

CORRESPONDENCE.

HIGHER COMMERCIAL TRAINING.

To the Editor of THE WEEK :

SIR,—Your correspondent, "J. R. A." struck a keynote which should be sounded throughout our country as an alarm against a possible danger—or at least as a warning to Canadians to fit themselves for their destined place and work in the world; and I had expected to see the subject followed up by some of our prominent business men.

Briefly stated, I understand the argument of "J. R. A." to be: (1) Canada has passed from her former agricultural stage to that of commercial development and of strategic importance internationally.

(2) To properly fulfil their duties and take advantage of the changed position, Canadians must be trained in the "higher mathematics," as it were, of commercial matters.

(3) The lack of a proper training institution (which "J. R. A." claims does not exist, notwithstanding the business colleges), he proposes to supply by a properly-equipped school under Government control, whose certificates should be equivalent in commerce to those of our national university in Arts.

Akin to this suggestion is that made some time ago by Mr. D. R. Wilkie, Manager of the Imperial Bank in this city, for the appointment of a Commercial Examiner at Toronto University, in order to encourage University students to "perfect themselves in book-keeping, in the theory and practice of banking, and in many of the subjects which now form the curriculum at this important seat of learning."

These suggestions, coming from two different sources at different times, show that thinking men are looking forward for a development in the line of commercial training. This aspiration is encouraging to, and to be encouraged by, all who have the welfare of Canada at heart. If it be true that the laws of commerce are as immutable as the laws of chemistry and other sciences, it follows that these laws should be so studied that every candidate for school-teaching, every graduate from our higher institutions—yes, and every schoolboy and girl—should be as familiar with them as they are now required to be with the laws of chemistry, botany, etc. The reasons for this drill are threefold:—

(1) *Personal*.—That each man and woman may be able to manage his or her own business affairs with accuracy, discretion and despatch, avoiding the vexations and expense of litigation, and making the most of the means at command.

"How often," says Mr. Wilkie in the address referred to, "how often we hear of the doctor and lawyer who, from want of experience, has been obliged to employ outside assistance to enable him to fathom his own assets and liabilities; and how many clients have been ruined by the criminal carelessness of lawyers, honest enough in their intentions at the start, who have through ignorance of book-keeping allowed their clients' money and their own to form part of one bank account, drawing against the fund as occasion required, regardless of the proprietorship, until too late he finds that his all is gone." Surely a national system that licenses a man to practise law, yet leaves him incompetent to manage his clients' affairs, is a mockery! "Licensed to ruin!" might be written upon the parchments.

(2) *National*.—Are we as Canadians making the most of our immense national resources of metal and mineral, agriculture, timber, fish and fruit?

Why the increasing burden of mortgages on fertile farms? Why do we find the poorer classes growing poorer, while the rich are growing richer? How comes it that in Toronto alone there are nearly a thousand able-bodied and big-brained men fattening at the expense of the toilers, and producing nothing themselves—riding, as in Bellamy's dream, on the choice seats on the national stage-coach, while the toilers tug and pull to carry them along? Are our national expenses kept prudently within our national income, and is the accumulating debt kept within reasonable bounds? How many of Canada's citizens—how many even of our representatives in Parliament—can discuss our national finances intelligently? These are a few of my questions, the very statement of which suggests that there is a great national lack of the proper understanding of the laws of commerce and trade, and consequently a dreadful apathy on the whole subject. If the safety of a free people depends upon their intelligence of public affairs, is Canada not in grave danger? Are we a nation of spend-thrifts? If so—and it seems as though we were tending in that direction—is it not because those who lead in society do not themselves understand the laws of thrift, and have not been trained to practise them?

(3) *International*.—The relation of Canada to the great empire of which she forms a part, and to the Great Republic adjoining; her position as a mediator in an Anglo-Saxon confederacy; her strategic position as a military highway; her trade relations, as that of "middle-man" between the nations of the East, and Britain; as a battle-field for the conflict between old-world oppression and new-world libertinism, and for the out-working of problems of sociology for which her geographical position and the complex character of her population specially fit her.

In these and other respects, Canada must assume a unique international position. She needs, therefore, far-

sighted, deep-thinking men to grapple with these problems. Who should be better fitted for the high task than our merchants, our manufacturers, our men whose lives are spent in dealing with financial matters? A better knowledge on the part of the many, of the commercial questions now dealt with only by the few specially skilled mercantile men, would mean a rapid growth of the importance of this country in the eyes of the world, and a development, more rapid than is now going on, of our national resources.

