



THE PHILOSOPHER

The past month will hold a unique place in Canadian history by reason of the great pageants on the Plains of Abraham, in celebration of the tercentenary of the founding of Canada. Only some thousands actually witnessed the impressive spectacles of that great celebration; but the mind of the whole world has been impressed by their meaning. To every Canadian heart that meaning has brought a new thrill of patriotism and of pride in Canada's history. With the Prince of Wales representing the King, and with representatives of the United States and of France, and of other nations looking on, the great historic pageant pictured the story of three hundred years; but the dominating note of triumph is in the wonderful development since the morning Wolfe climbed the heights and conquered New France for the British flag. The celebration has been an inspiring festival of thanksgiving for what the centuries have brought and for the work of the great men who laid the foundations on which their successors have builded nobly.

HISTORY IN PAGEANT.

The morning sunbeams that gilded with summer splendor the historic heights at Quebec on each of the days of the tercentenary celebration lighted up a couple of hours later a vaster pageant here in the West—the great expanse of wheat, with heavy yellow heads ripening to the harvest, from skyline to skyline a field of the Cloth of Gold, as a poet might say, and a rippling sea of wealth, as the matter-of-fact, practical man prefers to see it. With an acreage one-third greater than last year's under crop, and with conditions almost ideal since the seed went early in the fertile soil, a crop which in magnitude and in quality will excel all previous crops in the history of the West is in prospect. So great is the volume of the wheat that the problem of the ability of the existing transportation facilities to move it out of the country is looming up. A hopeful factor in the situation is that the early harvest will give three or four weeks' more time than is usually available for the carrying of the wheat to the lake ports before the close of navigation.

THE PAGEANT OF THE WHEAT.

In the newspapers of both the United States and our own country the doings of a pastor in East Orange, New Jersey, who has held open air services on Sundays during July, at which the men present were invited to smoke and soda water was served to the thirsty, have been made mention of. The congregation was even requested to remain seated while the hymns and the Doxology were sung, so anxious was the East Orange minister to make things easy for his flock. Religion in New Jersey must have fallen upon strange days, when a minister resorts to such devices. We may next expect to hear of hammocks being provided for the congregation, in which they may lounge while the pastor points the way to salvation.

MAKING RELIGION FREE-AND-EASY.

Last month the *Philosopher* took occasion to deal with the criticism of Canada and the Canadians set forth in a series of articles by Mr. Harold Begbie in the *London Chronicle*. Mr. Begbie wrote his articles after a trip across the Dominion; and they stand on record as affording a striking illustration of how much misinformation a man may accumulate with a little effort and how much bosh in the way of false conclusions he may base upon his misinformation. But Mr. Begbie is outdone by a writer who contributes, without signing his name, an article in the latest issue of the *London National Review*, in which he tells the readers of that review many startling things about us. He says that we "dress so as to slavishly reflect the style in vogue in the United States," where, by the way, there are many styles in vogue; that we "drink ice-water and cocktails;" that we "smoke domestic cigars;" that we "gamble in real estate, also in produce;" and—will it be believed?—that we "chew peanuts interminably." These are some of the statements he makes, after care-

ANOTHER CRITIC OF CANADIANS.

ful observation, as he assures his readers, of the people of Canada. And he says that "it is sheer nonsense to talk of a Canadian nationality." This cheerfully bumptious gentleman, whose modesty in refraining from signing his name seems strangely out of keeping with his character as it shows through his writing, should have been secured to take part in the pageants at Quebec. Arrayed in cap and bells, he might have enacted the part of a jester. He would not need to do any more than repeat extracts from his article in the *National Review* to provoke much merriment.

This year a vastly greater volume of Western grain than ever before will pass over our railways and on by the mighty St. Lawrence—which is taking its place as the chief traffic way of the continent—to the eager markets overseas. And the northern outlet by way of Hudson Bay cannot be made ready too soon for our needs. The future will see Fort Churchill a northern New Orleans. Meanwhile the St. Lawrence outlet, as New York is realizing with alarm, is carrying out four times the volume of traffic that goes out by New York, instead of one-twelfth as much, as was the case not many years ago. Anxious meetings of the New York Produce Exchange and other business bodies in New York have been held during the past few weeks to consider this state of affairs, and New York newspapers have voiced the urgent demands of the business interests concerned for lower rates on the United States railways. Grain can be carried to Montreal by the all water route at from three and a half to four cents a bushel less than the cost of carrying it to New York; while by the lake and rail route the difference in favor of Montreal is two and a half cents a bushel. What the New York Produce Exchange and other concerns interested may be able to do in the way of inducing the railways to cut their rates remains to be seen; but a speaker at one of the New York meetings discouragingly remarked that if they did get a reduction there would immediately be an equivalent reduction in water carriage to Montreal. In this matter the natural geographical advantages, of which Canadian energy and enterprise have made the most, are unquestionably with Canada.

WILL THERE BE A BLOCKADE?

