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LEARNED PROFESSOR SAYS POLITICS IS THROTTLING CANADIAN PATRIOTISM

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perfectly legitimate corporate needs. Having once committed itself by diverting public money for private enterprise, a government is no longer free. It is in the situation of a man who is partner in a business over which he has no control, or of a father who has once paid the gambling debts of his son. He is liable to fresh demands; and to have his investment or his credit he is compelled to yield. The situation is still more difficult when the gambler assumes the role of blackmailer. Occosionally a lucky coup is made, but the very foundation of business itself is destroyed.

When a group of speculators go to a government with a demand for protection, and receive it under threat that they will close their works, the way is easy for another group of speculators to go to the government with a demand for actual money to be paid directly from the treasury, without the bother of extracting it from the consumer's pocket, under threat that a bank which they have involved will close its doors. From that it is an easy step for the legislator to demand that he be paid a part of the price. The situation becomes almost hopeless when the government owes its very existence to the men who make these demands and threats, who, indeed, have placed it in power for that very purpose.

The government is overwhelmed by its public undertakings. A minister of public works or of marine, for example, when he assumes office, is suddenly face to face with problems which a man in private life has been trained to meet by years of experience of a most specialized kind. He is faced with one of two alternatives, either to take into his own hands matters of which he knows nothing, or to leave them to deputies whose salaries would not procure the services of a chief clerk in other corporations doing a similar business. In addition, the minister is hampered at every turn by the interference of local politicans, by demands from provinces for the expenditure of money within their borders merely on the ground that money has been spent elsewhere for similar purposes, and the still more urgent demand that public works be undertaken not in response to a real need but in view of the balance of political parties in any given area. The wonder is not that the public service is so inefficient but that it is so good.

Each organism develops other organisms to destroy it. Democracy in the United States bred political corruption, and political corruption in turn developed enemies of that form of evil. In the fulness of time investigators and expositors were brought forth. They held up a mirror to democracy, and revealed to itself a face in the crowd, which was hideous, and democracy struck at the hideous face in its own brutal way.

Of these scientific expositors of political corruption Lincoln Steffens will serve as a type, and he has just told us, in the Metropolitan Magazine, the cause and the cure. The cause and the cure hatch in the same place, and often in the same person; the "best man" and the "worst man" are often identical; wherever there is a bribe-taker, there is also a bribe-giver. In search of the evil he sought upwards through the ranks of policemen, of the low-down politicans, of the rich politicans, and he came upon the political boss. But he discovered finally that the political boss was merely an agent of the business boss, the captain of industry, whose desires for himself what nearly everyone wants, but desires it more earnestly and more courageously. The cause then lies in the community; and the cure lies in the hands of the few, who, as Mr. Steffens put it, care less for the apples and more for the trees.

For some years past the government of Canada has been carried on by a politic business alliance. An election cannot be held, because elections are bad for business; and if a new government came into power it would take some time to bring it into alignment with vested, financial interests. The imperial relation itself was dominated by the spirit of a Birmingham business man and the Canadian speculator freebotting for money; but the fabric of imperialism which was inspired by mercenary motives is now pretty well shaken. Preferences, ease of borrowing, readiness to lend, turned out to be too insecure a foundation. The union was not organic. In due course it will disappear and make way for a fabric which cannot be shaken. In the meantime there is nothing to be done, no permanent policy for defence, no plan of union. Certain things must first be forgotten; and hardest of all to forget is the betrayal of the larger patriotism by politics in that great moment of temptation, during the campaign in Drummond-Arthabaska, when the Nationalist party was born and the Imperial cause for the time was reduced to the likeness of a zero with the rim removed.

A year or two ago, when a Canadian went to London, he was [illegible] in declaring the country of his origin, and he acquired thereby certain solid advantages. His very loyalty was an asset to him, and he made the most of it. Under cover of imperialism a humble person might obtain a desirable invitation, an astute person might place some very doubtful securities. A person who was both astute and ambitious might even attain to the dginity of a title, especially if his financial record precluded him from a seat in the cabinet at home. But all that is changed, and the way of the Canadian adventurer is not now so easy. For a time we were taken at our own valuation. There is a disposition now to listen less to what we say than to what we can prove. The truth is, we have made ourselves somewhat ridiculous, and people in London are telling each other funny stories about us.

