

REFLECTIONS: BY THE EDITOR

The Summer Wanes.

WHAT a beautiful summer it has been, and how regretful we all are that already autumn is in sight. June was a bit chilly and we wondered if there would be a harvest. July had scarcely reached the centre of the arena, however, before all doubts were dispelled. While July has been sunshiny, it has not been too hot and it brought a fair amount of rain. August has opened reasonably and every one's summer holiday has been a success. We are all prepared for the "fall fair" season, now only a fortnight away.

While certain improvements might be made, this Canadian climate is hard to beat. Take it all in all, it is unequalled in the world for the production of a hardy and progressive race.

A Growing Feeling.

EVERYWHERE just now you will find men discussing the problem of taking the navy question out of politics. There is a growing feeling that it would be a great mistake if the debate in the next session of parliament should be partisan. Debate there must be, as the Government's policy must be announced and discussed. But what moral effect upon Europe will Canada's new naval policy have, if it can be shown that nearly one-half of our elected representatives do not approve of it? Moreover, the Government has not a majority of supporters in the Senate, and party considerations might lead that body to defeat or delay the Government proposals. Purely financial bills, they cannot delay; but this is not wholly a financial question.

Every citizen interested should use his influence towards bringing the two parties together on a national naval policy. There are plenty of other questions to divide the parties. The naval policy is imperial and international, and hence should not be the football of party conflict. Besides, there has been quite enough discussion. It is about time that this country stopped looking as if its compass had got out of order.

Missionaries for Canada.

WHAT a magnificent spectacle—England is raising money to supply Western Canada with churches and ministers. While the Canadian churches are sending money abroad to aid the heathen of Japan, China and India, Britain is trying to supply funds for missionary work in Western Canada. It is enough to make a Canadian ashamed.

Again and again it has been pointed out on this page that Canada should abandon her foreign missionary work and devote all her contributions and missionaries to the tremendous task of educating and Christianizing the foreign citizens of our newer districts. The demands for new churches and more preachers is tremendous, and the Canadian churches are not meeting it. The Western people are forced to look to Great Britain for aid in both men and money.

What does the Laymen's Missionary Movement intend to do about it? Or has that movement passed into the limbo of forgotten things? If the laymen have forgotten their new enthusiasms, let the missionary departments of the various Protestant churches get together and unite upon a programme which will meet the occasion. The Roman Catholic Church is doing its duty. Both the Canadian and United States prelates are sending money and men to Western Canada and are looking after their people with their usual foresight. It is the Protestants who refuse to see the duty which lies closest to their hand.

Land Values and Cost of Living.

WHAT effect has the tremendous increase in land values on the cost of living? This is a question raised by Mr. G. Frank Beer, in his recent address as retiring chairman of the Toronto Branch of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association. He thinks the two questions are intimately related.

He takes the case of a factory-site, once worth \$10,000, which has risen to \$60,000. The landowner gets a profit of \$50,000. The manufacturer pays the \$50,000 and thus adds \$3,000 a year to his over-head expenses. Now this sum is rent and a first tax on the product, therefore it must come out of the wage-earner or the consumer. The manufacturer must either pay less to his help or charge more for his product. In short, the burden falls upon the consumer, and the cost of living goes up.

In Mr. Beer's own words: "It is possibly not properly appreciated that the millions of dollars that have been added recently to land values in Toronto must ultimately fall on the consumer of every-day necessities. He pays the bills."

Startling as it may appear to some, here is a manufacturer who has sympathy with the consumer and is anxious to help him. He points out that some system should be adopted whereby a large portion of this increased value of the land should go to the consumer rather than to the land speculator. Like Lloyd George and the other advocates of land reform, he advocates "a special tax on unearned land values. The unearned increment should go to the community rather than to the individual land-owner."

This plan may or may not be practicable, but it is quite clear that the great rise in the price of city lands in Toronto and every other city in Canada is aiding tremendously in shoving up the cost of living. The tariff is usually blamed for this, but the tariff has little if anything to do with it. The cost of living has gone up 37 per cent., while the tariff remained stationary. Because land has gone up in value, the grocer and butcher must pay higher rents, and because they pay higher rents they must get higher prices. So it goes all the way along the line from manufacturer to retailer.

The only immediate remedy is for every man to own a bit of land and share in the general increment of land values. If a man finds his family expenses increased \$300 a year, he must get that \$300 out of the increase in land values. I cannot see any other remedy. If the community collected it in taxes, there is no certainty that the consumer would get it any more than when the land-speculator gets it. It might reduce city taxes, but that will be but a slight benefit unless the citizen is a landowner.

Western Wheat Crop.

GIVEN favourable conditions for a few weeks, Western Canada will harvest about two hundred million bushels of wheat. Some enthusiasts predict two hundred and fifty million bushels, but the other figure is more nearly correct. There are not enough men and harvesting machinery in the West to handle a quarter of a billion bushels of wheat, in addition to the other grains now waiting to be harvested. If the West cuts, threshes and markets two hundred millions, it will be exceedingly lucky.

