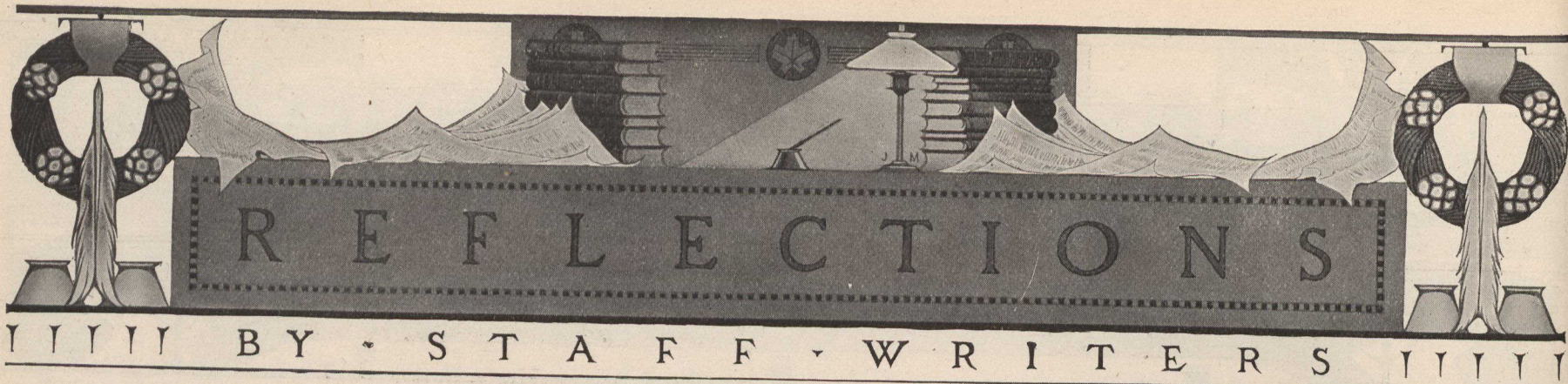




REFLECTIONS

BY STAFF WRITERS

MARITIME UNION

PREMIER HAZEN'S remarks at Halifax, though guarded, indicate a growing feeling in favour of Maritime Union. Our correspondent's suggestion in last week's issue that the part of Quebec lying south of the St. Lawrence and north of New Brunswick should be given to the new province is also worthy of consideration. When Newfoundland comes in, she too should be part of the Maritime province—the new Acadia. This new province would then be equal in area and population to most of the other provinces. It would also be equal in possibilities.

It is a radical suggestion, but something radical must be done to prevent these districts being overshadowed by their more powerful partners in the Confederation. The pressing need for action has been well explained in Mr. McCreedy's letter of two weeks ago. The "Courier" commends the subject to the serious consideration of all its readers who have the future prosperity of Canada in their minds. The West must not engross all our attention. Fair play demands that the East be not overlooked.

UNFAIRNESS OF UNIONS

AT times, capitalists and employers are decidedly unfair; so are the trades unions. Occasionally capitalists will combine against a fellow-capitalist to crush him out of existence; the trades unions are at times autocratic enough to prevent starving men from earning wages. Neither capital nor labour may claim to be possessed of the highest virtues or to be animated always by the loftiest ideals.

A case in point came under the writer's notice last week. A certain painter in Toronto, who had been out of work all summer, was desperate enough to go out to West Toronto and become a strike-breaker in the Canadian Pacific Railway shops at that point. His wife and two children were practically without food. Though a union man, he felt that his family deserved his first consideration. Two or three days afterwards, as he was getting off the train which brought the strike-breakers into Toronto, where most of them lived, he was set upon by strikers and brutally beaten. So severe was his punishment that he was afraid to go back to work. Had he complained to the authorities, he would have been black-listed forever by union workers. To-day, he is still without work and is living upon the charity of his friends.

The writer has every reason to believe that the case is typical. If so, trades unionism is showing a great deal of inhumanity and following a most pernicious and iniquitous policy. The Minister of Labour should investigate this C. P. R. strike in Toronto, Montreal and Winnipeg, and if it is ascertained that this has been the general conduct of the strikers, punishment of some kind should be meted out to those who are responsible. This so-called "peaceful picketing" seems to have been turned into an engine of oppression and cruelty which cannot be tolerated in a free country. Labour unions have done much good but that is no reason why they should be allowed to displace parliament and the judiciary as makers and dispensers of law and justice.

ART AND THE EXHIBITION

IT has become the custom at industrial and agricultural shows, with any pretention to importance, to have an art display. This is a rule in Europe as well as in America, though perhaps few observers stop to formulate a reason. Many people talk of art and literature who have little idea of the part which these two forces play in the life of the nations. They admire the successful artist and the successful literary man because it is the fashion among intelligent and important people to do so. They have but a faint conception of the

relation which art and literature have with general culture, and an equally faint idea as to the relation between general culture and national progress and development.

It is well, however, that every people, either by intuition or of set purpose, should cultivate the art side of their natures and should encourage the development and display of art. Such conduct has a most beneficial effect upon the tastes of the public and the products of their hands. Without artistic tastes our homes and our cities would be mean and uninviting, while the products of our hands and our machinery would bear crude and vulgar appearances. To be an artistic people is almost as important as to be a progressive people.

That Canada is less artistic than most countries of similar wealth and history is beyond question. Every large city in Australia and New Zealand has its art gallery. Even Norway is noted for its taste in art and the national style of its artists. Canada has not a single public art gallery, although there are small collections at Ottawa and the Education Department, Toronto. In this respect we are more barbaric than the United States and Mexico were at our stage of development. We are making absolutely no public sacrifices for art, though we are giving millions to hospitals, colleges and universities. The effect of our inattention to this phase of our development is seen in the crudeness of our architecture, the incongruous aspect of much that we manufacture, and in the inartistic house-furnishings which lumber up the best homes of the land.

The Directors of the Toronto Exhibition have for some years been making a decided effort to bring about a better state of affairs, so far as their influence extends. They have encouraged an annual exhibition by Canadian painters and in addition have brought from Europe an annual display of somewhat famous pictures. Their art gallery has become a Mecca for thousands of people who have little hope of ever visiting the galleries of Europe or even to find time to attend the annual exhibitions of the Canadian art societies. Along this line, the Toronto Exhibition has performed an exceptional public service and has set an example to the exhibitions in other cities. This year's collection includes twenty-eight canvasses collected by the Exhibition's London representative and eighteen canvasses selected by their agent in Paris.

In addition to this feature of their work, the Directors have encouraged the amateur painters and designers by giving them a small gallery of their own. The students who are working in oil and water-colour and those who are studying the art of design for commercial purposes are thus encouraged to exhibit their best. This year there are some two hundred entries. The professionals who make industrial drawings and designs have a second small gallery which is under the control of the Graphic Arts Club. Their display this year is perhaps the best ever seen in Canada, both as to variety and excellence of workmanship. A third gallery is under the management of the Applied Art Association and contains excellent examples of wall decoration, stained glass, pottery, iron and brass utensils, hand-made laces, painted curtains, hand-made jewellery and other similar productions. A fourth gallery is devoted to professional and amateur photography. The four galleries are in the Applied Art Building, which also contains educational exhibits and women's work.

The importance of so varied an art display cannot be over-estimated, especially in a young country such as ours. For half a century, Canada has been going abroad for her art works, whether paintings, pottery, lithographs, engravings, Christmas cards or other classes of art productions. Such of her young men or women who desired to make art work a profession were forced to go abroad for employment. During the past few years, there has been a decided change in the opposite direction, and in this development the art department of the Toronto Exhibition is playing an important and creditable part.