

SOME IMPRESSIONS

Prof. Bryce and John Morley in Toronto

WITHIN the last three months, thanks to the courtesy of Dr. Goldwin Smith, Toronto has had the honor of welcoming two distinguished visitors—Prof. James Bryce and Mr. John Morley. Both of these gentlemen are eminent men of letters—as also parliamentarians, high in the councils of British liberalism. Whilst their visit avowedly has no political significance, there may be a grave suspicion, owing to their well-known hostility to the Chamberlain programme, that they are, while on their tour, seeking to ascertain the pulse of the outlying Empire. The fiscal opinions, as well as some anti-imperialistic notions held by these two, will be freely dissented from by many Canadians; and there is no doubt these gentlemen, earnestly sincere in their convictions, and by the competent prestige of their reputations, hoped to leave behind a justification of their views, such as would materially alter the by no means, dubious. attitude of Canada.

Nevertheless, we fully believe that both of these great men, even in the brief interval of their stay, will have adopted in some degree a counter-impression—that will modify the most extreme phases of their attitude, and with at least a more enlightened appreciation of Canada they will, upon their return, express henceforth in their public utterances a greater confidence in Imperial unity. Both Mr. Morley and Mr. Bryce have been assailed as “Little Englanders,” and short-sighted in principle. We do not believe that is true. Faithful, however, to their political education they have stood steadfast to the principles of British liberalism, and they have the inward satisfaction of knowing, in the face of all past mistakes, that the principle of true democracy has not suffered at their hands. We trust, therefore, that Mr. Bryce, as an expert in matters of political economy, and Mr. Mor-

ley, as an acute-minded statesman, will be impressed sufficiently with the Canadian portion of the Empire to secure their co-operation in lessening the tension of British feeling regarding the colonial dominions.

Tension does exist. It is folly to deny it. During the last few years it has cropped up in many significant ways. The total deduction of the trouble lies in the insular sentiment of Great Britain. For there we find preserved a considerable portion of the same autocratic temper which caused the American Revolution. There is just that quantity of pride, self-complacency, and pique in the breast of the average Englishman to make him resent the forward enterprise, and dynamic energies of colonial dependencies, and to make him long to show the envious continental powers how England can exercise her school-mistress authority. Such a spirit as this can be plainly seen in the utterances of foremost politicians, in inspired editorials of the British press, and in the affairs of diplomacy. It is more than probable the agitation now in progress over the fiscal problem will yet contribute seriously to public irritation. It is questionable whether, after all, the commonalty are more than a football for ambitious politicians. The general action of the free trade advocates is to press home upon the masses the bogie of food taxation, and to lay the onus of the same on the cupidity of colonial producers. There seems no possible doubt now that the *argumentum ad hominem*—the free dinner-pail—will carry the day, and the preferential idea will come to a decided halt.

From considerations such as the British political campaign, where the facts of commercial profit and loss will have to be thoroughly sifted, and a balance sheet drawn regarding the solvency of Britain's world trade—the facts of colonial relationship will necessarily be weighed and examined more carefully than ever before. It is grati-