Responsibility and Privileges of Citizenship

E. C. Drury, at Annual Garden Party of Whitby Grange

FOR a quarter of a century past the members of Whitby Grange have met together annually for the purpose of enjoying a pleasant outing in the form of a picnic or garden party. The event of this year took place on Wednesday last on the lake shore, says the Toronto Weekly Sun in a recent issue. In addition to the members of the local grange, there were present visitors from Kinsale and Columbus Grange and a number of others not identified with the organization.

The principal feature of the afternoon was an address by E. C. Drury, lecturer of the Dominion Grange, on the privileges of Canadian citizenship and the responsibilities going therewith. The main points made by Mr. Drury may be thus summarized:

Within the last fifty years the first perfect system of democracy has been established. For the first time man, because he is a man, has been given a share in the governing of his country. In no country has this privilege been so fully accorded as in Canada. Each man in this country has a share in governing the state—each citizen is a sovereign. Natural conditions add to the advantages going with citizenship. We have a population hand-picked from Europe, made up of those who possessed the courage and endurance necessary to enable our forefathers to overcome the physical difficulties inseparable from creating homes in a virgin forest. We have in forest, field and mine resources without parallel. We also have as a country youth on our side, and we have not, as they have in the United States, a race question to vex us.

The privileges so conferred convey with them duties and obligations which cannot be escaped. If these duties and responsibilities are appreciated to the full there will be realized in this country the dream of the best minds of humanity. If we fail in realization, the blessings which have been secured for us by those who have gone, will be lost and the last state will be worse than the first.

If we are to make the most of the opportunities open to us several things must be guarded against. The first of these is materialism. Wealth alone has never made a nation great and wealth, unless assisted by moral qualities, cannot make a great nation of this Dominion.

Corruption and self-seeking in public affairs must also be guarded against. No matter to which party we belong, or whether we stand independent of the two great parties, it is the bounden duty of each good citizen to guard against corruption and the disposition to use the machinery of government for personal gain. Let those who belong to one party begin work by cleansing at home. This is a duty which devolves in a special sense upon farmers, because, drawing their sustenance from the soil as they do, they are attached to the land in which they live as no other class is.

The greatest evil of all against which we must be on guard is indifference. Too many men take their opinions ready made, because they are too lazy to think clearly for themselves. With a reading, thinking citizenship, our country would be safe; it will never be safe until we have such. It is said that in the United States one per cent of the people own one-half the wealth of the country. A few men own more than is good either for themselves or the nation, while many have too little. How has this state of affairs been brought about? Largely through the indifference of the masses, which has resulted in allowing a few to exploit the national resources for personal benefit. We have lately been developing a millionaire class in this country as well. How has this class been created? By the giving of bounties, bonuses, and railway subsidies.

Another means by which we are creating an extremely wealthy class is through the tariff. Politicians tell us that the tariff is out of politics, and it is well this is so, because we are more likely to look at that question through clear seeing eyes under such conditions than if we were blinded by party prejudice. From a system of protection farmers have absolutely nothing to gain. We are in the one remaining country in which are vast unexploited agricultural resources. We will produce a surplus of foodstuffs for export longer than any other country. That being so, no matter what tariff may be imposed against agricultural imports coming into Canada, it cannot increase the price of that which the farmer has to sell. It is different in the case of the manufacturer. In addition to the goods manufactured at home, we import very largely from abroad, and the duty upon imported goods not only adds to the price at which the imports are sold, but enables the home manufacturer to bring his price up to a corresponding level. Few realize the extent of the burden protection imposes upon consumers, and more particularly upon farmers. We protest against the increasing expenditures by government, and justly so, but we are paying in excess profits, owing to the existence of a protective tariff, one hundred and seventy million dollars a year ($28 per head), or a good deal more than the cost of carrying on the Dominion government. Farmers pay not only their share of this, but in many cases they pay that of professional men as well; and, in addition to all this, they are forced to pay their hired help wages made unduly high by reason of competition created by bounty-aided and tariff-fed industries.

Take the woollen industry as a case in point. In 1906 there were 129 woollen factories in this country; the capital invested amounted to $6,938,683; the value of product was $5,764,600, of which $67,968 worth was exported, leaving $5,696,632 for home consumption. Our imports of woollens were largely in excess of the total amount manufactured in Canada. Thus the tariff of thirty per cent on imported woollen goods enabled the home manufacturer to charge that amount in excess of fair market value for nearly five and three-quarter million dollars worth of woollens sold by him to the Canadian consumer. The excess of price on home-made woollens, due to the existence of this thirty per cent tariff, amounted to $1,708,989, while the wage bill was only $1,190,000. The excess of profit, due to the tariff, was $518,000 more than the wages paid. And still woollen manufacturers demand an increase to fifty per cent in the tariff enjoyed by them.

