to the pomp and circumstance which is supposed by American short story and serial story writers to surround a titled Britisher. Three or four steps and a narrow stone "stoop" brought one to the front door of the house. The door opened directly into what had once been a very narrow and very dark hall, but the partition between the hall and the front room had been removed so that one entered at once a small office where Lord Milner's secretary was engaged at a desk. Directly at the back of the room a narrow stair led to the floor above, and in the room directly over that in which the secretary worked Lord Milner received his visitor. I recall a very comfortable chair and a well-matured grate fire, and the fact, too, that this room, like the one below and like the stairway, was simplicity itself. I meant on this, again, not to make capital of a man's privacy, but to emphasize the simplicity of the setting of one of those rare personalities that only old states and great states can produce.

I should like to be able to quote, from Lord Milner's remarks on the Balkan situation, on the situation in France and on the London political situation. Though a year has elapsed since then, those remarks have still an interesting bearing on the matters to which they referred. With the simple assurance, however, that he would not be quoted, His Lordship was very candid and very pointed in his opinions. Suffice it to say that he has been borne out in all that he then said, or that situations which he then saw developing are still growing along the lines he indicated.

The remarkable thing, however, was the personality of this—at that time—idle Britisher. His face was not unlike Goldwin Smith's, in its long, thoughtful cast. But where Goldwin Smith was delicately made this man seemed made of stern stuff. He was, if you like, an intellectual Van Horne. Here was all the buoyant energy of a western railroad contractor, with the scholarly qualities of a priest. A splendid face. A fine upstanding figure! This man was of the sort that could raise a loyal army round no other standard than his own pocket handkerchief. He HAD raised it—for the Empire to which he is devoted—hence the Round Table, a splendid institution whatever one's differences with its trend of thought. Yet here he was, sitting before a grate fire, idle—and as I then surmised, impatient for work.

I remember that on this very day a very fine

SOME time ago it was discovered that Liberty in the United States needed more light. These two ideas are supposed to go together in a great democracy. So the statue of Liberty in New York Harbour was illuminated, because almost anywhere else in the United States the cause of liberty had been somewhat in the dark. After the illuminations were turned on, President Wilson made a speech, in which he pointed out that the United States had more ideals in common with France than with any other country in the world—which, of course, leaves poor little Big Canada out in the cold.

point in parliamentary procedure had been carefully demonstrated by the able parliamentarians at Westminster. Reading about it in the newspapers that night one could not help feeling how exquisite was Mr. Asquith's sense of forensic niceties. Yet the recollection of the man in Great College Street persisted in blocking out the elegance of the House of Commons strategist. It made one think of a certain old C. P. R. contractor whose one love was the C. P. R. He had no ideas on publicity, or dining car service, or finance, but he DID know how to build track. When I saw him he was waiting for a spring thaw in order that he might take his gangs into some God-forsaken part of the Dominion to blast a right-of-way through rock and hard-pan to some isolated town. Till then he was unhappy. Milner, in another setting, seemed the same sort of man. What he craved was employment at the thing he knew best how to do—building, organizing, coordinating. Yet he was kept idle. Recalling that picture, one cannot help feeling that the terse courage of this brilliant Englishman will now have its effect.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON is another of these Empire-trained men. Like Milner, he was a Balliol man. Like Milner, he has perspective and the courage to undertake big ventures for the sake of the Empire. Perhaps it is not unfair to say that statesmen of the ordinary London-trained type could not have been expected to foresee the aggressive tendency of certain nations in Persia and in Tibet, and to set in motion counter movements for the protection of British interests. Curzon's work in India was marked by industry governed by peculiar good sense. He had the faculty of quick and courageous decisions.

Perhaps the best example of this Curzon quality—and one which may fairly be taken as typical of these Empire-trained men as against London-trained men—took place in the course of the South African War. At a very opportune moment it was announced that 15,000 troops from India were being sent to the veldt. Although that number of men seems a mere drop in the bucket of war to-day, it was at that time very important and contributed largely, no doubt, to the success of British arms in the struggle with the Boers.

But the remarkable thing was the fact that India was at that time troubled with anti-British agitation. Unrest was apparently widespread. A less courageous man than Curzon might very justly have reasoned that he needed these troops in India. Or if he had had the courage to give up the troops he might have been content with suggesting to the Home authorities that they be sent to South Africa. Tradition in London says, however, that Curzon took no chance on the over-cautious tendencies of London. He SENT the troops—and asked permission afterward. His very daring in thus stripping India of fighting men did more to quell Indian unrest than if the garrisons in India had been doubled.

THIS is the kind of man preponderating in the Lloyd George Cabinet to-day. Carson, though trained at home, is of the Milner-Curzon type. Lloyd George is of the same sort. Thus there are at least four bold men at the head of affairs in England to whom we may look for vigorous leadership. It should be borne in mind, however, that the type of man like Asquith and Grey still merits gratitude and respect. In other times than these, this type would unquestionably furnish the leaders in domestic politics. But for special times special men are necessary. For the present emergency no better type than the Milner-Curzon-Carson sort could be asked for as supporters of Lloyd George.

BOOKS could be—will be—written on Lloyd George. There are bits of Roman road in England to-day built by the soldiers who, wanting "a place on the sun," drove the Celts to the highlands. Two thousand years later a descendant of these Celts comes out of the Welsh hills and takes the headship of the British people to defend the world's greatest Empire from the 20th century Romans. If there's anything in the pertinacity of a race, Lloyd George represents it. It there's virtue in passion, force, uncompromising action, Napoleonic decision and great eloquence, he has it all. Very few great orators are great in action. Lloyd George is a great orator. But it is the oratory of action, of headlong passion, rather than of argument or rhetoric. David does not care how his periods build up for the parliamentary reporter. He flings himself into the action of his words.

Just here, in order to show how this Welsh Radical shapes up from his words to the winning of the war,

(Concluded on page 18.)

