

# REFLECTIONS

BY THE EDITOR

## Sir James Whitney

**H**IS many friends and admirers throughout Canada are pleased that Sir James Whitney may possibly be restored to a measure of strength and vigour. But, undoubtedly, his political career is at an end. It can hardly be that after such a severe illness, his medical advisers would again allow him to risk his life in the political arena.

Yet, if Sir James retires, there are great difficulties in sight for the Conservative party in Ontario. It is always so, upon the retirement of a great leader. When Sir John Macdonald passed away, it took years for the Conservative party to produce another great leader. When Hon. Edward Blake retired from the leadership of the Liberal party, there was the same tedious and time-consuming evolution.

The outstanding figures in Ontario Conservatism are Hon. W. J. Hanna and Hon. Adam Beck. It would seem natural that either one should succeed. But it may be that Hon. Mr. Hanna would not care to serve under Mr. Beck, and Hon. Mr. Beck might not care to serve under Mr. Hanna. So far, there has been only speculation on the result. If a choice becomes necessary, the Conservative party may congratulate itself that it has two such good men to choose between, with one or two other coming leaders cruising in the offing.

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## Some Hopeful Signs

**T**HAT the two parties are feeling their way towards a non-partisan settlement of the navy question is indicated by some of the speeches in the Senate. There may be only slight progress in this direction, but even slight progress gives reason for hope.

The CANADIAN COURIER, following the lead of the three hundred prominent citizens who signed the non-partisan memorial, has maintained week after week for more than a year that a bi-partisan policy is the only solution. Many other independent journals have voiced a similar sentiment. The best citizens everywhere have applauded these suggestions.

In the Senate, last week, Sir George Ross, the Liberal leader in that chamber, spoke deprecatingly of the cleavage between the two parties on this great question:

"That is a terrible and humiliating condition of things—two great parties at variance with each other on a matter of life and death. It never so happened in Britain, even in the dissensions that arose over the Crimean or the Boer wars. While the war was on both parties locked arms and marched side by side, in Parliament and out of it, for the defence of the honour of Britain. That is what we ought to do. The defence of Canada and the honour of Canada is not in the custody of one party more than the other."

Senator Lougheed, the Government leader, replied that he was glad to see that the Liberal Senators concurred as to naval defence and its necessity at the present moment. He expressed the hope that before the session was over there would be an intimation that the Liberal party is willing to join in some practical defence plan.

Senator Lougheed is right. The Liberal declaration that a bi-partisan settlement of this great national question is necessary should be followed by some definite move on the part of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his lieutenants. Otherwise, their laudable statements are a mere show of words. Only

by definite and clear action can they prove to the people that they are in earnest.

In the meantime, every citizen who has influence at Ottawa and who believes in a non-partisan settlement should do his duty. Several hundred letters from influential citizens would have a powerful effect if despatched to Ottawa just now.

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## Feeding Ourselves

**D**R. C. C. JAMES, who has made a life-long study of agricultural conditions in this country and who is a member of the Dominion Commission on the High Cost of Living, laid down some elementary principles in a recent public address. He contrasted the conditions in Prince Edward Island and British Columbia. In the Island Province, eighty-four per cent. of the people are engaged in agricultural pursuits, foodstuffs are exported because there is a surplus and prosperity is rampant. In the Pacific Province, less than fifty per cent. of the people are on the land, there is shortage of foodstuffs which must be imported from the United States and Australia, and prosperity is much less striking.

The lesson is simple and clear. The province which is self-contained, so far as food is concerned, does not feel the pinch of "hard times" when they come. The province which does not produce enough from the land to feed itself and leave a surplus for export is bound to suffer when industry and commerce lag.

If this means anything, it indicates that more attention must be paid to getting people on the land and keeping them there. This is a tremendous and ever-pressing task. Our school system makes it more difficult, because the tendency has been to educate the boy off the land; to make him a doctor or a lawyer or a dentist, instead of making him an expert farmer.

When the present era of land speculation and railway building has passed, agriculture may take its proper place in our system of economic activity. But it would be well to help forward that prosperous era. It will not do to sit idly by.

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## Political Wastage

**A** NEWSPAPER despatch sent out from Ottawa, concerning some new junior judges for Ontario, contains the proud boast that "there will be no members of parliament in the list." Whether the Government suddenly ran short of barristers who are also M.P.'s, is not explained. Nor is any change in the historic policy of appointing members of parliament to public office announced. Let none be alarmed, the ancient system of distributing jobs remains as it has been for a hundred years.

This is one of the manifestations of our system of political wastage, a system which is in vogue in all our governments, all our legislatures, and all our municipalities. In the city of Toronto, for example, the Property Commissioner is a flour and feed merchant who happened to become an alderman. The corporation counsel is one of the cleverest politicians in the city, and was appointed Counsel during the closing days of a two-years' term as mayor.

