

of the great engineering undertakings of the world, this channel.

Where were the three block-houses whose loopholes used to threaten any hostile one who should dare set foot on this sentinel island of Bois Blanc? Where were the sentries, in old-fashioned stock and cap, whose measured tread seemed to keep time with the oars of the picket boat that went to and fro across the stream to the official red storehouse at Amherstburg three times a day? Gone, two of them at least, with the stockades and bastions and cannons of the main Fort Malden. True, the light-house on the point of the Island overlooking Lake Erie still remained. "The snowy light-house, with its sanded shore," which Sangster's poetic eye singled out for a feature of his Evening Scene. But the glades where we picked berries, and the red-leaved sumach bushes whence we cut pop-gun wood are ruthlessly cleared away, to be replaced by dancing pavilions and refreshment booths for the thousands of Sunday merry-makers from Detroit, who sing German songs and drink Milwaukee lager on what a money-making modern amusement company calls, in advertising print, Boblo Island, in defiance of historic fact as well as literary good taste.

Elliott's Point, where the river empties in Lake Erie, was the culmination of a curved bank which made the little bay it enclosed so charming. A mile above, there were maples and locust trees at Park's, succeeded by gloomy fir trees shading fragrant sweet-brier at Squire Reynolds', tall poplars at Duff's leading up to the grove of enormous walnut trees and elms that waved their spreading branches, on Elliott's Point, opposite the light-house. Not knowing it at the time, I can now see that the landscape beauty of this mile of wooded beach, margining the waters of a sheltered bay, was what made us youngsters so often prefer it in our evening strolls or canoe trips with the girls.

Many pens have celebrated this lovely view, and many visitors have tried, oftenest in vain, to describe the gorgeous pageantry of the Western skies when the sun went down behind the shores of Michigan, miles away, flooding earth and water with a radiancy of colour,

Setting the calm horizon all ablaze
With splendours stolen from the crypts of heaven.

Looking from Elliott's Point into Lake Erie, or from the town down the British river channel into the lake, it was a brave sight to see, in early

September, the fall fleet of grain vessels from Buffalo clustered outside the mouth of the river. Fifty, seventy, a hundred in number, impelled by a south or west wind, these white-sailed messengers of commerce would press forward, each captain anxious to pass the intricate and often shallow channel of the river by daylight and reach Chicago ahead of his rival. Regardless of the risk of grounding—careless of collision with a hurrying neighbour, great or small, these splendid, square-rigged three-masters, brigantines and swift fore-and-aft schooners would press on through the narrow water-way, contracted here by the Bois Blanc Island. Excited, reckless, raging when his taffrail was crushed by a swifter following schooner or his bowsprit broken by a huge brigantine crossing his bows, one captain would let fly his opinions of another in nautical language that affrighted even the small boys on shore.

It was a yacht race on a great scale.

No such sight can now-a-days be seen, for the picturesqueness of the Great Lakes marine is gone. Instead of graceful hulls of green, of grey, of white with a gold stripe, carrying square-rigged canvas up to "royals" and sky-scrappers, or the many stay-sails of the more handy fore-and-aft rig, the grain and ore carriers of to-day are for the most part vast and unshapely tanks, of steel, all length and no shape, painted black and belching smoke. But they carry a hundred thousand bushels where the wooden vessel carried ten—and there is no room or time for gracefulness.

The huge excavation through limestone rock, made to accommodate these modern monsters and named the Livingstone Channel, is nearly opposite the site of old Fort Malden. The accompanying picture, taken while the work was in progress, shows the piles of rock removed from the river-bed, and still remaining a feature of the landscape for miles. The cutting is made to give depth of 24 feet water to a width of 400 feet. A grand celebration and procession of boats took place last autumn when this wonderful channel was opened for traffic.

The town, Amherstburg, was so named after Jeffrey Amherst, Governor of New York State. He it was who empowered Robert Rogers, commander of Rogers' Rangers, to raise this body of men, who became so well known in the early history of the new Republic. It was the same intrepid Robert Rogers who, in 1760, carried the news of Canada's cession to the British Crown, to the then French government at Detroit.

"A Phase of Centralism"

A Reply to Professor Kylie

By GEORGE CHARLESON

ALL must admire the very thoughtful tone of Prof. Kylie's article in the *Courier* of January 25th on "A Phase of Imperialism," but believers in Canadian autonomy and in the ideal of a Canadian nation within a Britannic empire must challenge a number of his arguments, and question many of his comparisons.

Before this so-called question of Imperialism can be properly discussed at all, it is necessary to recognize that the British Empire, as it has developed, is something new and unprecedented, and that many ordinary maxims which applied perfectly to other empires, do not hold at all when applied to this one. Indeed, the British Empire is so different from the Persian, the Roman, the Napoleonic, the Russian or any other empire, ancient or modern, that, were it not for lack of a better term, it should not be called an empire at all. The essential point about the ordinary empire is that authority is centralized; the wonderful thing about the British Empire is that, while in portions of it like the British North American dominions, the Australian dominions, or the South African union, local consolidation and centralization have taken place, the empire as a whole has become steadily less centralized, as it has become more populous, more wealthy and, I believe, more mighty. The so-called "Imperialist" appropriates the name, because he believes that some form of centralization is necessary for the growth and continued existence of the empire; whereas the autonomist believes quite as sincerely that the empire is developing very satisfactorily into an ideal federation of nations. The self-styled "Imperialists" should therefore be given their proper name, "Centralists," and we are really dealing with a phase of centralism.

