

No one will think of refusing a hall to Mr. W. D. Le Sueur. They perhaps are happy whose infantile faith no doubts or misgivings have ever assailed. But to inquirers, or those who have had leisure for studying and for watching the currents of thought, it cannot appear wonderful that some of the best of men should be in doubt not only about the evidences of Revelation, but even about those of Natural Religion. Mr. W. D. Le Sueur is one of these, and his treatment of the subject is always entirely reverent and such as becomes a sincere seeker after truth. In an address delivered before the Free Religious Association at Boston he discusses the question whether a scientific basis of religion is possible. He seems to come to the conclusion that such a basis is or may be afforded by our faith in human nature. He appears to agree with Feuerbach in thinking that the form of religion is disappearing from the world, but that its essence or content, which is love, will be preserved. In this he hopes, in the days to come, to find all that to him constitutes religion—high ideals, sources of enthusiasm, morality still touched with emotion, charities not less sweet, harmonies not less delightful than the present, founts of inspiration still flowing, and undiminished recognition of spiritual good. For ourselves, we must confess once more that we find it impossible to imagine a religion without a God. A religion of humanity, as distinguished from the mere enthusiasm of philanthropy, seems to us to be a figment devised to satisfy an unextinguished craving, and perhaps to smooth a transition; a mode, so to speak, of gently weaning mankind from that to which alone the name of religion properly belongs. What is humanity that we should worship it, or cultivate a religious faith in it? Does it not embrace as much evil as good? Is there any process by which we can abstract the good from the evil, so as to produce a rational object either of worship or of faith? What is there, we might add, to mark off man from the rest of the animal kingdom as divine? Has not physical science broken down the wall of division and proclaimed that man does not essentially differ from the brutes? Do not some scientists even hold that the higher orders of brutes are in certain respects superior to the lowest races of men? What prerogative has this particular biped that we should fall down and worship him, either individually or in the mass? Among a number of philosophic and metaphysical definitions of religion Mr. Le Sueur quotes one of a very plain kind:—"Religion teaches us that we have our being in a Power whose character and purposes are indicated to us by our moral nature, in whom we are united, and by the union made sacred to one another; whose voice conscience, however generated, is; whose eye is always upon us, sees all our acts, and sees them as they are, morally, without reference to worldly success or to the opinion of the world; to whom at death we return." This, surely, or something like this, is the meaning hitherto attached to the word religion. It is difficult to see what object, except a brief respite from disillusionment, is to be gained by retaining the word with a new meaning when the old meaning has been discarded. If the Agnostic is in the right, surely it is the manliest and the best course at once to look in the face the grim fact that the universe, so far as we know or can hope to learn, is merely a universe of forces to the action of which we have no choice but to resign ourselves, and, laying all vain hopes aside, to make the most that we can of affection and the other solaces of our brief span of existence. It does not seem to us, however, that any Agnostic has yet succeeded in fairly putting himself into this frame of mind. They all cling to something which is not science and which they call religion. They will not be surprised if the Theist draws the inference that the religious instinct is ineradicably implanted in the nature of man, and, unless our nature lies, must point to truth.

#### CANADIANIZING THE NORTH-WEST.

An observant writer has said that one of the beneficial results of the recent display of military force in the North-West is that it has made the people of the North-West feel that they are really part and parcel of the Dominion. This conclusion is correct; at all events it is the case with the people of Alberta; and it is not to be supposed that it is inapplicable to the people of Assiniboia or those of the Saskatchewan.

An eminent Canadian thinker has repeatedly said that one of the greatest dangers to which the Canadian Confederation is subjected is its isolated position—that its centrifugal tendencies were such as to be just cause for alarm. That there was just reason for this apprehension two or three years ago is not to be denied, but the almost completed state of the Canadian Pacific Railway has reduced much of the danger referred to, and if there had existed any suspicion before the Duck Lake outbreak that Canadians in the older Provinces would not come to the rescue of Canadians in the North-West it disappeared upon receipt of the information from headquarters which was flashed to all threatened points—that "troops are on the way."

Perhaps I am astray when I estimate that the Canadian Pacific Railway is a prime factor in Canadianizing the North-West. I ought to write it is a potent factor in the settlement of the country.

