

## The Empire Press Conference

Visiting Canada to-day are representatives of the daily press of the Empire for the purpose of exchanging ideas, and in the words of Lord Burnham, the leader, "for information." The idea of newspapermen from every part of the British Empire meeting on common ground to discuss subjects common to all is an excellent one, particularly when those subjects deal with the best means to bring about a better understanding and closer co-operation between the nations and peoples that make up our Empire. And such no doubt is the object of the Empire Press Union which, being made up largely of newspaper proprietors, is in a position to carry out the recommendations of the conference, the deliberations of which have been read with interest in this country. But attached to the conference is the word Imperial which to many people in Canada, as well as in other of the Dominions, smacks of jingoism, and if it is any information to Lord Burnham and his colleagues of the Imperial Press Conference we would remind them that the spirit of jingoism in Canada is confined to the very few who have the idea that unless they are everlastingly waving the flag, the Empire spirit will die in this Dominion. Canada today is working out her own destiny in a way peculiar to herself and requires no beating of the drums to bring her to a sense of loyalty to that conglomeration of nations called the British Empire. The war tested that.

But what the people of Canada does want is news of the other Dominions, of India, of the Crown Colonies and Protectorates, and of Great Britain herself, and if the leaders of the daily press of this country are really in earnest in their Empire building, they will see to it that that news is forthcoming for the benefit of their readers. It may take from their profits, but what of that. To serve the Empire and incidentally Canada, means sacrifice. As a matter of knowledge there is no part of the Empire so badly served with Empire news as is Canada, so that it is hardly consistent with the flag waving propensities of one or two of our dailies to preach the gospel of Empire when they don't supply the news for which they are primarily in existence. The British Empire is not an Imperial unit, as our jingoes would have it, but a democracy under the mild and wise rule of a king who is a real democrat. King George is a strong believer in the "freedom of the Press and in the formation of a well instructed public opinion."

For the further information of the Imperial

Press Conference we would remind the members that there is in existence a municipal press that serves every part of the Empire—including India—in a way that, so far as municipal government is concerned, is really influencing public opinion, because it goes out of its way to exchange the ideas of those who administer local affairs in all parts of the world. The result is that there is no phase of British governmental activity so well and intelligently understood as its many systems of municipal government, and we venture to say that it is this close understanding between the different units that is quietly binding the Empire together. Every municipal man in the Empire finds a common bond of sympathy in and through his municipal press, whether it be published in Canada, India, South Africa, Australasia or Great Britain, and we would commend this spirit of co-operation to those how control the daily press of Greater Britain.

So far as Canada is concerned the many hearty welcomes given (and by our cities in particular) will convince the delegates of the wholehearted determination of the citizens to treat them as brothers and sisters. In the words of our own Sir John Willison: "They are on their own soil, under their own flag, welcome visitors from the old homestead to a new land, where the children hold the old faith and love the old traditions and cherish the memories of the fathers from whose loins they have come and whose high qualities of independence and courage they would emulate." And in French Canada the citizens felt honoured in hearing the praises of their own province expressed in their mother tongue and responded with that gracious hospitality that make their guests honoured in its acceptance.

What the results of the Press Conference will be we do not know, but this we do know that every overseas delegate will go away feeling that Canada is loyal to the traditions of British citizenship, that her people are more than willing to share in bringing about the closest co-operation between themselves and their compatriots in every part of the Empire, that their saving grace of common sense will save them from much of the miseries of the social unrest now fast spreading over every part of the globe, and above all, each delegate will feel that Canada is sound at heart in the principles of that democracy upon which has been built the British Empire itself.

## Belleville 100 Years Old

We congratulate the City of Belleville (Ont.) on its hundredth birthday. Beautifully situated on the Bay of Quinte, an arm of Lake Ontario, this bright little community marks many events in the history of Canada. It was in the neighbourhood that Champlain, the first white man to navigate the lakes, spent a winter after fighting a series of

engagements with the Iroquois. It was in 1816, just after the Declaration of Peace between Great Britain and the United States, that the settlers, many of whom were U. E. Loyalists, decided on naming the then settlement Belleville, after the Governor's wife, Lady Bella Gore, but they had to wait until 1920 before a charter was granted.