Surely the commercial interests of Canada offer an inviting and profitable field for investigation by the brightest minds among us; and certainly every move that will increase the knowledge or augment the skill of our young men in commercial matters is worthy of encouragement.

Toronto, June, 1890.

BEE.

MORNING.

THE first warm breath of drowsy, morning breeze,
Inebriate with sweetness, came and went
Above the new wak'd flowers, heavy with scent
Blown from the dewy blooms of orchard trees.
The spendthrift lilies rais'd their calyces,
Yellow'd with gold-dust, richly redolent,
The hidden violet her fragrance spent
And myriad roses breathed sweet subtleties.
While, for perfection of fair harmonies,
Two indistinguishable sounds are blent
In one full chord of uttermost content—
The dull surf-murmur of the distant seas,
And in the orange-blossoms, dew-besprent
The humming of innumerable bees.

X.

LAVAL: FIRST BISHOP OF QUEBEC.

THE first Bishop of Quebec, François Xavier Laval de Montmorency, was born in Laval, the capital of the Department of Mayence, France, April 3, 1623. His father, Hugues de Laval, Seigneur de Montigny and de Montmorency, was a direct representative of a house which had made history before the crusades. His mother was Michele Péricard, daughter of the Seigneur de St. Etienne. Far back in the thirteenth century, the Laval branch, proud as it was, had gained greater pride from its union through marriage with those haughty Montmorencys, who, for generations, had vaunted themselves *les premiers barons chrétiens, premiers barons de France*. Through a powerful kinsman, François de Péricard, Bishop of Evreux, at nine years of age received the tonsure, and a canonicate when he had scarcely reached the age of twelve. It had needed a struggle with hereditary instincts for the boy to remain in the church, for his two elder brothers had died in battle, and his family—looking upon the strong frame and high courage of the third son—had hoped that he would have maintained the military glory of the race.

The young Abbé de Montigny—as he was then called—stood firm. On his father's death in 1638, he appeared for a time among men. The result of his stay in a society which was ready to scatter its flowers before the fortunate youth, if a surprise to his family, was a greater one to that society itself. The renunciation of the title and the estate in favour of his younger brother was positive. His uncle of Evreux, now convinced that the nephew was to be a chosen vessel in the church, sent him to Paris to perfect his studies. He was nineteen when he reached that city. He was twenty-six when he left it, having entered the priesthood. Once back in the Cathedral of Evreux he started by being, what is always noticeable, if not always attractive, a zealot. He seemed, after his return from Paris, never to have known how to do a duty half-way. He was always for going the whole road, and a few rods beyond. The fire of zeal, active from the beginning, had no lack of fuel to keep it alive. Under the instruction of the Jesuit Bagot, he soon became a fair type of a Jesuit out-of-vows. To a zeal such as his, the new West, with his Jesuit friends at the helm, seemed a far more promising field than the old East. In 1653 he was appointed, through his uncle's influence, deacon of Evreux, the duties of which position he continued to discharge until 1659, when an event occurred which fixed at once his life and the scene of his labours. This was his departure for Canada, bearing his appointment by the Pope, as Vicar Apostolic of New France, and Bishop of Petraræ *in partibus*. Laval was consecrated as Vicar Apostolic on the fête of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, 1658. On Easter day, April 13, 1659, he embarked for Canada. These dates, for a profoundly Catholic soul, must have had a special spiritual significance.

Laval seems, at first, to have had no reason to complain of his reception by the civil authorities. Governor Argenson gave him a welcome which, in the stately fashion of its reverence, might well have satisfied Pope Hildebrand himself. But official ceremonies are, at the best, empty show cases. Taking them at their proper value, the new vicar-apostolic first provided for what may be called—with a gentle sarcasm—his comforts. These were of the scantiest. With two servants to keep his "hired house" and till the garden, the man's humility being shown, the bishop's pride forthwith asserted itself. The main trouble, in 1659, outside of the fierce Iroquois in the woods, and Mynheer stolidly smoking his pipe behind the wretched guns of Fort Orange, was that the colony, in its babyhood, needed nursing both from Government and Church. Who was to do the most of this nursing? Was it to be Louis? Or was it to be Alexander? Laval insisted that it should

