

# OPINIONS OF OTHER PEOPLE

*Letters to the Editor on Various Subjects Recently Discussed in the Canadian Courier*

Fort William, Ont.

Editor, The Canadian Courier:

I HAVE been told there are no such things as Canadians in Canada—except possibly the descendants of those ladies and gentlemen who once costumed in blankets and feathers in winter and red skins and less feathers in summer.

Perhaps the dearth of Canadians in Canada is due to the fact that the bigger ones are killed off young. When I say "killed off" I do not refer to the war. Long-distance execution from the big Imperial ambush has been in vogue since Confederation.

Let's take a peep into the system. We'll say John Blank, third generation Canuck, gradually rises into prominence as a Canadian leader of thought. He has certain pronounced national ideals which he is cute enough to keep under his bushel basket till he's high enough up to swing 'em without bumping the rocks below. Then the little snipers at home get busy. If his volplaning is too skilfully executed for them to bring him down as a "grafter," an "annexationist," an awful "nationalist," or the common, garden variety of "corruptionist," an S.O.S. call goes out for the big game hunters over the water to get busy.

John Blank gets a pressing invitation overseas. He is whirled from dinner to dinner, wined and stuffed against the great day of dissolution. So much is made of his vibrating potentialities and brilliant future by the leading statesmen and public prints that John Blank gets dizzy in the head and begins to wonder if it is not true that he is equipped with somewhat wider intellectual rollers than are designed to fit the narrow-gauge metals at home.

About the time he has reached this receptive mood they traject a nice, gold-plated title through his solar plexus and hand him a tinsel-covered handle for his name. This finishing touch is invariably sure death. Sir John Blank, K.C.M.G., leaves the riddled corpse of his Canadianism somewhere overseas and comes home inoculated for life against advanced nationalism. There have been cases where the toxin didn't "take," but they are rare enough to be native curiosities.

At times you will actually run across individuals who proclaim native birth without an addenda about their grandparents. There are people in this country who, suddenly asked for their nationality and not having pause to select the most suitable of the fifteen European breeds from which their ancestors sprung, have, on the spur of the moment, been known to tell others they were "Canadians." For their rashness such adventurers are usually transfixed with a Mona Lisa stare and gain a colourless "Oh yes, uh, hu, I see," meaning nothing in particular unless it be, "I hope he's harmless."

Anent questions as to race, there is the story of the chap who was making his registration before the Pearly Gates.

"Of what nationality are you, son?" asked the bearded guardian.

"Canadian!" responded the newcomer.

St. Peter scratched his head for a moment, then the light seemed to suddenly break in upon him.

"Let me see," he ventured, "are you the fellow who played hockey with Duluth last season, or the chap who cleaned up on the Chicago wheat market?"

However, it must be admitted one may run across persons in Chicago, New York or San Francisco, or other centres a safe distance from our border who will inform one above a whisper, and without a furtive glance over the shoulder, that they are "Canadians." But "Canadians in Canada!" Well, it used to be a deadly sin to so acclaim oneself. It is not quite so dreadful now.

CHARLES JENKINS.

November 8, 1916.

Editor Canadian Courier:

Having read with considerable interest your article in the Courier on Church Union, and especially on the recently held Convocation in Toronto, may I be permitted a few words from another point of view. The impression created by your admirable article is that only a group of earnest stand-patters are in sympathy with the movement to oppose Union within the Presbyterian Church. No doubt the attendance of venerables at the convocation was a most noticeable feature, but there were many, very many, young men there and young men who represent a very large section of the Church of advanced thought. The six-year-out minister interviewed in your article may represent a type, but not the only one. While you are not interested in my own attitude, may I say that I regard it as typical of a growing section of our

## Have We Any Canadians?

By CHARLES JENKINS

## Church Union and Young Men

By E. B. WYLLIE

## Tax American Periodicals

By NEW BRUNSWICK

## Journalists and Professors

By COLLEGIAN

### CANADA'S MAGAZINES

London Advertiser, Dec. 9, 1916.

THE Advertiser believes that Canadian magazines have made distinct advances since the war began. All of them are quickening to their opportunities, and although it is a long, long way to the point where the influence of the American magazine will be overcome, yet if the good work goes on much will develop toward the establishing of a popular periodical class which can do so much to shape the consciousness of the country.

The Advertiser does not deplore the entrance of the better class of American magazine, although some that are widely read are not fit to be touched with tongs. The conscientious American magazine is a mine of information to the Canadian, and helps to keep him up-to-date as to the progress of society, science and business on this continent. Also there are splendid and high-minded men and women, who sound always the keynote of democracy and the good old virtues in new dress, writing the short stories of the United States. (It may be noted that most of them lean toward the British ideals of justice and denounce the German conception).

Among the Canadian magazines the Canadian Courier develops the weekly field along new lines. While it may be just a trifle too self-conscious at times, it is coming into the title of "National Reporter" for Canada. The "Sons of Canada," by Augustus Bridle, is a Courier product that should be the basis of public school instruction. The Courier pages always have something vital to Canadian welfare, and with its editorship in capable hands, it would seem that the support of the Canadian people is the only thing it lacks to become a great force for good, and for the development of Canadian talent. There are many men in newspaper work in Canada who need only a powerful weekly magazine to develop them as national reporters for Canada, as Blythe, Collins, Cobb, the Irwins and many others are national reporters for the United States. Circulation should come to such a publication, and advertising is certain to follow in the wake of popular approval.

