

REFLECTIONS

By THE EDITOR

A "Toy-Sword" Militia

CANADA'S militia is efficient and popular, but it could be easily rendered otherwise. It could be made useless and abhorred by a most simple device—a device which is well known and has been well tried. Not only could the militia be rendered useless by this expedient, but the cadet corps which Hon. Sam Hughes has brought to such a high state of efficiency could also be destroyed.

There are a number of people in Canada who devised this expedient, but so far as is known there is no patent on it. Both Liberals and Tories have used it at one time or other in the country's history. The Tories have been extremely successful in their latest and most recent use of it.

This expedient is just this—if every Liberal father and mother in this country decided to do to the cadet and militia system exactly what the Conservatives did to the Canadian naval service, there would be no cadet corps and no militia worth while. If every officer in the service who is a Liberal were to resign and every Liberal non-commissioned officer and private drop out of the ranks, it would be a serious state of affairs. If they went farther—if they labelled it a "toy-sword" militia and used this word daily in every Liberal paper in Canada and in every political speech, what would be the effect? Finally, if they all banded together to hoot any man who appeared in uniform and bar him from social functions, what would happen?

Of course, the Liberals are too patriotic to do anything of the kind. But the Conservatives were not above adopting the boycott in the case of the Canadian naval service. Conservatives refused to let their sons enter the naval service. They labelled it a "tin-pot" navy. They used every daily newspaper they owned to poke fun at it. They ridiculed it in every public or private political gathering. Why shouldn't the Liberals take vengeance with the same weapon?

There was no militia in Canada worth the name until Canada became a nation and her people patriotic. The militia is a breeding-ground of patriotism and national pride. The writer served nineteen years in the militia and took oaths of allegiance to three sovereigns, and should be in a position to speak on this point. The cadet and militia training gives men a consciousness of nationality and citizenship which is far above that gained through smoking a cigar at a Canadian Club lecture.

But the Liberal party, aided by the trades-unionists and the grangers, who are avowedly opposed to military training, could overturn the army of which Hon. Sam Hughes is so proud. It would be a dastardly deed we all admit, but would it be any more dastardly than to boycott a Canadian naval service established under the authority of parliament?

Canadian Justice Vindicated

EVERY true Canadian will rejoice and be glad that justice has been vindicated and the administration thereof justified in the Thaw case. For a time it looked as if the quibbles which are so effective in the United States would be accepted here because of fear of international complications. Sir Lomer Gouin decided otherwise, and when he decided, presumably after full consultation with Ottawa, then the machinery of justice worked admirably. Sir Lomer is to be congratulated. But, above all, Canada is to be congratulated at having once more proved that public opinion in this country will not tolerate any introduction of United States criminal court methods into our administration of justice. Our British inheritance has given us a criminal law and criminal procedure which is a tremendous asset. Let us guard it jealously. So long as justice is enforced speedily and effectively, without reference to the culprit's wealth, influence or position, so long will Canadians be guardians of the best traditions of the race.

Criminal Factories

FACTORIES for the manufacture of criminals is the term applied to prisons by a speaker at the American Bar Association meeting. He must have been speaking of the Portsmouth penitentiary, which is the most hopeless prison in Can-

ada. There in one building over two hundred prisoners sit herded together breaking stones day after day and exchanging opinions and information. The keepers will not allow visitors to go into this building and they themselves take unusual precautions. That building is a little bit of hades on earth.

Ontario has transformed its central prison into a farm reformatory. Toronto has a jail farm. The jail is becoming a place for correction rather than a place of punishment and a school for criminals. The penitentiaries will follow when the Dominion Government wakes up to find that its punitive institutions are twenty years behind the times. The reform may be delayed somewhat by the system of political patronage which honey-combs the penitentiary service and which has grown worse during the past ten years, but it cannot be held back long. The appointment of a commission, the other day, to investigate the Portsmouth (Kingston) penitentiary, is an indication that the authorities recognize that the public are getting restless.

A Unique Occasion

UNIQUE was that event in Montreal last week when Rt. Hon. R. L. Borden, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and other prominent Canadians were elected honorary members of the American Bar Association. This important legal society did Canada an honour by meeting in Montreal and a great honour in electing so many of our distinguished men to honorary membership. It did more than that. It gave the daily newspapers of Canada a chance to speak respectfully of the two distinguished political leaders in one and the same paragraph. For once in a long period, the daily press was non-partisan. True, it was done only in a news paragraph, but even that is a great deal.

Let it, therefore, be recorded in red letters on the national tablets that on one day in September, 1913, every daily newspaper in Canada contained a news paragraph in which Mr. Borden and Sir Wilfrid Laurier were mentioned as if they were gentlemen, not cut-throats and thieves. Indeed, Dr. Doughty might personally make a collection of the clippings, paste them in a scrap-book, and fyle the volume in the Archives. If he can afford the time, he might make an extra collection for the British Museum.