What is the result of this policy? There are two results. Despite the application of machinery to farm labor, farmers could employ more men on a given number of acres today than ever before, and still the rural population of Canada has decreased by 50,000 in ten years. That is one result of protection. Another is that we are, in this country, as in the United States, creating a class of people who have more wealth than is good for them, a class such as in Pennsylvania produced a Thaw.

I have a different ideal for this country from that set up by those responsible for the policy of protection. My ideal is a country in which the agricultural resources are properly utilized and in which urban industries, suited to our conditions, develop as a natural consequence. Canada is at the crossroads. Along which line is our national course to be directed?

DEPRESSION IN IRELAND.

Joseph Tatlow, railway manager, at a sitting of the Viceregal Commission on Irish Railways in Dublin, painted an exceedingly gloomy picture of declining Ireland. He referred to the dearth of great industries and to the declining population.

He said that in the fifteen years from 1891 to 1906 the population had decreased to the extent of 292,370, or 6.25 per cent, while during the same period the population of England and Wales had increased by 5,461,197, or 18.17 per cent, and Scotland had increased by 689,825 or 17.09 per cent.

But with reference to industries Mr. Tatlow was able to hold out the hope that they were likely to improve. The milling trade was increasing in a marked degree and there were great possibilities also in the Irish timber trade.

Civilization In Danger

A Very remarkable and thought-provoking article, entitled "Civilization in Danger," appears in the July issue of the always-interesting "Hibbert Journal." It is by M. Rene-L. Gerard an "avocat a la Cour d'Appel, Liege." If Liege has many more philosophers of the same kind she is fortunate.

His object is to point out what he calls "the gradual disappearance of human inequalities," and the possible consequences. These consequences are indicated in the title of his article, "Civilization in Danger," or, as he puts it elsewhere, "There is reason to fear that the process of social levelling may have for its result a state of universal mediocrity; and this would mean the ruin of our civilization."

M. Gerard first points out how striking have been the changes in Social Uniformity. "Hardly fifty years ago civilized humanity," he says, "was composed of a certain number of groups that were easily recognized and possessed strongly-marked characteristics. Within the limits of every community the various social classes, sharply differentiated from one another and clearly subordinated in their ranks, mingled but little, and were kept apart by their mode of life, education, and even dress."

Today, however, "a stranger arriving in Europe for the first time would surely be unable to distinguish among the crowds which throng our streets on Sunday, masters from servants, rulers from ruled. . . . All classes of society are clothed indiscriminately in garments of one type, and even in the remoter country districts, where until recently the costumes of the past still survived, the uniform dress of the modern man has reduced originality and diversity to the rank of a souvenir."

"In another direction the low price of manufactures makes it possible to introduce even into poor homes almost all the articles of furniture formerly reserved for the houses of the privileged classes." So with amusements. "Man has become impersonal. The man whom we are going to meet round the next turning is no longer soldier, magistrate, artisan, but quite simply the man of today."

So in the Intellectual Sphere. "Go back a century and a half, and you find that instruction was reserved for a select few. The possession of knowlege is no longer a mark of superiority. Henceforth it is the possession, if not of all, at least of most. Education, having ceased to be mark of superiority, has ceased also to be a weapon in the daily struggle for existence. The state of not being ignorant, or even that of possessing a moderate endowment of general knowledge, is a minor advantage in the gaining of a livelihood. It avails no longer to be acquainted with many things; it is more advantageous to know only one, but to know it thoroughly, and to concentrate upon it. In other words, specialization is necessary.

"Specialization arises on the one hand from the new extension of human knowledge and on the other from the needs of the economic struggle. Not only are our brains hopelessly incapable of absorbing the accumulated gains of science, but the necessity of remunerative work prevents even those who desire to do so from paying attention to that which lies outside the particular business by which they live. Specialization, therefore, will increase in exact proportion to the further growth of human knowledge."

"As instruction spreads culture diminishes . . . . The cultivated man is disappearing. In proportion as the individual develops along the path he has chosen as the means to his end the level of general knowledge descends through sheer want of opportunity. Henceforth culture is like a luxury.

"Even the graduates of universities outside their own subject are often deficient in intellectual curiosity and the power of comprehension. And for this reason they, like their servants and the neighboring shopkeepers, are slaves to their daily paper."

So M. Gerard concludes that, "alongside of the levelling process in things material, our age is producing an intellectual uniformity by substituting an instruction freely distributed among all in place of the culture reserved for a minority."

The most serious contention the writer makes is his third—that there is a moral uniformity, and that a low one. The others, perhaps, are not serious by themselves, but accompanied by a low morality the situation is greatly altered.