Canada has three splendid monthly publications—McLean's, the Canada Monthly and the Canadian Magazine. Each has a distinct individuality, and as editors receive encouragement and the struggle for mere existence ends, these publications will become as vital to Canadian life as McClure's, the American, Everybody's and the Metropolitan are vital to American life. Every Canadian should be a reader of Canadian magazines. Those who are not now will be surprised at the things they may learn about their country. The writing profession, the public, the news dealer and the advertiser should consider it a patriotic duty to give the Canadian magazine its due. They do not ask for patronage on a charitable basis, and they are by no means weak to-day, but if 25 per cent. of the population would endeavour to do its duty by the national magazines they would soon be more potent in the life of the nation.

younger men in pulpit and pew. I am a student of "higher criticism" and of "sociology" and have gone a bit further in both than most of our younger men. Moreover, I am extremely fond of the catch-word "efficiency"—though it is being a bit over-worked by many who roll it with unction on their tongues; I have worked among men in the North, on railway construction, etc., as a common labourer for seven years before entering my thirteen years of University work and during many vacation periods. From the same point of view of efficiency I fail to see the pressing need of organic Union until a larger measure of preparation has been effected by co-operation in removing the evils of over-lapping, where it is said to exist. Our Unionist friends have resolutely set their faces against this and gone in for Union or

nothing. From the same point of view and from that of internal honesty we are opposed to the action of this year's Assembly because the majority simply ignored the growing opposition to Union among the people and railroaded Union through a packed Assembly (see the notorious Ramsay letter). Thousands who, like myself, have no objection to Union if a hearty and real Union, are opposed to the autocratic action of a group of ministers who have ignored the patent opinion of the church membership, led by the ecclesiastics and secretaries of the church. One of the most prominent Unionists in the city of Halifax said to me in the presence of others, "Why should we care for the people's vote; we have to maul and whip the people into following us." That spirit is not popular these days and it is to withstand it that the Convocation in Toronto was called and from a desire to preserve in the church the spirit of our Empire the movement against the action of the Assembly derives its chief strength.

Your article hardly makes this clear and does us less than justice. There are many sides to this issue, and one should try to make all issues equally clear. Like many other great movements the Union has been unfortunate in having for its leaders men whose main desire was to rush things regardless of the people who must carry it into effect. The earlier Union of the Presbyterian branches was not an analogy to the present either in matter or in method, and has no bearing on the points at issue.

Very sincerely,

E. B. WYLLIE,

St. Andrew's Church, Chatham, N.B.

St. John, N.B., Dec. 4, 1916.

Editor Canadian Courier:

Sir,—Whilst waiting for a car at one of the transfer corners in a certain New Brunswick town, I stepped into a drug store, where I witnessed two transactions, and this imposition upon your editorial indulgence is the result of my observations. Among customers served during my wait were two women. One purchased a bottle of cough mixture and a tin of mustard leaves, amounting to fifty cents; the other bought a half dollar's worth of U. S. magazines. The former, whose purchases covered necessities, was called upon for four cents for war tax stamps; the latter, who invested in luxuries from across the line, had no tax to pay. Curiosity prompting me, I turned over the magazines displayed for sale at that particular drug store, and found 19 different U. S. publications, and was assured by the clerk in charge that his sales of that class of literature were very large. I had heard Sir George Foster, and had been reading the Courier religiously, and those two transactions did not appear to me like a square deal, and so I have written this to inquire why it is that the powers that be in charge of the revenue proposition have failed to spot what looks to me like a fairly good source of income. It would seem as if a cent tax on 5 cent, 2 cents on 10 cent, 3 on 15, 4 on 20, 5 on 25, U. S. magazines, and so on, would result in quite a respectable revenue and incidentally give the Canadian magazine a chance to attain something beyond a struggle for existence. Mr. MacMechan's article, while forcible, was not half strong enough, and we Canadians can't wake up soon enough.

Sincerely yours,

NEW BRUNSWICK.

Dec. 4, 1916.

Editor, The Canadian Courier:

There are several things I should like to say about the way you "featured" MacMechan in your last issue. I suppose it was to illustrate his point about the Americanizing of our speech that you used a piece of American slang. "Speaking out in meeting" is a pure down-East Yankee idiom. "Church" was taboo; "meeting" and "meeting-house" were the accepted terms. Speaking out in meeting was a violation of the decorum which should mark a religious service. Again let me ask you, as man to man, why journalists think themselves entitled to sneer at professors? or why you think any individual should feel himself complimented at the expense of his calling? The implied contrast is between the dull, prosy professor and the brilliant, omniscient journalist. The only trouble with the idea is that it is about fifty years old, when the professor was an ex-parson. You journalists should wake up to the world around you. Is Hutton a frump? Is there a "pen-pusher" in Canada that can turn out racier copy than Stephen Leacock? And they are types.

Yours candidly,

COLLEGIAN.