be the Pope. Argenson swore that it should be the king. It was not long before several nice points of etiquette, half-political, half-ecclesiastical, had brought about a coolness between bishop and governor. When the *Fête Dieu* came along, with its invariably long procession, bishop and governor were to stop, every now and then, at stated distances, at a *reposoir*. One of these *reposoirs* happening to be within the fort, bishop demanded, besides the taking off of their hats by the soldiers during the ceremonies, that they should kneel where they stood. Governor, zealous for his official honour, hotly declared that a French soldier's duty within a fort over which the Lilies waved, was to stand—never, never to kneel. Bishop summarily ended the dispute by sweeping in his priestly robes past the temporary altar without stopping. Laval certainly knew theoretically the metes and bounds of his prerogative far better than Argenson could have understood those of his own. "In things spiritual, you shall give way to ME," he had as much as said to Argenson. "In things political, I shall give way to you," would have been the logical inference. But, unhappily, the bishop put to the test, proved not at all logical. In a wholly civil matter—which the taking of M. Denis' servant girl from service by his order, and lodging her with the Ursuline nuns "for instruction," undoubtedly was—the bishop was so palpably in the wrong that he was forced to suffer the indignity of seeing the girl seized from the protecting nuns, and returned to her employer. The offshoot of these dissensions, discreditable to both bishop and governor, could only, if continued, have weakened the props which made the royal representative in some sense a coadjutor of the Church. Argenson, who had none of the stuff out of which martyrs are made, saw this. He kept a bold front, but he had for all that lost heart. Writing to his brother, he declares: "I am resolved to stay here no longer, but to go home next year." Next year he kept his word, not without some gossip, however, that his grace had, by private letters, hastened his homeward journey.

A new governor soon reached Quebec. This was General Baron du Bois d'Avaugour. Frank, honest, loving, plain-dealing, in the main good-natured, but bristling with prejudices, and terribly inclined to blunder in matters out-of-trade, Avaugour possessed in perfection the military incapacity to bend. In the Hungarian wars he had made his mark under a strict system of obedience to orders. Once in Quebec, as governor, nothing would do him but give orders, as he had once received them, by tap of drum. He seems to have started with a prepossession against Laval, which he scarcely made an effort to conceal. He first put some Jesuits in his council to show that, while distrusting the bishop, he was rather disposed to like their Order. These he quickly dropped on finding out that they and Laval were good friends. So summary a dismissal brought about a coolness, which invoked a storm that had muttered behind the colonial cloud long before Argenson. A soldier by training, as he was an aristocrat by feeling, Avaugour had never once dreamed of any policy which might bring him in alignment with the people. But, in opposing the bishop, in that prelate's resolute purpose to crush a great evil, the old campaigner unconsciously found himself drifting side by side with Jacques the runner and François the trader—lawless vagabonds as ever roamed in a Canadian forest.

The evil of which he constituted himself the champion was one that had corrupted, more or less, every class of the young population. It raged, of course, more strongly among the wild spirits of the colony, but it had not spared its more steady and reputable class. It had changed hopeful Indian converts into howling and murderous drunkards. It had found lodgment on the hearthstones of many sober people, who thought it no great harm to turn an honest *sou* by selling what the statute forbade. It was said even to have crept into the forts, and to have turned the king's houses into *cabarets*. One element alone of the infant population had had courage to take it by the throat. That element was the Society of Jesus. As far back as the Sillery Missions of 1648—when Father Lalemant's kindly heart warmed to hear an Algonquin chief, a new convert, denouncing the infamous traffic—it had been the Jesuits who, fixed both in their spiritual and temporal authority, had striven to keep the decree valid through successive administrations of lessening zeal, from saintly Aillebout to shifting Avaugour. Even Avaugour, at first, stepped in to execute the law which he had found in force. But it was enough for him to know that Laval was bent on upholding that law to make him lukewarm in its support. This evil was the brandy trade, the "dead fly" in the colonial ointment, the "first source," as Charlevoix calls it, "of all the misfortunes of New France"—otherwise, the illegal sale of brandy to the Indians. The weakness of the redskins for the white man's *eau de vie* had done more to degrade their tribal sense, and to franciser them, than all the arms of the king's soldiers, or all the prayers of the Church's missionaries. Here and there, some red converts, ardent in their new faith, had raised their voices to rebuke this vile traffic. In 1650 they had prayed M. de Aillebout to "build a prison in order to shut up those who, by their scandals, troubled the piety of their brethren." One, indeed—as conscienceless a bibbler as Falstaff himself—had declared French *eau de vie* to be an "extract of tongues and hearts, for, when I have drunk of it, I fear nothing and I talk big." To check this foe to religion and morality, Laval had already, in Argenson's day used the harshest censures of the Church, next to excommunication, against all those engaged in the trade. Not satisfied with this spiritual penalty, of doubtful