

BRITISH DIPLOMACY AND CANADA

V. Concluded.

IT requires about thirty-three years to remove a false impression from the public mind, and about the same length of time to replace it by a correct one. This formula may be employed under ordinary circumstances, and will be found sufficiently accurate for all practical purposes in cases which are not complicated by self-interest, national jealousy, or theological hatred.

No one in Canada has any especial interest in entertaining or propagating the delusion that British diplomacy has been inept or that the area of Canada was unnecessarily abridged by any negotiations which had been undertaken in the ordinary course of Imperial diplomacy. And yet, up to a few years ago such opinion did prevail, and not alone in the minds of the most foolish or the most ignorant. The reason probably is that no one had any especial interest in disseminating the truth.

But comparatively recently there has been a remarkable recrudescence of feeling for everything pertaining to the Empire, and a desire to be informed upon all the circumstances which led to its establishment. Scholars have undertaken investigations, but the results of their researches lie in transactions of learned Societies, which but slowly filter down through the magazines and newspapers into the common mind. Much labour and love has been bestowed upon the history of British diplomacy in its relation to Canada, and the record is now open to all who choose to read. The incurably stupid and the wilfully ignorant may be left to themselves. This writing is not for them. It is rather for those who are oppressed with public cares, who are entangled in the intricacies of practical politics, and have not that reasonable leisure which is necessary for forming opinions upon the results of enquiry made at first hand; since it is an obligation upon