

four. It is safe to say that the Union of 1867 never really could have taken place had not education been left sacredly to the provinces. One cannot help thinking sometimes, however, what the end will be if education being, as we have already said, the greatest single positive power in the state, is left wholly to the separate provinces in the future.

V.

THE ELECTORATE

The soundness of the electoral principle rests wholly upon each elector always recognizing and acting upon one simple fact, viz., that each elector is an officer of state. He is a member of parliament, the last final sovereign parliament of all, the parliament of the whole people. His voting franchise is not an asset and cannot, therefore, be bought and sold or used in any way for personal profit. It is not even a privilege. It is an obligation. The functions of the elector are precisely the same as those of a member of the House of Commons although, perhaps, usually drawn to a smaller scale. He must vote, not in his own interest nor even in the interest of his own community or province, but, as he best believes, in the interest of the whole Dominion. The theory of popular government is not that the selfish interests of the majority must prevail over the selfish interests of the minority, but that what a majority of the qualified electors believe to be in the best interest of all the people will in the majority of instances and in the long run turn out that way. A general election is not, as some writers say, a device for preventing civil war by indicating in advance what will likely be the result of civil war. That is, indeed, a poor decrepit theory of democratic government.

We are, unfortunately, in Canada, however, just at present showing some distinct tendency to overlook the great principle of free responsible government which I have just stated in the next preceding paragraph. We sometimes show a tendency to become distinctly provincial, local or even personal in our national outlook. There is nothing so fatal to any great country as this township vision. Suppose that Quebec elects representatives to represent Quebec, and Ontario elects representatives to represent Ontario, that the East elects representatives to represent the East and the West to represent the West, and the manufacturers elect representatives to represent the manufacturers, and the grain-growers to represent the grain-growers, and the labour unions to represent the labour unions and each and every electoral district tends more and more to elect representatives to represent its own interests, and nobody elects anybody to represent the nation, what do you think is likely to become ultimately of the Canadian Union?

THE OUTLOOK

Finally, what is our own vision of what Canada is to become in the future? Ask any casual person, and he will probably tell you that the future of Canada is to become a second United States of America excepting that it will remain faithful to the British Empire. That is, perhaps, in a vague way the vision most of us have entertained since 1867. That is a false vision. That vision never can come true. Climatic conditions alone will take care of that. The climate of the United States is nearly the same as the climate of Europe. There is scarcely a single day

in all the year anywhere in Europe for which a replica cannot be found in the United States. That is the main reason why the United States has never had any immigration problem except the problem of how best to exclude immigrants or how best to deal with them after admitting them. But Canada has a cold, ice-bound, snow-clad, northern climate. That fact alone makes our problem essentially different from the problem of the United States.

Then again the United States is a compact federation of states. There are no serious topographical or ethnological boundaries dividing the different states. Canada, on the other hand, is a long, transcontinental corridor of provinces passing through at least five distinct natural civilizations on the way. In the beautiful, many-colored Maritimes, in the two great central provinces by the wide-rushing river, on the wide prairie lands, "the land for which the tongue of England hath no name, the Prairies," in the vast multitudinous Rockies gazing like hooded sentinels far across the wide Pacific: it is a long vista, a great landscape, but it is also a difficult and unique task to build the whole prospect into a single civilization, a single community, loyal man to man from sea to sea. If Canada is to have a culture and civilization of her own it will be distinctly, uniquely Canadian, or it will be nothing. Indeed, perhaps one of our chief difficulties in the past has been our tendency to follow too slavishly the literary and scientific thought forms of Europe on the one hand and the economic devices and social usages and manners of the United States on the other. Imitation will get us no distance ahead in building up a Canadian culture. No people ever consciously undertook a similar enterprise in the past. Our literary men and artists must somehow gather new inspiration from our own landscapes and the peculiar traditions, customs and sentiments of our own people, and our scientific men must find new opportunities of research in our natural resources and the providences of nature which lie around us on every side.

But we need workers most of all. Canada has come upon the stage at a difficult period in the economic history of the world. We have no native races to do our menial work if, indeed, there be such a thing as menial work. Slavery is long an outlaw. Industrial employment amounting to virtual slavery, thanks to the labour unions, is also rapidly becoming a thing of the past. On the other hand, we insist that the children of all immigrants coming to Canada must receive a sound, adequate school education. The real ultimate problem, then, which we have to meet, is the problem of the relation between education and work. Until our university graduates, even, are willing to go upon the farm and into factories and into business, Canada can never succeed as she ought to succeed. What is a Canadian? A Canadian is a scout, and a scout is a scholar in his shirt sleeves. You recognize our national ideal character, Johnny Canuck. There he stands then! Mark him well, for certainly, if we come to think of it, no finer national character ever stepped upon the stage of history, clean, wholesome, unstanding, vigorous, venturesome, free. We recognize in him none of that colour of self-satisfaction and authority, of the county squire with a little whip in his hand, which we sometimes resent a little

bit in the character of John Bull, and we certainly recognize none of that colour of craftiness so obvious in the character of Uncle Sam. That, then, is our natural ideal, that the end and aim of all our national institutions and efforts.

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