



T H E

Canadian Courier

THE NATIONAL WEEKLY



VOL. 7

Toronto, May 14th, 1910

No. 24

REFLECTIONS

BY THE EDITOR

A CORRESPONDENT is quite angry with us for trying to defend the Dominion Government in the matter of Lord Kitchener. The only weakness in his attack upon us is the fact that we did not try to defend it. We have no evidence that it was the Government's fault, and therefore we must assume that it is "not guilty." Every man is entitled to that favour until he is proven to have committed a wrong. Why not a government?

If any correspondent can prove to us that the Dominion Government prevented Lord Kitchener from coming to Canada, we promise to be as sarcastic as we possibly can. As we said last week, we believe that "any government which acted so childishly would seriously lower itself in the estimation of the people." We still believe that. We believe also that the truth should be known, and the blame placed where it belongs.

NEVERTHELESS, we again repeat that we believe Lord Kitchener made two fatal mistakes. He should not have passed Canada by without making a public explanation of his conduct. If he had a reason for not passing through Canada he should have given it. He must have known that his silence would injure his reputation. The onus was on him to show that he was not ignoring Canada, but was passing us by because of the sins of our government. It is not too late yet, if he desires to put himself right.

Lord Kitchener's second mistake was contained in an interview in London. He was apparently trying to bolster up Britain's oozing courage by an expression of his confidence in British power and British courage. However, in so doing, he rather went out of his way to minimise the value of colonial assistance. No man has had greater experience with colonial troops and consequently even the slightest words from him must bear great weight.

It is possible that we are doing Lord Kitchener an injustice, but we must accept the facts as we have them. If there are other facts which the public does not possess and which would put a different face on the matter, then it is for Lord Kitchener and his friends to make them known. If our government is guilty, then it stands condemned in the minds of every citizen who believes in British connection.

TORONTO has completed its Y.M.C.A. campaign and raised over \$600,000 in ten days. The big drum has been sent back; the kettle-drums and the bugles have been laid away for future use. The financiers and lawyers have gone back to their desks to devise ways and means for increasing their profits sufficiently to cover their gifts.

Frankly it was not a pleasing spectacle. It was too close to an attempt to stampede men into giving money to a cause in which they were not interested. It was an application of United States religious methods to Canada, and the importation of hysterical and dramatic methods will not commend itself to people who have time to consider the consequences.

The Y.M.C.A. movement is one of the best modern institutions. It is deserving of the sincere and earnest support of every right-minded citizen. However, the movement will be degraded if associated with circus methods just as certainly as would a church organisation of any kind. Clatter and fuss and noise are not a good substitute for reason and conviction.

AS these lines are being penned, the guns announce the birth of a new reign. King George V. has begun to rule. The chimes of old St. James' are playing "God Save the King" and the bells of the other churches are doing their best to convey the message in their own dull way. And so the word has gone around the earth, and similar scenes and similar sounds are occurring in a thousand Anglo-Saxon cities. The Empire on which the sun never sets, the greatest Empire that the world has ever seen, accepts joyfully and gladly a new monarch.

But while this is Monday noon, we cannot so soon forget Friday

night. Those evening hours at Buckingham Palace in which Grim Death again showed his disregard of rank or position, touched us deeply. It created everywhere throughout Canada a silence

as deep and as impressive as that in the Palace itself. There was no discussion. There was no attempt to estimate a monarch's virtues. Men shook hands with each other and simply said, "Too bad, isn't it?" And the other answered, "Very sad." Words did not count; men looked what they could not express. The blow was too sudden, its force was too keen.

King Edward was to most people in this country but a name, but that name was second to none in their affections. Why it should be so, would be hard to explain. Nor does it matter. He was our king and our idol—the facts are sufficient. Why try to reason the unreasonable?

KING GEORGE will find as warm a welcome and as hearty good wishes in Canada as in any other part of the Empire. Canada is virtually a republic, but it is also a Kingdom. Constitutional monarchy has so adapted itself to modern conditions that republicanism has little to offer. King George will be a constitutional monarch. He says so, but we do not need his assertion. His grandmother seldom stepped over the line, in spite of her autocratic nature and training. His father bore himself even more carefully. The son of such ancestors, with all the knowledge and training which are his, could not but continue the traditions.

In some ways, King George should excel his father. He comes to the throne much earlier in life and therefore with more physical vigour. He should be able to bear the burden more lightly than did his father. Moreover, he knows the Empire more thoroughly. He has travelled on every ocean and in every continent. He is familiar with colonial aspirations and colonial aims. The narrow-chested doctrines on which his father was brought up were discarded with the nineteenth century. Travel has kept him young and aggressive, and he knows the modern spirit. King George will be a twentieth century ruler.

HIS late majesty was so human that he appealed to the masses. Both nature and training gave him the bearing and attitude of a sovereign, yet even this kingly dignity did not prevent his meeting friends and acquaintances on common ground. He also had a splendid sense of humour which stood him in good stead. The story goes that he took one of his guests aside in his smoking-room and in tones of awe said to him: "You see that chair; that is the chair John Burns sat in."

He loved the freedom of the individual and because he took it in his early days occasionally, he was freely criticised. Perhaps, however, that close touch with men which he secured in the theatres, the clubs, and on his European journeys "incog.," brought him more of democracy and of humanity than he could have gained in any other way. He believed in horse-racing, but regretted the gambling evils which went with it. He was fond of a glass of good liquor but despised intemperance. In his well-known letter to Archbishop Benson he declared "that gambling, like intemperance, is one of the greatest curses which a country can be afflicted with." He loved manly sports; shooting, golfing, bicycling, motoring were pastimes which he loved and encouraged. He was an English gentleman of the highest type—and what more need be said?

SUPERSTITIOUS people are talking of a connection between Halley's comet and the death of the King. In 11 B.C. it appeared before the death of the Emperor Agrippa. In A.D. 218, Dion Cassius mentions it as "a clear premonition of the death of Macrinus." In 451, it was thought to presage the death of Attila, King of the Huns, in 837 of Louis le Debonnaire, King of the Franks, in 1066 of Harold, King of England, and in 1223 of Philip Augustus, King of France.