

# REFLECTIONS

By THE EDITOR

## Laurier, Grey, Chamberlain

LORD GREY'S statement in the *Times*, that Sir Wilfrid Laurier was a good, loyal Britisher was a sore blow to some Conservative politicians. They seemed to recognize instinctively that if the insidious charge, which has been made so often, could not be made again, political results might be different. Most surprising of all was the attack on Lord Grey by the *Toronto News*, Sir John Willison's paper. The *News* thought that Lord Grey, as an ex-governor-general, was not free to express such an opinion. Of course history and precedent are against the *News* on this subject. Perhaps the editorial was written without Sir John Willison's knowledge; at least one would like to give him the benefit of the doubt.

To further add to the discomfiture of the Tory politicians—I exempt all ordinary Conservatives—Mr. Austen Chamberlain comes out in that ultra-Tory, Centralist organ known as the *National Review*, and states that he holds a similar belief. He expressly refers to the services of Sir Wilfrid and his colleagues "to imperial unity and particularly to imperial preference." This declaration will raise Mr. Chamberlain in the minds of most Canadians whose good opinions are worth having.

In this country, our political strife is little better than savagery. We term our political opponents "liars," "thieves," "degenerates" and so on. Both parties are equally guilty. Perhaps it is yet too early in the history of this new nation to expect our provincial premiers, our leading politicians and our high-placed journalists to have that regard for truth and fairness which seems to characterize corresponding persons in the United Kingdom.

## A Day Dream

THAT Lord Grey incident is fine for a day dream. What a wonderful country this would be if Dr. Gordon stood up in his pulpit and said that Premier Roblin had done great work in Manitoba and he therefore forgave him his occasional outburst of political wrath. And if Premier Roblin would stand up in the Manitoba House and say, "So long as Dr. Gordon sticks to theology and novel-writing I shall honour him for his great talents; but when he enters the political field he must take what the rest get." What a mellow, Winnipeg day it would be!

Suppose, also, Sir James Whitney should begin to receive friend and enemy with a chesterfieldian politeness, so that he could say in the House, "I hope that when I leave the Premier's chair, I shall be succeeded by one of my present colleagues; but if fate or the people decide otherwise, the province will find Mr. Rowell an earnest, if mistaken, patriot." What a sensation such a speech would create in the smoke-rooms of the Albany and the Ontario Clubs!

And if Sir Wilfrid Laurier would get up in the House of Commons and say that he believed Mr. Borden was an honest statesman seeking for the right solution of the naval question, and that he would be glad to meet him half way in order to secure a non-partisan policy. And Mr. Borden were to stand up also and say that he had always had confidence in Sir Wilfrid's patriotism, even when he questioned his judgment, and that he accepted the Opposition leader's suggestion in the same spirit in which it were made.

Day dreams are fine, are they not? They earn you no dividends, but they give you a glimpse of the god-like character which man lost in the apple-orchard of Eden and which every succeeding generation has sought in vain to regain. Blessed but foolish day dream!

## The Flag-less Men

THREE splendid Canadians have no protecting flag. These are Sir Thomas Shaughnessy, Hon. George H. Perley, and Mr. Castell Hopkins. Those three men were born in the United States. Having come over here and taken the oath of allegiance, they cannot fly the Stars and Stripes. Not being recognized in the United Kingdom as British subjects, they are not entitled to fly the Union Jack. They are merely Canadians, and Canadians have no flag, so long as they remain on land. If these gentlemen were to live on board a merchant vessel, they could fly the Canadian en-

sign, but it is hard to keep a residence and a business office on a merchant vessel.

So it is with all Germans, Americans, Frenchmen or others who settle in the British Dominions. They have no flag. South Africa is using an ensign with the jack in the corner and the Vleurkleur in the field. Australia is doing the same, with the Southern Cross in the field. New Zealand has a similar flag with stars in the field. Canada has been using the Canadian coat of arms in the field. But the Secretary of State for the Colonies says that none of these flags may be used on land. Therefore the foreign-born in the British Dominions have no flag.

If these men go abroad and are taken prisoner by any foreign government, they have no government to appeal to. They are not British subjects except when they are at home, and hence cannot appeal to the Union Jack. They have renounced their allegiance to the land of their birth and thus cannot appeal to that flag. Canada has no flag which foreign countries or even the United Kingdom recognizes, and therefore they cannot look to Canada for protection.

Sir Joseph Pope, in his recent pamphlet on "The Flag of Canada," thinks we should be proud that the flag of the United Kingdom is the only flag we can fly, but our foreign-born citizens can hardly be expected to agree with him. So long as the Union Jack fails to protect a certain number of our citizens when they travel abroad, so long will it be an unsatisfactory emblem of our supposed nationality.

## Political Patronage

LAST week the Senate discussed the evils of political patronage. The occasion was the sending on of Sir George Murray's report to the Senate committee on civil service administration. Senator Belcourt told how for years as Ottawa's parliamentary representative he was dogged hourly by office-seekers. They approached him in church, at the theatre, in court, and wherever else he could be found. He argued for an independent commission to govern the whole service.

