

Is Canada Blocking Imperial Unity?

Recent Symptoms Seem to Show That We are Becoming Politically Cross-Eyed

By NORMAN PATTERSON

CANADA is a national paradox; on the one hand it shouts for King and Empire, while on the other it refuses to recognize well-defined Imperial obligations. Any prominent Britisher coming to Canada will be overwhelmed with courtesies and good-will. He will be satiated with talk about Canada's loyalty to the Crown. It may even be intimated to him that if Great Britain ever needs men or money to help in a European war, Canada will sacrifice everything it possesses in that behalf. At the same time, three hundred and fifty Sikhs, citizens of the Empire, are marooned in Vancouver harbour, because the Canadian Government and the Canadian courts will not allow them to land in this white man's country.

During the past session of the Dominion Parliament, an act was passed providing that a citizen of Australia or New Zealand or Newfoundland may become a Canadian citizen with a slight formality, even though he may have been originally a German, a Russian or a Turk. A similar measure is before the British Parliament and the other Dominion legislatures. All these measures are designed to give the citizens of all the countries of the Britannic Alliance equal standing when they migrate from one unit to another, or travel abroad. If a citizen of the United States is naturalized in Canada, he can go over to Great Britain and down to Australia and know that he is a British subject, and as such entitled to the protection and rights of the British flag. Yet, while doing this thing for their own benefit, Canadians refuse to recognize that the residents of British India have any rights when they migrate to Canada.

Would not the disinterested observer naturally conclude that Canada will support and recognize the British Empire only so far as it serves Canada's interests to do so?

NOR is the case of the Hindus the only one which indicates that Canada is at once supporting and fighting Imperialism. At the Imperial Conference, in 1909, Canada agreed to do certain things in connection with Britannic defence on the high seas. Canada and Australia each agreed to build a naval unit which in times of peace should guard the country which created it and in time of war should be at the disposal of the Empire as a whole. Canada deliberately broke that agreement.

It has been claimed that the agreement referred to was made by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, then Premier of Canada, and is not binding on Sir Robert Borden, his successor in office. That is a hollow claim. Either Sir Wilfrid Laurier made a treaty with Great Britain and Australia, or the Imperial Conference is not a recognized institution. If Sir Wilfrid Laurier made a treaty on Canada's behalf, then Sir Robert

Borden is under a moral obligation to observe its terms. What would be thought of President Wilson, of the United States, if he refused to be bound by the international treaties made by Taft and Roosevelt, his predecessors in office?

There was only one way out for Sir Robert Borden. He could have asked the other governments in the Britannic Alliance to call another Imperial Conference and revise the naval plan agreed upon. He did not do it. Therefore, he deliberately broke the treaty Canada made with all the other British countries represented at that conference.

On his behalf, though not in his defence, let it be said that he broke that treaty with the consent of Mr. Winston Churchill. But that only serves to make Mr. Churchill equally guilty with himself. Indeed, this same Mr. Churchill struck a deeper blow at Imperialism when he went farther and refused to carry out the agreement made by Mr. Asquith to plant a British fleet in southern Pacific waters to co-operate with the Australian and New Zealand forces.

If Mr. Churchill and Sir Robert Borden had possessed any high regard for the Imperial Conference of 1910 and the compacts made there, Canada would have had a fleet unit in the harbours of Canada, as Australia has a nearly-completed fleet within Australian waters. It is not a question of whether Canada should have a fleet unit or not, but simply a question of whether Canada is sufficiently enamoured of Imperialism to keep her Imperial bargains.

Judging from these facts, Canada feels a very slight moral obligation to keep any pact made with other portions of the Empire. Our conventions with Australia, New Zealand and South Africa should surely be as binding as those with Germany or the United States.

ANOTHER action which indicates that Canada is working towards a withdrawal from the Britannic Alliance is our attitude towards Australia and New Zealand. These two Dominions were deeply incensed over the breaking of the Imperial Treaty of 1909, by Mr. Churchill and Sir Robert Borden. They protested vigorously, but without avail. They then suggested a naval conference either in Vancouver or London, in order that the question of Britannic naval defence in the Pacific might be taken up afresh and a new plan adopted. But Mr. Churchill and Sir Robert Borden have refused to meet them. In this way, these two statesmen have practically told the Australians and New Zealanders that the Pacific is to be left to the tender mercies of Japan. This is the most serious blow aimed at Imperialism in recent years.

In consonance with this policy, the Borden Gov-

ernment stripped the "Rainbow" and put it on the scrap-heap at Esquimalt. The "Rainbow" was a small cruiser, purchased in 1910, for training purposes, and placed on Canada's Pacific Coast. It was the humble beginning of a fleet unit on the Pacific which would be a tribute to Canada's recognition of her Imperial responsibilities. But even this insignificant beginning was ruthlessly "scrapped" by the Borden Government. The other day, when the Hindus on board the "Komagata Maru" mutinied and were ordered deported, there was no cruiser to perform the police duty. The despised "Rainbow" would have been splendidly useful to uphold Canadian sovereignty on that occasion, but it had been sacrificed to party spirit or Imperial antagonism.

LET us hope that the situation is not so bad as it seems. Perhaps Canada does not intend to break away from the Empire. It may be that our refusal to carry out the agreement of 1909, our refusal to consult with Australia and New Zealand with regard to Pacific defence, our refusal to recognize the British citizenship of the Sikhs who knock at our door, and the uncompromising attitude of both Conservatives and Liberals in regard to a non-partisan settlement of the naval question, are due to ignorance rather than intention.