As far back as the minds of present day politicians go, it has always been customary to appoint members of the Ontario Legislature to be sheriffs and registrars and other public officials "who toil not and neither do they spin." Liberals and Conservatives approve the practice. Sir Oliver Mowat, Sir George Ross and Sir James Whitney have all given it their distinguished approbation. So in Quebec and Manitoba, and the other provinces. So it has been in the Parliament of Canada since 1867.

To tell the truth, if you desire to be a member of parliament you must break into the circle of people who are now office-holders, or who fully intend to be. There is a definite ring. The man who makes a place for himself in that circle must do some real work for himself and the party—either party. The circle is political, but not partisan. It doesn't matter whether the burglar is a Liberal or a Conservative. He will get his place regardless. There is only one rule to hamper him: Liberals are always appointed by Liberals and Conservatives by Conservatives.

This is the political wastage of the democratic

system. Every leader demands his price and the people must pay. It matters not whether the leader is advertising manager of a labour journal, an alderman, a member of the legislature, or a cabinet minister—he demands exorbitant pay. There are socialistic labour leaders in Toronto who would not care to open their bank books to public inspection, and there are big men at Ottawa who have the same distaste for publicity. It is to-day as it was in the days of the Family Compact—the Compact still exists though the Family may have been largely eliminated. But in Ontario, they even go so far as to say that there is still a Family Compact, and name a most distinguished and brilliant man as the head of the institution.

Monarchy in one form or another has always existed and still flourishes. Canada has numerous petty sovereigns and each his circle of retainers. Under the monarchs of old there was political patronage and wastage; under the monarchs of to-day there are similar expensive practices whereby a few men get the judgeships, shrievalties, and other fat positions with which the "Crown" buttresses its sovereignty. When the Socialists and Labourites win the control of political patronage, there will still be monarchs, and there will still be those who will benefit by princes' favours.

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## License Fees and the Boy

**S**OME time ago it was suggested in this column that the mere reduction in licenses would not "save the boy"; that he must be saved by the mother, the father and the school-teacher. The suggestion seems to have met with more approval

## THE SPIRIT OF PRUDENCE.

"Clearly, we have come through a time of difficulty in a most creditable manner, and we can look forward to the future cheerfully if the spirit of prudence which now characterizes our people remains unchanged at least until another good crop has been marketed."

—Sir Edmund Walker.

than some of those which appear in this page of wisdom. Therefore the idea may be developed further.

Those who favour good roads and better roads are suggesting that the motorists be taxed and that these taxes should be applied to road construction and road maintenance. Isn't there a parallel here? Why not take the license fees collected from the hotels and use them to provide public clubs, gymnasiums and sporting fields for the workingman and his boy? Why should the license fees be applied to the reduction of general taxation?

If the workingman and the boy are to be saved from the evils of intemperance, they must be given other places in which to spend their leisure hour. If a workingman wants to spend a pleasant hour with his fellowman, smoke his pipe, and talk politics, where can he go except to the bar-room? The churches are closed and the schools are closed and "silence" is demanded in the public reading-rooms. Men must talk with their fellows. The richer classes have their clubs; what is there for the workman?

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## Hon. Mr. Foster Returns

**T**HAT the pleading of the public has had some effect upon Premier Borden is clearly proven by the return of Hon. George E. Foster to Ottawa. Our champion orator is to be heard once more in the House of Commons. Gladness reigns supreme in the hearts of Mr. Foster's admirers.

All last session, when the Canadian navy idea was being hammered for political purposes, Hon. George E. Foster was in Australia, China and Japan. Many of us feared that he would again be absent during the present session. It was rumoured that certain influences were at work to induce him to stay away. But he has suddenly returned from England and we rejoice.

Aside from the fact that Mr. Foster is the great champion of a Canadian navy, his crisp oratory always enlivens the dull debates on any subject in which he is interested. Dr. Clark and Hon. Mr. Graham are all right in their way, and there are several other fun-makers, but when something really sarcastic is to be said Mr. Foster is the man. When Mr. Foster takes his seat, the public will eagerly await a sprightliness of debate which none can impart so easily and so effectively as this past master of parliamentary discussion.

## THE TRUTH ABOUT US.

Immigration figures show an influx for the year of 417,000. But how many went out? What was the net gain for the year? Was it one hundred thousand? Was it two hundred thousand?

In the decade 1901-1911, Canada got 1,500,000 new citizens and lost 700,000 of them. There were 417,000 arrivals in Canada in 1913, but how many departures were there? Do you want to be deluded or do you want to know the truth?