Prior to the arrival in Alberta of the Mount Royal Rifles (65th Carbineers) it was not believed by most of the people of that district that the Dominion Government would send troops to protect them. Why troops could not be sent did not clearly appear; but it is a fact that the people of Calgary and those of Edmonton did not believe the news that military assistance was coming, though it was officially announced by Major-General Strange as early as the 9th of April. When the train containing troops came in sight of the station at Calgary hundreds of the populace went to the Depot, and could scarcely believe their eyes when they saw the 65th's officers and men debarking, forming into companies and preparing to be billeted. There were no cheers to greet the men who had come two thousand miles to protect these very people. The crowd gazed in silence, and appeared to be more anxious to display themselves to the troops than to appreciate the fact that the troops had arrived.

Two weeks previously many of those people had swarmed into a meeting of a volunteer company in the town, and had broken up the meeting by brutal interference. They did not want a volunteer company because they were afraid the men would be sent to the front. This unpatriotic course was incited by the mayor of the town, and ably seconded by an ex-Inspector of Mounted Police at the very time when Montreal troops were hastening over the wilds of Algoma to protect the people of Alberta. There was an incontinent shout for "Home Guards," but this was only raised to break up the regular volunteer movement; but the "Home Guard" diversion was a huge fraud in Edmonton and Macleod as well as in Calgary.

The arrival of the troops had a most beneficial effect, not only in Calgary but north and south. It was interesting to note this change and examine into the causes of it. Before the arrival of the troops the Canadian Government was freely sworn at. Many did not know there was a Government, and a number who were aware of it did not desire to cultivate its acquaintance; but the fact that it was sending troops here to protect the people and relieve Edmonton struck a responsive chord. The officers and men had come a long way. They were not mercenaries either, but volunteers, and they came to protect and defend.

The arrival of Col. Osborne Smith's Winnipeg Light Infantry shortly after the arrival of the Carbineers was followed by a total disappearance of anti-Canadianism. Here were men who had come from one distant part of the North-West to protect another part—to march with their Montreal comrades through "many a fen where the serpent feeds," to protect Calgary and Macleod, relieve Edmonton and avenge Pitt and Frog Lake—to make "forced marches" to the Arctic Circle if necessary. Even Calgarians are human, and if anything touched their hearts more than this fact it was not easy to find it. Power begets respect as well as obedience; but in justice to the people of the district it is due them to say that they had in that instance, as they have in many others, misjudged the Government and its capacity to manage the affairs of the North-West.

A great number of the inhabitants of Alberta are not Canadians, and until very recently they had a very faint conception of what the Canadian Government and Canadian people could do. The military has swept away hostiles and rebels alike. Like the "boys in blue" at Uncle Sam's frontier posts, they have shown by their good behaviour, by their self-denial and patriotism, that there is a central power whose laws ever are and must be respected, and whose citizens will be protected by its soldiers. The Edmonton Expedition has done much to awaken a proper respect for government—and I use the word without a qualifier—for there is always a lawless, shiftless element in new territories that defies all authority. Mischievous agitation in Alberta had gained considerable ascendancy. A spirit of intolerance showed itself against those Federalists who were outspoken in their views, and who dared call themselves Liberal-Conservatives.

The Edmonton Expedition not only saved Edmonton but it redeemed Calgary, and gave confidence to Macleod. There could have been no agency more eloquent, potent and patriotic than the arrival of the relieving columns—the "Mount-Royal Rifles" and the "Winnipeg Light Infantry." Recruiting then went briskly on, both for Major Halton's Mounted Rifles and Major Steele's Scouts, until the combined force of these two corps reached nearly one hundred men, all belonging to the Calgary district: the same district the people of which two weeks before had emphatically declared that no volunteers from Calgary should go to the front.

It was not the Snider rifles of the Canadian Volunteer Militia which wrought this change so much as the gentlemanly bearing of the officers, the patriotic devotion of the men and the complete organization of the Alberta field forces by that distinguished commander Major-General Strange. The Half-breed himself, as well as the hostile Indian, realized for the first time