



REFLECTIONS

IIII BY STAFF WRITERS IIII

IF this practice of fining people who speak ill of the country is to be extended to cover all the critics there is likely to be trouble. There is the editor of the Toronto "Mail and Empire"—he ought to be fined regularly every day. He has been speaking ill of our leading statesmen regularly ever since that fateful day in June, 1896 when his party went down to defeat. There is that expressive and aggressive paper the Halifax "Herald" which says things along the same line. The other day it was up in court for libel but the judge dismissed the case. The people at Ottawa who are to impose the fines might start with Mr. Dennis, notwithstanding that the judges declared in his favour. Then there is the editor of the Fredericton "Gleaner," and Brother Richardson of the Winnipeg "Tribune," and a number of other wicked chaps. Even the editor of the Canadian Courier has said some things, which might reasonably be included in the same category.

What a pity this rule had not been imported from Germany before Mr. Stratton and Mr. Ross left the Ontario government? What a fine they could have imposed on Mr. Macdonald of the Toronto Globe for that memorable "barnacle" editorial! The fine would have eaten up all the increase in salary which that editorial brought him.

About a dozen British journalists arrived last week and some more are on the way. If these gentlemen do not say this is the finest country on earth, with the best equipped railways, the most honest politicians, the finest newspapers, and the greatest natural resources in the world—have them fined. If one of them dares to say that protection is not a good thing for Canada, the fine should be very heavy, one-half to go to the Liberal campaign fund and one-half to the Conservative campaign fund. In this case, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association will undertake to collect the fines for a commission of five per cent.

The idea is a splendid one. Down with the critic and the plain-speaker! !

WHEN Mr. Morang undertook to give us a set of biographies under the general title of "Makers of Canada," every patriot not wholly concerned with money-making rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Mr. Morang was known as a daring and enterprising publisher. It was learned that he had the sympathy of a goodly number of Canadian scholars and had secured a corps of able editors. His presentation of Wilison's "Laurier" had set a new style in Canadian book-making. Consequently many of these patriots believed that a new era in Canadian literature had dawned.

The series is almost complete and one must confess to a measure of disappointment. It may be that the publisher attempted a task beyond his powers; it may be that when he got to the selling part of his undertaking he did not meet with the support which he had expected; or it may be that his editorial staff were men more accustomed to the smell of the study-lamp than to keeping a public audience awake. Whatever the defect, the books have not proved popular. This is an unfortunate circumstance because so much good intention and so much excellent work deserved a wider appreciation.

There is one criticism which may be afforded here. The volume by Stephen Leacock, entitled "Baldwin, Lafontaine, Hincks" is not biography. The author distinctly says in his preface that it is intended to be an essay on "Responsible Government." Mr. Morang promised us entertaining biography; Mr. Morang gives us constitutional essays. He ought to have known that Stubbs is not quite so popular an author as Justin McCarthy, and that "The United Kingdom" by Professor Goldwin Smith was not a popular success. Either Mr. Morang's promises were misleading, or his authors and his editors caused him to change his mind. What occurred in connection with the Leacock book occurred with several of the others; hence the whole series is political history rather than pure biography.

The books have great value. They are splendid works of reference. They should be in every public and educational library in the country. Nevertheless, they cannot be as popular as they would have been had the original aim been adhered to more closely and the personal element emphasised.

WAS there ever an age since the earth began to cool when there was so much talk of nerves and worry as we hear and read at the present day? One of the most distinguished young medical scientists in England has just concluded a series of addresses on "Worry: the Disease of the Age." The nerve specialists on this continent have become millionaires, with automobiles and country residences to burn. But here is a curious circumstance! Mrs. Eddy, who believes in neither nerves nor worry, and to whom matter is a myth, has also laid up for herself treasures on earth although she cannot entirely rid herself of such a substantial occurrence as litigation. Worry, its absence and its cure, are among the themes of every "quiet corner" in a Saturday paper. We hear about it from the pulpit on Sunday, the advice "don't worry" glares at us in red characters from post cards and blotters, while lofty sentiments beautifully printed on a dull grey background entreat us to remain calm and let the others struggle.

A good deal of this agitation and adjuration must surely be wasted. Worry is an exercise in which certain people take a contrary sort of pleasure, and without which they would be positively lonely. To cure them of worry would be an act of unkindness. Fussing is as natural to Martha as spiritual discernment is to Mary. Why disturb the worriers and try to quell them into gentle restfulness? Let them fret their righteous souls out in being careful over many things, for it is their way of getting the most out of life and no doubt they are happier than they look.

FEW public men have received greater tributes than Sir Wilfrid Laurier received in Quebec, Montreal and Ottawa on his return from Great Britain. Both Liberals and Conservatives joined in welcoming home, not a party chief, but a great Canadian. He has served his country well and deserved this high tribute.

Even if Sir Wilfrid were, by a turn of fate and the decision of the Canadian people, to become the leader of