The problem of getting men to harvest, thresh and transport this growing wheat crop is a more acute problem than at any time in the history of the West. Labour is scarce everywhere in Canada, and especially scarce in the West. Of course, the Eastern harvest will be over early and a few thousand men released in time to take in the Western "harvest excursions." But the East is holding fast to what labour it has, and this year's migration will be insufficient.

This annual sacrifice to the West—for many of these men do not come back—has put the East in a serious position. In Huron County, for example, the farmer with a hundred acres of land can only cultivate about twenty-five of it, because the "boys" have all gone West. The population has declined thirty per cent. Rural Ontario is in a bad way largely because it has given the West freely of its brawn and sinew. Even the employers of labour in the towns are feeling the pinch. Industrial establishments are growing fast and workmen are not too plentiful.

The West, like the East, is feeling growing pains intensely. Production is out-running labour and the means of transportation. There is more work than men; and more traffic than trains. There are signs of a freight congestion at points in the East as well as in the West. Toronto is threatened with a coal famine, because the railways are not able to handle the tremendous quantities required in that city. Canada needs railway facilities more than it needs almost anything else. If the people were asked to choose between Dreadnoughts and locomotives, I think they would vote for the latter by a huge majority.

An Imperial Council.

MR. BORDEN is likely to meet with many difficulties before he secures Canadian representation on an Imperial Council. The British authorities will share in these difficulties. It will not be possible to give Canada representation without first formulating some scheme whereby all

other portions of the Empire can be given similar representation when they take an equal part in the burden of Empire. The creation of such a body is therefore not an easy task nor one to be undertaken without due consideration.

It is easier to ask for representation on an Imperial Council than it is to give it. For example, if Canada is to have one representative on such a council, how many representatives shall be given to India, which has nearly fifty times as many people within its borders? If the basis of representation is not population, what shall that basis be? How else shall we gauge the importance of any portion of the Empire and give it its proper share in the general government which the ultra-Imperialists are advocating?

These difficulties in finding a basis on which to form an Imperial Council are not insuperable perhaps. Few difficulties are. Nevertheless, Canada should be prepared for the announcement that the British Government desires to leave this question over for further discussion at the next Imperial Conference. They are undoubtedly sympathetic with the ambitions of the Dominions Over-Seas, but it is to be hoped that they will not be accused of opposition to the idea simply because they desire further time to consider the innovation.

Already there are precedents. There is an Imperial General Staff which is now supposed to direct the military affairs and co-ordinate the military forces of the different portions of the Empire. On this staff the leading Over-Seas Dominions are represented. While its work is purely advisory it may, nevertheless, be considered a possible forerunner of a larger council which shall advise on both military and naval matters. Such a "Council for Defence" with purely advisory powers is quite within the region of possibility, but it is doubtful if this would satisfy the Canadian Ministry. It certainly would not satisfy those who look forward to an Imperial Parliament and an Imperial Ministry. However, we are more likely to have a "Council for Defence" for many years before we have even an Imperial Ministry.

Municipal Ownership.

THERE are two classes of people who favour municipal ownership. One class would have all public utilities within the municipality owned by the public without reference to existing franchises, private rights, or economic advisability. The other class are in favour of municipal ownership theoretically, but are careful to advocate municipal ownership only where there will be no invasion of private rights and where the public will be benefited by taking these utilities out of the hands of private corporations. The CANADIAN COURIER is in the second class.

A few days ago there appeared in the Calgary Standard an announcement to the effect that "The CANADIAN COURIER boldly announces that civic ownership does not pay." This is both untrue and unfair. We are not opposed to civic ownership. We hope, however, that we have sufficient judgment to decide for ourselves when civic ownership in any particular city is a success or not. Civic ownership in Calgary may be a success and probably is, but that does not prove that civic ownership would be a success in every other Canadian city. Much depends upon local conditions, upon the form of civic administration and upon the civic spirit of the people.

We speak of one city as being well governed and we speak of another city as being badly governed. That does not mean that we are opposed to a city having a municipal government. It merely indicates that municipal governments differ in quality according to the class of men who play the leading parts. We speak of good governments and bad governments; but nevertheless we all believe in the value and necessity of governments. Otherwise we would be anarchists. In the same way it is surely possible and permissible to speak of successful municipal ownership and unsuccessful municipal ownership.

Again, Toronto has one of the best police forces in the world; New York has one which is not quite so perfect if one is to judge from recent revelations. Because Toronto has a good police force it does not follow that the police force of every other city is good. If New York's police force is not good it does not follow that every other police force is bad. The efficiency of a city police force depends largely upon its system of government. In cities where it is subject to political or aldermanic influence it is not as likely to be efficient as in a city like Toronto, where it is directed by an independent commission. It is just these differences in the system of government and in local conditions which largely decide whether or not civic ownership will be a success. Every case must be judged by itself.