To the *Western Home Monthly* subscriber who a couple of weeks ago sent the *Philosopher* a copy of the *Philadelphia Enquirer* of July 4, with the Independence Day editorial marked, thanks are hereby returned for the pleasure which the *Philosopher* has had in reading that just, well-informed and right-spirited article. The subscriber in question is one of our numerous Western Canadian citizens born under the Stars and Stripes. He has specially marked these sentences in the editorial in the *Philadelphia paper*: "It is not true, and it is well the truth be known, that on July 4, 1776, the American people were unanimous in favor of independence. It is not possible to ascertain how many favored this movement, but at the date mentioned it may be assumed that about one-half of the population was in favor of it—probably more. Even the Congress which met in this city a year after Lexington and Bunker Hill was divided upon the question of the Declaration of Independence. When the document was finally signed, there was no ringing of bells and no explosion of fireworks. A few months later, when disasters came thick and fast probably a majority would have been in favor of peace." These words, be it remembered, are from a leading paper in Philadelphia, the city where the Declaration of Independence was signed. They are a reminder that the people of the United States have of late years been reading more impartial histories than their forbears read, or reading histories more impartially. As late as the closing weeks of 1775, Benjamin Franklin and John Adams believed that independence was not wanted. A few wise concessions on the part of the British Government would have averted the war; but the wisest of then living British statesmen, Chatham and Burke, were not then at the helm of state. A change in the political relations of Great Britain and the American

AS TO THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

Colonies that were driven into declaring their independence was inevitable, owing to the growth of the latter; and but for the stupid obstinacy of those responsible for what happened Benjamin Franklin's dream of a British Empire with the American Colonies as a component part, might have been realized long ago. There would have been no legacy of bitter memories which estranged for over a century the two great branches of the English-speaking race, which are now happily on terms of ever-increasing friendship and of united desire for the preservation of the world's peace and attainment of all the good ends of civilization.

When the Rocky Mountains were young, there were mighty volcanoes among them. But long ages ago they settled down. The idea of volcanic activity anywhere on the upper half of this continent at the present time is startling, but Prof. A. H. Sylvester, of the United States Geological Survey, has his doubts about Mount Hood in Oregon, which has been behaving suspiciously of late. Ever since the mountain was known, steam has been escaping from certain fissures in it. But have we not hot springs in the Canadian Rockies? Mount Hood, however, has been "warming up" recently, Prof. Sylvester reports. A few months ago numerous witnesses saw "a cloud of smoke, probably dense steam, rising from near its summit." This persisted throughout the day, and at night there was a glow "like a chimney burning out." Sudden floods the next day were inexplicable except on the theory that the glacier had melted rapidly from volcanic heat. As an interesting coincidence it is noted that at the same time there were earthquake throes in the Bogaslof group off the Alaskan coast. No further signs have been noted, and it is very possible that these faint activities mean merely a last flicker of life in an expiring volcano. It is, at any rate, abundantly interesting that Mount Hood, as Prof. Sylvester says, "must be taken from the list of extinct volcanoes and placed at least among the doubtful." Volcanic action suggests earthquakes. Much remains to be learned in regard to the conditions and the forces at work beneath the surface of the planet on which we live. But one fact of which we may, according to all the conclusions of science, feel reasonably sure is that no area of any of the continents is farther from any likelihood of disturbance than this northern central area in North America. Beneath these vast prairies where Dame Nature has packed the earth down well and, as it were, rolled the crust smooth with a Titanic rolling pin, the foundation is not excelled in solid stability by the foundation of any other part of the land surface of the globe. ..

Three hundred and twenty years ago this summer the stout little ships of Queen Elizabeth's navy planned and built by Sir John Hawkins and captained by him and Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Frobisher, drove into the huge galleons of the Armada and destroyed the naval might of Spain. From that day Britannia has ruled the waves and has ruled them of right and of might. Holland, in the great age of Dutch power, challenged the British supremacy at sea; and France too, essayed to challenge it. But their challenges were vain. Now Germany is believed to cherish the dream of seizing the sceptre of the seas; certain it is, at any rate, that Germany is straining every resource to make her navy numerous and powerful. The North Sea has thus become the important naval area of the world at the present time. The Mediterranean has become pretty much a British lake, now that Britain and France are allies. The Japanese alliance and the close friendship with the United States are strong factors in making both the Atlantic and the Pacific secure. But out of the North Sea might issue a German Armada. Rightly or wrongly, this possibility is much in the world's mind; and rightly or wrongly, the British people and the German people regard this possibility as the reason for the gathering in the North Sea of the greatest and most powerful fleet the world has ever seen—three hundred and fifteen ships flying the British flag. From the Admiralty offices in London flashed instructions by wireless transmission to the commanding officer in charge of the manoeuvres, and by the same "sightless couriers of the air" the fleet kept in touch with the naval stations on the British Isles and with Gibraltar. This is the Twentieth Century, whose sense of wonder is dulled by a series of marvels of human achievement such as never in any previous epoch appealed to the imagination of mankind; but the whole world has been impressed by the wonderful North Sea demonstration of unconquerable British sea power, as it has never been impressed before.

THE MASSED LEVIATHANS ON THE NORTH SEA.

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