Most remarkable of Senator Belcourt's statements was to the effect that even in the inside service the recommendations of the Civil Service Commission were being ignored. If this is true, it is a sad state of affairs. If the present administration and its supporters in the House are ignoring even our present measure of civil service reform, then Canada is in a bad way. If the cabinet and the members of parliament break the laws or evade them, how can they expect the people to preserve a correct attitude towards their enactments?

Let us hope that Senator Belcourt was overstating the case. I cannot believe that Premier Borden would countenance any conduct of this kind.

## Storage Wheat Elevators

SINCE the Dominion Government has failed to supply internal storage elevators, the Canadian Pacific Railway will attempt to do so. The government tackled the question last year, but the best its wisdom could decide upon was another elevator at Fort William. This helps very little. What is needed is a series of large storage elevators at Saskatoon, Regina, Edmonton and other central points, so that grain may be moved quickly from the farmers' granaries to storage elevators for grading and cleaning. This appears to be the real solution for the annual fall congestion.

At present every bushel of western grain must go to Winnipeg to be graded. This is ridiculous. If it were graded at these central storage elevators inland, the farmer would get his money more quickly. The bank would get a certificate to discount instead of the farmer's estimate of value.

It makes one proud to see the enterprising officials of the C. P. R. stepping into the breach and supplying necessities for the new western farmer which our politics-ridden parliaments and legislatures are unable or unwilling to give.

## Canadian Flour

THERE was a time when the United States millers thought they were the only millers in the world. At one time their annual shipments to Great Britain reached a total of twenty

million hundred-weight. In 1909 this had fallen to seven million hundred-weight, due to Canadian competition and to the expansion of domestic grinding in England itself. In that year Canada sent two million hundred-weight as against the United States' seven. Canada has since made steady progress and last year nearly caught the famous millers of the United States. Their exports were 4,212,604 cwt., and ours 4,003,877 cwt. In the language of the late Mr. Tarte, "Wait till you see us next year."

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## A Terrific January

AS pointed out last week, January, 1912, was a wonderful month, but January, 1913, had beaten it. As the full figures come out, it is seen that last week's language was too mild. For example, Montreal's bank clearings were \$207,000,000 in January, 1912, and \$348,000,000 in January, 1913. It looks like a bad year for pessimists.

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## The Light is Dawning

THAT the annual election of aldermen, county councillors and other municipal legislators is out-of-date is gradually forcing itself upon the public mind. The Carleton county council had a talk with Mr. McElroy, M.P.P., the other day and advised him that they thought the annual election was a relic. Mr. McElroy admitted that he could not see why the term should not be two years instead of one, when members of parliament were elected for four or five years.

London has adopted the two-year term for aldermen and controllers, and a number of other cities are considering it. Montreal elects its controllers for four years. St. John and Lethbridge elect their mayor for two years and their commissioners for four. The yearly term in the larger cities must go. It is wasteful of human effort and deadly in its effect upon civic programmes. It prevents continuity in civic policy and thoroughness in civic administration.

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## Non-partisanship

CURIOUS how some of us favour non-partisanship in regard to some national issues and not in others. The *Ottawa Free Press* says, "Under no circumstances must the Bank Act be made a political measure." There might be trouble for the banks and financial complications for the country if this were done, thinks the *Free Press*. And yet this same journal was absolutely opposed to non-partisanship on the naval question, when the memorial on this subject was sent to the political leaders last November. The banks are "delicate and sensitive things" and must be saved from political squabbles, but the naval policy of the Dominion is not important enough to be similarly treated. What a wonderfully logical mind the *Free Press* must have!

Now that the "emergency" argument has been exploded, the Conservatives ought to seek a non-partisan settlement of the naval policy. Great Britain does not want a present of three Dreadnoughts, and will accept them only because the people there fear to offend Mr. Borden and his colleagues. It is quite clear to every leader in the Liberal and Conservative parties here and every public man in England who has considered the situation, that a non-partisan settlement of Canada's policy would mean much to the Empire generally. Yet each set of politicians fears to take this course, lest the "other side" should get an advantage. The so-called "party interest" is more important than the country's interest. They will make a party pawn of the naval policy, but the banks are "delicate and sensitive things," and non-partisanship is to prevail. If the banks lost a few thousand dollars in profits it would be a crime; if the country spends thirty-five millions improperly, it does not matter. Such is politics as we have it in the Commons and in the party press.

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## The Ethics of the Daughters

STRANGE ethics seem to prevail among the Daughters of the Empire in Ottawa. The Chapter there gave a very successful bridge party last week in the Chateau Laurier. There were thirty tables, and two prizes were given for straight bridge and four for auction bridge. Mrs. Borden, Mrs. Rogers, Mrs. Foster, Mrs. White, Mrs. Pugsley, Mrs. Hazen, Mrs. Oliver, Mrs. Sladen and other prominent Daughters were present. Not that bridge is wicked—but why should it be a form of entertainment for a society founded for nobler purposes? Is the I. O. D. E. to degenerate into a series of bridge clubs?