

WHAT WILL CANADA GET?

Under the heading of "What will Canada get?" a Toronto paper published last week a strange editorial in which the argument was put forward that it is forthwith the business of the Canadian Government to begin to dicker with the British Government regarding the terms upon which Canadian help is given on the battlefields of Europe. Why such an argument should be put forward at the present time is not clear, but in any case its provincial point of view and sordid tone are in striking contrast to the spontaneity and selflessness with which Canadian men and material wealth have been freely offered to aid the cause of humanity and civilisation at this crisis in the world's history.

GETTING AND GIVING.

What will Canada get? If Germany should happen to win, probably the alternative of making a pilgrimage to Washington with a humble request to ask either for the exercise of the Monroe doctrine or annexation or of becoming a German colony administered with the well-known gentleness of the German military and governing classes, with the C. P. R. transformed into a German State Railway forming an important link in the all-German lines of communications around the world. If the Allies win, then what Canada gets will depend upon what she gives, and probably the benefits derived will not be all measured in dollars and immigrants, nor be, perhaps, at all quickly obvious. A fresh stepping-stone will have been laid in the direction of placing the relations of the component parts of the British Empire upon a more satisfactory basis. Distinctly this is a particular in which what Canada gets will depend largely upon what Canada gives. The Toronto paper says Canada should insist that all our national expenses for troops, pensions, etc., should be repaid with interest by the British Government. That is to say, it argues that Canada should not take up arms in its own defence, unless paid to do so by the British Government, and, of course, should ignore altogether the claims upon it to do its utmost to maintain a system of government in which it is vitally interested, and with all its faults, and they are many, is immeasurably superior to the system for which its opponents in a life or death struggle, stand.

UNSATISFACTORY RELATIONS.

It is admitted by all serious students of the matter that the present relations of the self-governing Dominions, such as Canada to the mother country are unsatisfactory. Canada is a nation with national characteristics, national customs, and national prejudices (the last surely a hall-mark of nationhood?), without full national rights. We are still

in the leading strings of the Colonial Office, which *inter alia*, also looks after the Seychelles and St. Helena, and subject to its provoking, pettifogging and grandmotherly patronage. Even at a time of national crisis, as at the outbreak of war with Germany, our ministers had to cable to the Colonial Office humbly supplicating directions on even the most minute points, which a minor official, if he had the power, could dispose of in five minutes. We cannot send a Canadian Army to the battle fields of Europe; it is merely the Canadian Contingent—of the British Army. The Indian Army is a separate entity with the pride of its own name; the Canadian Army is merged with the British Army. Any lawyer with a large practise finds almost daily cropping up points where Canada's powers under her present system of government within the British Empire are limited by provoking restrictions.

GROWTH OF AN IMPERIAL MOVEMENT.

Such are the circumstances, but it is almost inevitable that an important effect of the present struggle will be a decided growth in Great Britain, as in every part of the British Empire, of a sane Imperialism—something more humble and less noisy than the wild kind which was much in evidence about fifteen years ago, at the time of the South African war, and has since happily suffered an eclipse. If the Allies win, the end of the war will find the British Empire in the position of being the leading world power owing to her command of the seas, and without fear of challenge for at least a score of years. Germany will be occupied in repairing the economic damage caused by the present conflict; Russia will be busy with enormous internal political and economic developments—a new Russia is not far off; the Austrian Empire and the Balkan States, their boundaries possibly readjusted to suit national traditions and prejudices will be busy getting themselves out of bankruptcy; France with the amazing thrift of her people will be repairing the waste of the present war; Italy having probably been placated with a slice of the existing Austrian Empire, is hardly likely to be a disturber of the peace of Europe. The next twenty years following the conclusion of this war will probably be a time unequalled in modern history for the quiet consideration and discussion of the problems of Imperial Government as affecting the British Empire.

A FALSE STEP.

It would be useless to expect that this discussion will make rapid progress or that remarkable results will be achieved within a comparatively short space of time. The ingrained British system of progressing less by revolutions than by broadening down