No More Gold From England.

The stage was set to attract the English investor, and considering our inexperience, it was well done. But things have changed much since those halcyon days. The English investor has learned many things. He has learned to his amazement that many of the Canadian industries in which he had invested his money were managed by men who knew nothing whatever about the business in which they were ostensibly engaged, and that they had been employed on account of their skill in finance, that is, of manipulating the securities of the corporation so that they would realize the greatest amount of money. The transformation of a railway manager into an ironmaster, again to a contractor, and again to a maker of bricks, is too rapid for his slow wits; but he has a dim perception that a financial prestidigitateur cannot concern himself usefully with the meticulous details of an exacting industry. It cannot have escaped his notice either that these business men regarded Canada as to small a world to conquer, and extended their activities to the ends of the earth, to Mexico, to South America, and he could not be very favorably impressed by the results of their exploits to those regions.

It is a common delusion that England lends money, that there is a kind of Mr. Mothercountry who buys and sells. Any such transactions are carried on by individuals who live in England for convience, and are not invariably Englishmen. They are the astutest and boldest of lenders and traders; and if they prefer doing business with persons who live under British institutions, the reason is that experience has taught them that the politics of communities enjoying those institutions are inspired by a patriotism which guarantees liberty, insures legislation which is undefiled, and justice which cannot be bought. He will decline to lend to a South American republic, and he will lend to Canada, not from any political consideration in itself. He will decline to lend to any country or to any corporation or indivdual in a country whose legislators accepts bribes, whose judiciary recruited from a corrupt legislature itself becomes suspect, whose municipal services break down through inefficiency and neglect. When he hears of a country whose capital is habitually ravaged by a preventable disease, whose chief city of six hundred thousand inhabitants was without a supply of water, and lived in a state of squalor for ten days in the depths of winter, is does not matter to him whether that country is Patagonia or Canada.

There is a sense, too, in which patriotism and politics are in antithesis. The ELECTION OF 1911 WAS A TRIUMPH FOR POLITICS; IT WAS A TRIUMPH OF PATRIOTISM TOO; BUT IT IS DOUBTFUL IF EVER AGAIN PATRIOTISM WILL LEND ITSELF TO EXPLOITATION FOR POLITICAL ENDS. IT WAS A SPLENDID PATRIOTIC PLAY, BUT THE END CAME WHEN THE SENATE REFERRED THE NAVAL BILL TO THE PEOPLE. NOW THE FARCE IS OVER; THE LIGHTS ARE OUT, AND THE PLAYERS HAVE GONE HOME. The collapse of other forms of speculation occurred at the same time, and now we have leisure for calm reflection after our essay in world politics.

Nothing is so useful, because so sobering, as to see ourselves through other eyes. We have been playing the part of the young man from the country, whom Matthew Arnold describd, earnestly talking to the house-maid who had got the perambulator into danger. This young man was vociferous in sugestion; but he was not at the heart of the situation; and his discourse did not touch the crisis vitally. Yet he was in earnest. WE MADE A GREAT SHOW OF EARNESTNESS DURING THAT ELECTION AND IN THE CONSEQUENT DEBATE. EVEN THE ELECT WERE DECEIVED, THOSE, NAMELY, WHO WERE SIGNED WITH THE IMPERIAL SEAL. BUT NO ONE NOW SUPPOSES THAT WE WERE AS MUCH IN EARNEST AS WE SEEMED TO BE. THE OLD GENTLEMEN WHO COMPOSE THE SENATE DO NOT PROFESS TO THINK SO—AND OLD GENTLEMEN WHO GO TO BED AT ELEVEN O'CLOCK GET UP IN THE MORNING WITH VERY CLEAR HEADS. THEY HAVE NO ELECTORS TO TROUBLE THEM; THEIR SALARIES ARE SAFE; THEIR NUMBER CANNOT BE DIMINISHED OR INCEASED; THEY FEAR NO ENEMY BUT DEATH, SO THEIR JUDGMENT IS FAIRLY SURE OF BEING UNBIASSED. When the charge of being partisan was uttered against them they made as if they did not hear; and when the word disloyalty was mentioned they gave no sign. The session was at an end. Like the witch in "Macbeth," MR. BORDEN CRIED, "I'LL DO, I'LL DO, AND I'LL DO," BUT HE DID NOTHING. HE DID NOT APPEAL TO THE PEOPLE. HE DID NOT RE-INTRODUCE THE NAVAL BILL AT THE PRESENT SESSION. HE HAS NOT EVEN MENTIONED THE SUBJECT OF A PERMANENT NAVAL POLICY WHICH WAS AT ONE TIME SO MUCH DISCUSSED. HE COULD NOT.

