

REFLECTIONS

BY STAFF WRITERS.

"COLLIER'S WEEKLY" has extended editorially to "The Canadian Courier" a neighbour's greeting and well wishes. We appreciate the big-hearted liberal spirit which inspired the complimentary remarks and will try to be deserving. For many years "Collier's" has depicted national life in the United States by word and picture, and fearlessly, without cant, has fought for the correction of abuses regardless of whether they were committed by the Trust Magnate or the Demagogue. Should we succeed in occupying the place in Canada now filled in the United States by "Collier's" we shall have gone a long distance towards reaching our ideal of a national weekly.

A GENEROUS
WELCOME

The newspapers in our own country have likewise been most generous in their welcome. From Nova Scotia to British Columbia, the best wishes have been poured upon us through the medium of the editorial columns. The reception has been almost unique and we despair of ever being able to repay in a decent measure the kindness of our brother journalists.

We have ventured into a field which has hitherto been regarded as "impossible." To publish an illustrated weekly in Canada has been the dream of several ambitious journalists. It may be that we are too rash and should have waited for a larger Canada, but our reception so far has tended to confirm us in the belief that the time is opportune. If the public will be lenient while we develop and will overlook little defects and inconsistencies until our "machinery" is in full working order, we believe we can give them a journal which will truly represent that part of the Empire which the orators tell us is "the brightest gem in the British Crown."

MR. PRINGLE has given notice of a resolution in the Dominion Parliament to the effect that the subject of improving the condition of "the aged deserving poor and of providing for those who are helpless and infirm" is worthy of Parliamentary consideration. This brings up during the formative stage of Canadian industry the question of old age pensions, a question which in Great Britain is now within the scope of practical politics. If the question is to be discussed in Canada it should not be looked at simply as an extended phase of the question of poor relief, as Mr. Pringle's resolution would suggest. It is the Nemesis of the modern productive system that whenever the skill of an individual labourer, or group of labourers, has become well nigh automatic in its application the way is prepared for the overthrow of this advantage by the introduction of machinery. While it is true that the increase in production, due to the increased use of machinery, leads in the "long run" to a larger employment of labour, this should not lead to the smug complacency which disregards the fact that the individual labourer lives in the "short run." With every such change in industry there inevitably is, for a time at least, a displacement of labour. Every time a change in process is made there is thrown on the scrap heap of progress some part of the tediously acquired skill of the human agent in production. This does not argue for the retention of the more expensive methods of hand labour. But it must be recognised that the labourer whose skill has thus been thrown aside loses the advantage of this

OLD AGE
PENSIONS

skill; he becomes a less efficient producing agent and is less able to provide for himself. If a lowered cost of production, due to a change of process in industry, means an improvement in the general standard of comfort, is it expedient that society should reap this advantage while the individual labourer, whose skill is "scrapped," pays the price?

IN a recent editorial, "Collier's Weekly" discovered some Canadian tendencies not visible to the Canadian eye. In the course of this editorial it stated: "In Canada to-day, statesmen in high position privately predict the complete severing of England and Canada within ten years, and count among the possibilities of their own careers responding, in the Capitol at Washington, to the call of 'the Senator from Manitoba.'"

FOOLISH
HOPES

Notwithstanding the sobering influence, in recent years, of participation in world politics and in world responsibilities there ever and anon is manifest in the United States a relic of the old time Fourth of July oration wherein the "effete civilisations of Europe" were plentifully castigated. There was a time when it was thought that the trade needs of Canada would, if sufficient pressure were exerted, lead to her inevitable absorption in the United States. Such were the ideas of Blaine and Boutwell; such was the idea lurking behind the campaign for rescinding the bonding privilege. When this failed in Canada's day of need, what reason is there for assuming that in her day of prosperity she will desire to become part of a Republic which, while strong from the standpoint of wealth, is, from the governmental standpoint, staggering under its own bulk? In the dark days of 1849, when the Annexation Manifesto was issued, the shock of England's changing tariff policy was making itself felt in Canada. The rescinding of the preference, the breaking down of the forwarding trade by way of the canals and the St. Lawrence, and the reaction after a period of excessive trade stimulation were all germinative of political discontent. But it must be remembered that, even then, among those who favoured a change in political status only a minority favoured annexation. What Canada's future may be is at present idle to predict. Too often a statement of tendencies takes colour from the eye of the beholder. Canada's life to-day is to concern herself with the hand-picking of her immigrants, to strengthen and diversify her resources, feeling that by being true to herself she will not be untrue to anyone. But why, in the name of all that is sane and reasonable, should a representative American journal think that if a change should some time come the United States will be the lode-stone?

THE West has spoken over the telephone and the message the wire carries is that public ownership has developed from a theory into an issue. Premier Roblin, taking the voice of Winnipeg as the voice of the people, will commence the construction of a line that is to be the basis of a provincial telephone system. Alberta will do likewise. Thus the dreams of a year or two ago are becoming the realities of to-day. What has caused this development? Is public ownership the child of national prosperity, even as free silver was the offspring of national depression? Is it the natural reaction against the massing of wealth by

PUBLIC
OWNERSHIP