

# THE WESTERN HOME MONTHLY.

Vol. XI, No. 2

WINNIPEG, CANADA.

FEBRUARY, 1910.

## A National Danger and its Remedy.

There are two dangers that beset every nation—the danger from without and the danger from within. In every way the latter is the more serious of the two. International complication is frequently the surest guarantee of national peace. There is nothing which unites a people more closely than the defence of their liberties against armed oppression. But it is not our purpose to-day to refer to our troubles with other nations: we wish to point out some dangers in our own midst which threaten calamity. We wish also to indicate how the calamity may be avoided.

### Industrial Antagonism.

The first danger to national peace and prosperity is the industrial antagonism which is recognized on every hand. We have seen evidence of it within the last month in the conflict between producers and shippers and we are to see it in a much more marked way in the year to come between producers and consumers. In the motherland this quarrel between producers and consumers has worked out in favor of the latter; with us it has worked out in favor of the former. The policy of protection is a policy for the producer. It enables him to get more for his work and his wares than he rightly deserves. The policy of free trade is in the interest of the consumer. It enables him to benefit from the sunshine and rain in all quarters of the globe; to buy in the cheapest markets; to get things at a minimum of cost. It may be that a man may have the greatest difficulty in deciding which policy he will espouse. For instance: when a farmer is selling some of the products of the soil he may be very glad that there is a protective tariff in existence, but when he is buying agricultural implements, he will be exceedingly sorry that the principle of free trade has not been adopted. Thus a man may be his own enemy. Wherever man loves not his neighbor as himself there is bound to be discord and ill-will because some are producers and some are consumers.

Of course, it may be that if a producer looked far enough ahead he would see that in the long run it would not pay him to have a tariff wall erected, for it would be the surest way to lessen trade with other nations. On the other hand, the consumer might find that though he saved something under the principle of free trade, he might find it a little more difficult to earn a living wage.

### Second Illustration.

The industrial antagonism has another manifestation when labor and capital are set up in opposition to each other. It is manifest that no nation can make progress unless all its elements are working in harmony and toward one worthy end. No matter how much the employers and employees seem to gain through their strikes and their lock-outs, in the long run they lose unless the result of their quarrels is to settle differences and leave amity in the place of discord.

### A Good Example.

Now there is no reason for the conflict between producers or consumers and between capital and labor, if the rule of "Live and let live" becomes the first rule in national life. If reason and justice are allowed to prevail there will never be any differences of the kind mentioned. The producer must learn to limit his ambitions by considering the needs of the consumer, and employer and employee must be mutually considerate, knowing that each is necessary to the other. A splendid illustration of commendable action recently occurred when the president of one of the largest milling companies refused to advance the price of flour on the ground that in a matter of this kind, where consumption was a necessity, the consumer had some rights. It might not be a bad thing if producers the country over would follow the noble example of the gentleman referred to,

### Racial Antagonism.

Racial antagonism takes two forms—that of antagonism to the Empire and that of local antagonism. There are within the borders of our Dominion many who are at least nominally loyal to Canada though they were born in other lands, yet these people have not a good word nor a good thought for the Motherland. It is about time that all people of this class recognized that it is their duty on coming to a British possession to throw in their lot with Britain. If they do not intend to be loyal British subjects they had better leave. When they came here they knew it was British territory, and if they did not like it they should have stayed away. To come here and foment disturbance is traitorous, and in our land as in all others traitorous action is to be condemned. There are some who insist upon flying their own flags rather than the flag of the Empire. We have no wish to appear as jingoes but we surely have a right to insist that in a British country the British flag should be duly honored. We can make room within our Dominion only for those who have true British sentiment.

Then there is a local antagonism that crops up occasionally and which does a great deal of harm. We find for illustration, our own Canadian born people despising those from other lands and those from other lands cordially hating the Canadian born. We should do well to remember that no great nation can be of one pure stock. The greatest nations of the world have been mongrel, as to population. One of the most hopeful signs for Canada is that it is made up of so many diverse nationalities. The Scotchman gives us his caution and his frugality; the Irishman his brightness and power of expression; the Englishman his courage and conservatism; the German his zeal and system; the Iclander his industry and his temperance; the Frenchman his vivacity and his comradeship; and so it goes. There is not a class but gives something and gets something. We must learn to work side by side, respecting each other, learning from each other, and we must sink our little differences in the conception of a broad Canadian citizenship.