"It is good indeed to love life and the whole of life. . . . For the crowd the idea of happiness never extends beyond a limited circle of immediate and tangible satisfactions which can be bought with money. . . . . Success under its most brutal form, which is monetary success, has almost become the exclusive object of universal endeavor. . . . It is the first time in history that utilitarianism has transformed itself into a dogma and become dominant everywhere. Utilitarian interests rule even the politics of nations.

"Utilitarian interests are on the eve of causing all that lies beyond them to be forgotten. In the collective life the principal elements which comprise the greatness of a people, which uphold the level of its civilization, and confer value on its intellectual and artistic work are being neglected. In the individual life nobody troubles to ask himself whether, in a civilization turned exclusively in the direction of wealth, there remains any longer a place for art or beauty, or even for happiness. Men deliberately forget that the gratification of material wants does not achieve the happiness of a being who is really civilized, and that the Greeks, who held the first place among the peoples for intelligence and for the art, were probably also the happiest of them all."

M. Gerard declares that while "the levelling of society is especially evident in the slow ascent of the masses to better conditions in moral and intellectual respects; on the contrary, it is being realized by the lowering of the elite to a level with all the rest."

"To offer resistance to the general tendency would be, indeed, the task of an aristocracy, since disinterested thought is a luxury, and because, further, the leisure and freedom of mind which material independence confers are almost indispensable for its cultivation. Under the influence of this levelling process the so-called governing classes have ceased to be higher classes. They seem to have renounced the speech which becomes an elite in order that they may follow the example of the crowd. Since the crowd has become the dominant social power, the attitude of these classes towards it may be summed up in two words—Abdication and Toadyism.

"If the social uniformity towards which we are advancing with even swifter steps should one day be fully attained, it will owe its realization to the suicide of the old aristocracies. The highest class today is a mere plutocracy."

The consequence of all this, says M. Gerard, is "the possible disappearance, after a relatively short interval, of every kind of social superiority. Indeed, a governing class never abuses itself with impunity: an aristocracy whose sole superiority to the masses which it professes to lead is that of money is doomed."

In discussing "means of defence" against a hurtful uniformity, M. Gerard insists that "it is essential to preserve an aristocracy. But in order to survive the aristocracy of the future must support its claims on superiority of talent and of character rather than on the privilege of birth or on money. It must deliberately endeavor to be, before all else, an aristocracy of the intellect."

"The aristocracy of the intellect exists already, but it lacks cohesion and is unconscious of the necessity of fighting to avoid being submerged by the democratic flood. It fails to see that the prerogatives of talent and merit, being left undefended, are slowly approaching the verge of extinction. It is not too late to establish a strong combination of forces in opposition to universal mediocrity. In this endeavor the help of writers and artists would be essential, but upon one condition—they must be men of culture rather than specialists. . . . The aristocracy of the future, if it would survive, must be an aristocracy of feeling and of manners as much as, and more than, an aristocracy of intellect.

"The aristocracy of the intellect, artists, women—such are the forces which may combine for the defence of the menaced culture of mankind. The time has not yet come to despair of the future of civilization. Art and beauty, which constitute its essence, have still too many lovers to be regarded as the objects of a fatal threat. None the less, we need to be on our guard, for the perils here indicated are very real, and they increase from day to day."

"Public Opinion" would be delighted to act as the journal of such an aristocracy as M. Gerard foreshadows.

AS BAD AS OUR DOUKHOBORS

Every man's hand is against a band of Macedonian gypsies who have unfortunately become wedged in between three countries, Germany, Holland, and Belgium, in that curious neutral territory named Moresnet, a corner which was forgotten in the general European rearrangement after Napoleon's downfall.

Frontier guards of three nationalities surround the place, with orders to prevent the party at any cost from passing on to other ground. The gypsies' case has become the subject of diplomatic negotiations between Germany and Turkey, but as anything connected with Macedonia spells delay, the unhappy wanderers would have been long ago starved to death had not some charitable souls provided them with bread.

Officially no one may give them sustenance, and their condition last week was pitiable. They speak nothing but their native language and are believed to be intending emigrants to America, but were deceived by unscrupulous agents and are now trying to make their way back to their native country.

WHY SHE MOURNED.

Mr. Browne—"I regret to say, dear, that—er—concerning that birthday gift I promised you—er—diamonds are up in price now, higher than I can afford."

Mrs. Browne—"I'm so sorry, dear."

Mr. Browne—"Yes, it is disappointing—"

Mrs. Browne—"Yes, it's too bad that you'll have to pay more than you can afford."

Japan's Eye Is on China

THE Paris correspondent of the New York Times writes as follows: A member of the French military commission now in Japan has just written an interesting letter to his friend, M. Stephin Lausanne, editor in chief of the Matin concerning the possibility, or rather what he choses to believe the impossibility of a war between that country and the United States. The letter was written in response to a statement by Mr. Lausanne that there are still many well-informed people in Europe who think that such a conflict is imminent.