Enlarging a City

OTTAWA has an opportunity of teaching a valuable lesson to all other Canadian cities. The city has a small acreage and it is claimed that it must be enlarged in order to provide cheap land for the working man. The same story has been heard by other cities in Canada, and as a result most of them have been enlarged by numerous annexations until some of them have as much land within their civic boundaries as New York or London. But still there is no "cheap land" for the working man. The subdividers always see to that.

Now, Ottawa, having the experience of other cities to warn it, might try the German system. There no land is annexed to the city until after the city has bought it as "farm land." The city annexes what it itself owns, subdivides, puts in sewers, water pipes, pavements, and street-car lines, and then sells the land as city lots. This ensures a low price for the land and provides the money necessary to pay for all improvements. In other words, the city takes the profit which on this continent goes to the subdivider, real estate agent and speculator, and uses it to provide each new portion of the city with adequate facilities.

This system is one of the reasons why a thousand German cities pay no city taxes in the ordinary sense. Ottawa might need special legislation to work out the experiment, but such might be obtained. At least, it is worth a trial.

A Distinguished Frenchman

MAITRE LABORI, the batonnier of the Paris legal profession, has been attending the meeting of the American Bar Association in Montreal. With Professor Taft and Chancellor Haldane he shared the honour of being one of the three most distinguished guests. M. Labori will be remembered as the defender of Dreyfus.

Last Friday he addressed the Canadian Club of

Ottawa, and the occasion was graced by the presence of Premier Borden and Sir Wilfrid Laurier. During M. Labori's speech in English, he explained why he used that language instead of French, incidentally paying a tribute to the respect and love for France which he had heard on every side. Once when stuck for an English word, he turned to Sir Wilfrid and in French asked for what he wanted. He got it quickly. Then he paid him a delicate compliment which is worthy of preservation: "I am not afraid to speak before Sir Wilfrid in English," said he, "because I would be just as afraid to speak before him in French, he knows both languages so well."

In moving a vote of thanks both Premier Borden and Sir Wilfrid spoke most highly of the pleasure of Canadians in welcoming so distinguished a Parisian and both emphasized the support which Canada was always willing to give to the "entente cordiale."

Toronto Exhibition

A GAIN the Toronto Exhibition has scored a great success. Occupying land worth probably four or five million dollars and buildings costing nearly two millions, it represents an investment which no other city is likely to duplicate. The land was acquired when values were low and the buildings erected through a long period of time. Similarly, the work of popularizing and developing the Exhibition has been the constant duty of a body of patriotic citizens for thirty-five years. That over one million people passed through the turnstiles during the two weeks is a guarantee that Toronto's supreme effort is appreciated at something like its real worth.

There are two distinct improvements necessary. The art gallery is so small that it is necessary to charge an admittance fee of ten cents and a catalogue fee of twenty-five cents. This excludes the working man and the agriculturist, who are as much in need of art education as other classes of citizens. It would be comparatively easy to enlarge the gallery and again make it free to everybody. A ten-cent catalogue would also be a decided reform.

The Midway this year was little less than a disgrace. Dope-fiends, human monstrosities, imbeciles, and other freaks of nature are not educational. When displayed in side-shows they are the opposite. There were some innocent and attractive amusements, but the fakir and the monstrosity monger were too much in evidence.

The Exhibition Association has done splendid work, which has been, and continues to be, highly praised. Its tremendous success brings tremendous responsibility, which should be recognized and accepted. An exhibition which is recognized by royalty and by Canada's first citizens as a national undertaking must live up to its reputation. The directors are doing this, in every direction, with the slight exceptions mentioned.

Civic Commission Rule

AT the meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, at Ottawa, the members seemed to be floundering on the question of civic commission government. Dr. Munro, of Harvard, a Canadian from Queen's, argued all around the circle and finally wound up by advising Canada to drop all innovations and go back to the simple systems of twenty-five years ago. He saw some good points in boards of control and in commissions, but not enough to justify their adoption over the ancient system of a common council. Alderman Wickett, of Toronto; Mayor Ellis, of Ottawa, and Mr. Lighthall, of Montreal, were inclined to favour the board of control system, while Professor Fox, of Texas, favoured the commission.

Whichever system of municipal government wins out in this contest, it is quite evident that it is the character of the men elected and the attitude of the electors which is important. The form of civic government matters little if the citizens have a civic conscientiousness which is reflected in the attitude of the men whom they elect to office. This is the point which Dr. Munro seemed to ignore.

Under the British system of national or municipal government, the character of the people is relied upon to a tremendous degree. The Britisher finds little fault with systems and places small reliance on mechanical devices in government. Beware the pettifogger and the rest is comparatively simple. True democracy consists in government by the wisest with the active support of an intelligent electorate. Where the people take a keen interest in civic affairs, keep themselves well posted as to men and measures, and elect the best type of administrator, the system matters little.