It is hard for the people of England to understand such a situation; and yet the explanation, to us at least, is very simple. Politics has got the better of patriotism, and the business interests have got the better of both. To the people of England defence is their supreme care, and they cannot understand how our defence should be a matter of so much unconcern to us; for we as well as they must know that if England "received a Baffle, England is neither able to Support its Self, nor the Plantations that depend upon it, & then consequently they must crumble into So many distinct independt Governts and thereby becoming weaker will be a Prey to any Stronger Power wich shall attacque them." Our behavior must appear to them as a piece of fooling. Let us assume that the English government had devised a measure of defence against an emergency, which may have existed merely in their own imagination, and that the house of lords declined to pass it. We could not imagine Mr. Asquith retaining office, and contenting himself with a derisive patomine behind their backs.

But the people of England have a distinct understanding that our performance not only embarrassed their government but that it has cost them dear. We created the impression in the world that three new ships were to be added to the English navy. Foreign governments acted on that assumption, and now England is obliged to build them for herself. They have a confused remembrance that there was much talk, that Sir Wilfrid Laurier cried aloud, "Give us self-government"; that Mr. Borden insisted, "Give us representation"; that, at an earlier date, the demand, "Give us a preference in your markets," was raised by Mr. Chamberlain in the name of Canada, and to it was annexed, as a reason, that we would leave the empire if the demand were denied. There would be no cause for wonder if John Bull should fly into a passion and retort; "You want self-government; well, have self-government. Keep your inexperienced counsel to yourself; and if your loyalty is for sale at the price of a preference, take it to another market."

And when John Bull has his seaboots on, as Professor Macnaughton once warned us, he is capable of a most devastating kick. John Bull always has his sea-boots on. He sleeps in them. He does not hang them up to dry for two years because certain old gentlemen, who are suffering from cold feet, advise him that wet boots are dangerous to the health and expensive besides. In such a mood he is very quick to recommend a young apprentice to fish, cut bait or go ashore.

To the more philosophical English mind there would be nothing strange in this hasty outburst. The doctrine of empire in which dominions over the sea should have a share is quite new, and even yet is not generally accepted as a dogma or a law of nature. Up to the middle of the nineteenth century it was taken for granted that the colonies would fall away; and the utmost that was hoped was that they would depart in peace. With the exception of Durham, Charles Buller and Elgin, Whigs and Tories alike were in agreement. "Why," Peel asked, "if the people of Canada are not cordially with us, should we contract the tremendous obligation of having to defend, on a point of honor, their territory against American invasion?" "Let Canada, if she be so minded, establish her independence and cast off her character as a colony, or seek refuge in the extended arms of the United States," declared Lord John Manners. And last of all there was Disraeli himself expressing the belief, "these wretched colonies will all be independent too in a few years, and are a millstone round our necks." Mr. J. L. Morison from the historical departmen of Queen's University has marshalled all the evidence, and politicans who read everything except the daily newspapers would do well to read the record he has made. So far as England is concerned, Canada is quite free to commit suicide if it likes.

Even in business the business spirit eventually defeats itself. It cannot understand that there are whole categories of subjects beyond its control. With its passion for organization it destroys what it touches. Everything fine—religion, friendship, love, education, literature, art, newspapers even—wither and die at the first touche of its breath. To combine the newspapers of a great city for the sole reason that they might all be printed by presses of the same width on wooden paper from the same mill betrays an ignorance of everything which lies beyond business, and even of business itself. The people have some intelligence left, even after reading a newspaper manufactured after this method. They may take their news and advertisements wholesale; they will not take political opinions by the ton.

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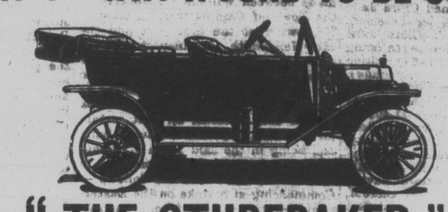

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