Indeed, Sir Robert Borden finds a defender in Mr. Richard Jebb. Writing in the first issue (May) of the new "Britannic Review," Mr. Jebb says:

"No one can seriously blame the Government of any Dominion for ignoring an agreement which the British Government had already abandoned. Had Mr. Churchill been loyal to the policy of 1909, it is tolerably certain that Mr. Borden, for his part, would have been well satisfied to strengthen and expedite the Laurier programme instead of throwing it upon the scrap-heap. Party spirit, no doubt, was running high; but party spirit has never yet over-ridden the Canadian instinct of duty to the Empire when the call was clear."

This is very kind of Mr. Jebb, and Sir Robert will no doubt appreciate the defence of himself and of Canadian loyalty. Nevertheless, Sir Robert knows that it has been utterly impossible to get his followers to accept the Laurier naval policy, or to get Sir Wilfrid Laurier to meet him half way. He knows that party spirit on both sides at Ottawa has trifled with this question, used it as a football, and has struck a blow at imperial unity, the effect of which it will take many years to repair.

What sense is there in talking of the ideals of Empire, when the people and the politicians do not care a penny about imperial obligations and are concerned only with their bank accounts, their women and their own petty glorifications?

Oriental Menace in New Zealand

A Letter Giving the Details of Sir Ian Hamilton's Warning and The Naval Policy

Wellington, June 4th.

From Our Special Representative

EVENTS do not march with any great noise of trumpets in this far corner of the world, as a rule; but occasionally we come in for a little reflected glory, so to speak, when something is said or happens. For the past month we have had with us General Sir Ian Hamilton, Inspector-General of the Overseas Forces, and though from the nature of his calling it may be easily understood that his creed is one of action and not words, still, a man cannot move in high circles and remain dumb. A fortnight ago, replying to a speech of welcome tendered to him at Auckland, while he was on a visit of inspection to the defences of the northern city, Sir Ian Hamilton made a notable reference to the Asiatic menace, which is causing deep concern to many people in this country. He said he had been asked, directly and inferentially, during his tour through the Dominion, this question: "Why, when we are expecting the millennium, do we find practical and prosperous countries like Australia and New Zealand furbishing up their armour of defence?" He would like to answer that question not in the usual obvious way, but rather in the abstract way.

OBVIOUS REASONS.

"The first of the obvious reasons," said the General, "is the shrinkage of distance through the advent of electricity, steamships, aeroplanes and high explosives (so high that a shot from a 14-in. gun could kill a man twenty miles away). These things, no doubt, have brought remote dangers nearer. Then there is the obvious reason that in the Pacific great nations have either risen in the last hundred years or else old nations are in a wonderful manner showing signs of marvelous energy. Even as volcanoes, long quiescent, break again into activity with disturb-

ing sounds, so it is with some of the old nations of the Pacific.

"A third obvious reason is that the Pacific, in spite of its peaceful name, is more stormy than other more distant oceans. While we would all deplore such a contingency, it is conceivable that apart from the storms of Nature there may be greater and more terrible convulsions than ever in the past. That is to say, the Pacific is the meeting-ground not of nations, but of continents. Here it may be decided whether Asiatics or Europeans are going to guide the destinies of this planet. These are more or less obvious reasons; but there are others which I believe to be real and true, although they are more or less under the surface.

A YELLOW VULTURO-PHOENIX.

"Terrible things, for instance, are going on in the Malay States. Here can be seen a fine people going under before the interests of low-class materialists—Chinese and Coolies, brought in to work for low wages. When I visited China, two years ago, I saw on every side that the country was waking up. Old moral restraints had gone. I saw a modernized Chinaman scratching his name with a nail upon the Temple of Heaven—a temple until recently so sacred that the Emperor alone might approach it, and that only once in a year. This is but an illustration to show the change from which is evolving chaos and confusion, such as existed at the time of the French Revolution, from which Napoleon arose.

"In our own nation there are signs of danger to the white race from the existence of the materialistic factor. In Ladysmith, during the Boer War, the main street was a thoroughfare containing prosperous

European shopkeepers. What a change had been wrought when I went there, two years ago, to take Sir George White's place as president of Ladysmith! The shopkeepers had vanished, and their places had been taken by Bunyahs and Coolies, who exist on a couple of meals of rice a day. While these Coolies have no constructive or progressive talent, they have the knack of handling and accumulating money to a nicety.

A REAL DANGER POINT.

"This, then, is the point of the story. This is the reason why, in the time of progress and prosperity, Australia and New Zealand are instinctively facing the necessity of preparing for defence. If people with high ideals and standards are forced to live cheek by jowl with people of low standards and low ideals, they must either become slave-drivers or sink to the level of those by whom they are surrounded, and thus be beaten. Of course, New Zealand is still a long way off from this danger, but Australia is not so far off."

These are the remarks which, cabled in substance to the rest of the world, have arrested attention. We are told this week that the Japanese press is indignant and that it suggests that Japan must be prepared to stand alone and fight the white races for the mastery of the Pacific. The suggestion, obviously, is that the Tokyo government must consider very seriously the wisdom of the policy of renewing the Anglo-Japanese Alliance next year. One paper, the "Nichi Nichi Shimbun," is reported to be so upset it declares Sir Ian Hamilton is a "disturber of the peace!"

NEW ZEALAND AND THE NAVY.

Since my last dispatch was written, much ink has been spilled and much talk expended upon the