### Antagonism of Occupations.

This manifests itself in the first place as an antagonism between country and town. This is one of the most senseless antagonisms, but one of the most deep-rooted. True, the mode of life in the country differs from that in town. There may be some difference in clothing, though it is not so marked as it used to be. There are, no doubt, differences owing to the fact that the environment differs so greatly, but it would be a very peculiar world if all the people were exactly alike. The man in town has very much to learn from the man in the country, and the man in the country can get a few pointers occasionally from the man in the town, and each is necessary to the other. If the farmer raises the wheat and other products he must have a market. If the townsman must feed and clothe his family, he must find a producer in the farmer. No man can live to himself.

We find a similar antagonism between the professions and the trades, though this is not so clearly marked. When the distinction becomes artificial, through the organization of men into bodies who call themselves working-men (as if professional men do not work just as hard as hand laborers) there is likely to be created ill-feeling and distrust. As a matter of fact, we cannot get along without our physicians, our lawyers, our preachers and teachers, any more than we can get along without the men who work with their hands.

### Religious and Social Antagonisms.

Of all antagonisms, there is none so deplorable and none so dangerous as that found among those holding different religious views. We see it in whole races of people, we see it among denominations as wholes, and we see it particularly in small country towns where local churches are striving for supremacy. It would be an unfortunate thing if all

the flowers in the garden were exactly alike. It would be equally unfortunate if people thought exactly alike. The lily should be glad that there is a rose and the rose should be glad that there is a lily. There is no reason that in matters of religion there should be ill-feeling. One may feel sorry that another person does not see the truth as he sees it, but he should not feel angry.

Social antagonisms are just as reprehensible as antagonisms in religion. A man who can afford to live on \$10,000 a year has no particular reason for feeling superior to a man who lives on but \$1,000 a year. The latter may be by long odds the better man. Probably the former will recognize this, but usually his wife will not. It is a strange thing that in social life the ladies are much more exclusive than the men. In a Canadian Club, men of all ranks and classes will sit side by side and think well of one another, but you do not find many of the plain working women, so called, who figure in the Women's Canadian Clubs. If our nation is to be prosperous, united, social pride must cease. The crowning grace in any individual or in any nation, is the grace of humility, which is always associated with the feeling of brotherhood.

### Political Antagonisms.

It is not necessary to refer to these. We always have illustrations. There is nothing so very serious in these antagonisms after all, because people differ in politics and yet remain the very best of friends. This cannot be said of the antagonisms mentioned above. It probably shows that men in Canada go into politics for the sake of the contest. In matters of religion and industry and race, the conflicts that arise are not for the fun of the thing but they are in deadly earnest. Yet out of political antagonism there arises serious danger to the state. A political party, to be successful, must be organized and must dispense patronage. This leads to one of the worst evils in our land today: the crime of graft. Sooner or later our people will have to take their political life seriously. Indeed, they have to take it seriously at the present time, when the attitude to the Motherland seems to be decided by political opinion.

### The Remedy.

Now, so long as senseless antagonisms exist, our country is not safe. We must get all our people working together, hoping together, in loving communion.

Towards that end we must preach unity and toleration in our homes. There is no home in a land so bad as that which sets up for its daily prayer—

"God bless me and my wife,  
My son John and his wife,  
Us four and no more.—Amen!"

In the next place, we must organize and support public schools in which will mingle all races, classes, creeds. The public school is the greatest institution ever devised by man, for unifying the diverse elements of the nation. When children play together and work together they forget all about the differences that their parents have continually before them. Our nation will never be so wise as when it supports adequately its public schools. The system today is not receiving the support it should. Those in charge of the schools are but boys and girls, and the boys are few and far between. It is only an occasional teacher that remains in the calling beyond three years. There is no encouragement to remain in it any longer. This is, perhaps, one of the saddest things in our national life—that our people will pay so much to equip their business and so little to educate their children. The wealth of a nation is in its children, but if the children are weak in intelligence and moral power, the nation, notwithstanding all its material prosperity, will decline. Those from other lands will come in to reap the reward of the patient labor of the men and women of today.

And the home and the school may be supplemented in their efforts to unify the interests of a nation by the pulpit and the press. As it is these two forces tend to separate the people into classes, but under wise management they could become great powers for good. They are that even now in so far as they insist upon the practice of that righteousness which exalteth a nation.