The officer in question points out that in the first place the Japanese are the least impulsive people in the world, and that such a thing as public opinion does not exist in the Mikado's Empire. War would only be decided upon by the thinkers at the head of the government, and as they have everything to lose and nothing to gain by an American war, it is incredible that they should ever undertake such an adventure. After pointing out the impossibility of Japan's carrying on a successful naval campaign against the Pacific littoral of the United States, the officer goes on to show that the highest success the Japanese could hope for would be the acquisition of the Philippines.

He continues: "I can affirm absolutely that the Japanese at this jupncture are giving no more thought to the Philippines than they are to our own colony of Indo-China. I say 'at this juncture,' because it is absolutely sure that if nothing hinders the development of Japan, Europeans will be driven completely from Asiatic territory, where, following America's example a new Monroe Doctrine will be enforced.

"But all that is for the very distant future, and the Japanese, like the yellow race in general, disdain the question of time, and are not inclined to rush at things headlong. The Japanese do not want the Philippines for several reasons. In the first place, they are engaged in the colonization of Formosa, which is far from being completed. Formosa is still making heavy draughts on men and money. Japan is also working hard at the colonization of Corea and Manchuria, a work of vital interest, likewise requiring men and money. The Philippines would be a harder proposition still. The Japanese would not know what to do with them, and they are willing to let rich Americans go ahead spending their millions in improvements.

No, Japan's zone of action is China. We in Japan are convinced that there alone lie her ambitions. The Japanese wish at any price to be the leaders of Asia. To achieve this end, one thing is obviously necessary, the mastery of China. This being so, the most dangerous enemy of Japan today is Russia. The Japanese are perfectly aware that so vast a country as Russia is not seriously stricken, not even by such a war as the last one. The Japanese know that Russia develops automatically in the direction of Asia, and that her invasion of China is inevitable.

That is why, while we speak of the "yellow peril," Japanese orators speak of the "white peril." That is why they are arming China, helping to train her growing army. They count on China to help them some day to repulse the Russian invaders, knowing that for an indefinite period China, herself, will never, single-handed, be a serious military rival. All this being so, you can count upon it that Japan is much more concerned in the double-tracking of the Trans-Siberian than she is in the arrival of the American fleet.

And then you should never forget that a war with the United States would mean Japan's ruin. There would be no indemnity, that is obvious. The cost of operations in such a war would be terrific. Commerce with the United States would be at the same time be annihilated. This commerce is Japan's most important branch of trade. The United States both for exports and imports, is at the head of the list. Japan is still in her economic infancy.

As for the immigration question, the Japanese government asks nothing better than to deter its surplus population from going to America and to send it into Korea, Manchuria and China instead. To conclude, Japan wants no war just now with any one. But when she does fight, the battlefield will once again be in Asia."

CONDITIONS IN RUSSIA A CENTURY AGO.

Peter the Great pulled up traditional Russian society by the roots, dug out all her time-honored institutions, and so shook up his subjects that on his death, his vast and much expanded empire was left in considerable confusion. He did not leave it, however, without a fixed system of government. On the contrary, he created and handed down to posterity the "Tchinovnik" and the bureaucratic system. Having taken care to make anything like a reaction impossible, Peter I. bequeathed to his people an alien system of administration ill adapted to their circumstances. The inherited religion of his country, the marriage customs, and the national morality he undermined if he did not destroy. The native aristocracy, never very powerful, he reduced to a state of impotence, and he entrusted all power to the officials he had himself appointed, who were for the most part foreigners.

Thus it came to pass that for more than a generation after the death of Peter the Great the country was governed by foreign adventurers, who pandered to the passions and vices of their sovereigns and enriched themselves at the expense of the unfortunate people. These adventures, who were real rulers of the country, perfected the bureaucratic system which Peter I. had introduced and forged it into a chain with which to keep the nation in bondage. While a few rich nobles and high officials led lives of self-indulgence in St. Petersburg and Moscow and squandered money right and left, the bulk of the population were in a state of abject poverty. Nine-tenths of the inhabitants were serfs of so-called country gentlemen, whose own condition was scarcely more enviable than that of the peasant; moreover, famine and pestilence stalked through the land. The life of the country gentleman himself left, as we have intimated, much to be desired. His position had become anomalous. Unless he formed part of the bureaucratic system and had his place in some link in the official chain he had neither rank nor influence, neither duties nor rights. Even his person was not sacred; his only safeguard against extortion and persecution was his distance from the supreme government. His life was empty in the extreme; and interests were denied him. No feudal traditions assigned to him his proper duties and priveleges; no local assemblies were tolerated nor was his economic position brilliant, although his power over his serfs was practically unlimited, and in the majority of cases his estates formed a self-contained kingdom,-from which he derived nearly all his requirements without the aid of the extraneous world. These requirements, however, were on the average extremely primitive and limited.