Prof. Kylie sees enormous difficulties in the way of governing a league of nations within the em-

pire. "One person will have to accept advice from five sets of responsible ministers, and when their opinions differ, he will, according to his duty as a constitutional monarch, have to accept them all." That would seem at first sight to be an absurd state of affairs, but it is exactly the state of affairs we have now, and yet the British Empire is staggering along very successfully. The advice accepted by the King through the Governor-General of Australia may be quite opposed to the advice he accepts through the Governor-General of Canada. For instance, the Government of Australia has decided on an Australian navy, and the act creating it has received the royal assent; whereas in Canada, the Governor-General seems likely to give his assent to one act contributing \$35,000,000 to the British navy, and to another doing away with the small navy Canada has already acquired. It might be objected that the British Government has the power to disallow acts passed by the Canadian or Australian parliament; but, as a matter of fact, it no longer exercises this power. To all intents and purposes, the imperial veto of the legislation of any of the large dominions is as dead as the royal veto is in England. Precedent is a mighty force in the development of the British constitution, and a precedent has been set in this case in favour of local autonomy.

THE illustrations used by Prof. Kylie to show the difficulties he anticipates, are not apt. Hanover and England had nothing in common but the king, and when the English King ceased to be Elector of Hanover, both England and Hanover were better off. England and Scotland did not get on well before the Union of 1707, partly because Scotland was very harshly treated by the Stuart kings, and partly because, except in opposing Charles I., the nations

made no serious attempt to co-operate. It is not necessary to go further, except to state that there is a serious objection to every one of the illustrations used in connection with this point.

The statement that "the empire to be an efficient unit must have a common government," might seem at first sight to be unassailable; but there is too much about it that is indefinite to allow it to pass unchallenged. When the centralist makes statements like this, he should explain what kind of unit he contemplates, and for what purpose he wants it. If he has in view such a union of the different parts of the empire as that into which Massachusetts entered in 1776, or that in which Nova Scotia was included in 1867, it may as well be said at once that such a union is undesirable. If it were consummated, and it were attempted to impose on the members such restrictions as are now placed on the provinces of Canada, or the states of the American Republic, the union would inevitably fall to pieces. Massachusetts and the other States of the American Union are so situated geographically that they form a natural union within which it is advisable to give a central government very large powers. But the units of the British Empire are scattered all around the globe. They have many things in common, but in many respects they differ so much that they cannot reasonably be compared with the States of the American Union. As one illustration it may safely be asserted that no statesman, however astute, could frame a tariff to suit all parts of the empire, any more than Mr. Bonar Law has been able to propose a tax on wheat which will meet with the approval of the English workingman who wants cheap bread. No facts are more stubborn than those of geography, and the statesman who would devise a wise constitution for the Britannic Empire must keep them in mind.

IT is not surprising that some do not see how the empire is going to last and be strong without centralization. Only sixty years ago responsible British statesmen believed that the growth of self-government in the colonies would inevitably lead to their separation from the mother country. As the boy left his parents' home after reaching manhood, so the colony after reaching maturity would, as a matter of course, become independent. But something has happened for which there was no precedent. The colonies, instead of becoming independent, or desiring independence, have become more satisfied with their lot, and more attached to the empire, as they have won greater freedom from interference from the central government. This gradual evolution has not been completed, and no one can tell just what its final outcome will be. But the autonomist believes that a final organization will be found which will keep the empire strong and contented, without sacrificing the powers of self-government we have secured at so great price. There may be no precedent for such a belief, but there is no precedent for the empire as it is. The great danger is not that we shall go too slowly in making changes, but that rash centralists will induce us to go too fast and to commit ourselves to schemes in keeping with old-world ideas of empires, but out of harmony with this new style of empire which is taking shape in the world.

Little need be said about the proposal to have a Canadian representative on the Imperial Defence Committee, if it were not for the undue importance attached to it by such centralists as Sir Joseph Ward, of New Zealand, who sees in it a first step towards an Imperial Parliament. As long as the powers of the Defence Committee remain what they are, a Canadian member of it, as such, can have little or no influence on foreign policy, since, in the words of the Hon. Mr. Asquith and the Hon. Mr. Harcourt, "The Committee on Imperial Defence is a purely advisory body, and is not and can not under any circumstances become a body deciding on policy, which is and must remain the sole prerogative of the cabinet, subject to the support of the Commons."

Spurious Maple Sugar

A DEPUTATION of maple sugar manufacturers representing the maple sugar industry in all the eastern provinces, waited on the Hon. Martin Burrell, Minister of Agriculture, and the Hon. W. B. Nantel, Minister of Inland Revenue, recently, and asked that the industry be protected against the free use of compounds bearing the word "Maple."

The members of the deputation stated that the industry was in serious danger by reason of the great number of flavourings and essences sold in the Canadian market as "Maple" which had never been in any way related to sap of the maple tree.