

## The Second of a Series of Articles on Reconstruction in Canada

## After the War--What?

By A. FRANK READE.

## The Human Problem of Reconstruction---Some Important Reforms---A New Starting-Point---Women Coming Into the New World---Judges and Officials Should Be Put Into Productive Work

WHERE shall we begin on the problem of reconstruction of Canada? That is really the chief problem at the start. The process should be very similar to that of construction, which always begins with a rough plan or sketch, a study of details, then the finished working plan, followed by the clearing of the ground, the digging of the foundation, and the superstructure. Such a programme cannot be worked out in its entirety when the project is not construction, but reconstruction; for we must bear in mind that there are some things we cannot change, no matter how desirable they are, or how eager we are for changes. The site, for example, cannot be changed. But, fortunately, no Canadian wants to change that. The geographical site on which the Canadian people live and work and love and struggle is ideal; so we may safely leave it to the poet's panegyrics and pass on to the edifice that is to be reconstructed and the grounds that are to be improved and differently laid out.

We must keep in mind always that in the process of reconstruction we are not dealing with bricks and mortar and material things, but with people; with human beings who have ideas, habits, traditions, attachments, sentiments, languages, degrees of training and skill, methods of thinking and working, modes of living and worshipping, limits of understanding and of education, as well as institutions of religion and philosophy, that must be thought of, and in some instances must be regarded with the most tender care.

The question of language is a serious one; not merely that we have in Western Canada nearly fifty foreign languages and dialects—for the people there are intermixed with English-speaking people, and are practically all, especially the young, ambitious individually to make English their common tongue—but the real language problem is massed in the Province of Quebec, where nearly a third of Canada's total population speaks only French, and does not understand what the other two-thirds are saying or writing. But the situation is even worse in the English-speaking parts of Canada, such as in Ontario, where practically none of the English-speaking people can either speak or read French. This vexed question is merely touched here because of its bearing on the broad question as to ideals for Canada, which we must now discuss.

## Canadian Ideals Lead the World.

Just as the architect and builder start with a plan before proceeding with construction, so we should have some plan, some ideals, as to what we desire or intend to do.

Canada, speaking nationally, has just passed the half-century of life as a Confederation of the Provinces, and therefore should be old enough to have some settled ideas and ideals as to national life. When the Confederation was formed in 1867, the basis was: Executive authority vested in the British sovereign through his representative, the Governor-General; a general legislature or parliament for the federated provinces, charged with matters of common interest to the whole country, and composed of Senate and House of Commons; provincial governments charged with control of local matters in their respective sections. Here we have, briefly stated, British connection; a strong central government, with the sovereign's representative at its head, controlling all national matters; provincial autonomy in all matters not of general (Dominion) concern.

These were the

ideals of our statesmen fifty years ago, as to the form and method by or under which the Dominion of Canada should live and develop; and it is assuring to all Canadians, as it has been inspiring to nation-builders in other lands, to know that the Fathers of Confederation proved to be "wise master-builders." Their edifice of statesmanship, which was the first experiment in federal government, was imitated by Australia in forming its Commonwealth, and later in the Union of South Africa. It is being followed also in the organization of India. In this connection, it is worth while relating that the name of the Canadian Confederation was suggested by Sir Leonard Tilley, who, on reading the 72nd Psalm, was struck with the remarkable description of Canada's geography in the eighth verse:

"He shall have Dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."

In other words, from Atlantic to Pacific, and from the River St. Lawrence to the Arctic regions, where Stefansson is even now exploring on behalf of the Dominion Government.

## Reforms Afford a Starting Point.

While Canadians may congratulate themselves on having a stable form of government with which to start their national life, there should be—and there is—a widespread desire to improve on the methods of the founders of the firm. Those old Fathers of Confederation were red-hot party politicians, and though they united for the great crisis in national life, they soon ranged themselves again on old party lines, and it has taken fifty years' time and another national crisis to bring back a union government.

But we have gone farther this time, and have abolished the chief feature of party government—the system of patronage and party pull, which vitiated the entire public service, filling necessary offices with inefficient, creating soft jobs and sinecures for party favorites, and wasting the public money most recklessly. Indeed, the example of union government has been imitated in other fields, particularly the newspaper sphere, and in many cases the two partizan papers of larger towns and cities have united. As the result of a recent case in Ontario, a small town weekly paper is able to boast that it is "the only Liberal paper in Blank County," but it is hot enough in its utterances to meet the entire county's needs.

Our ideals to-day are in advance of those of fifty years ago in respect of union government, for not only is this union to be permanent, but three important reforms—abolition of patronage, prohibition of the liquor traffic, and woman suffrage—have already sprung from the union. All these changes are

strong, radical, and in the right direction; and we may fairly take them as a starting-point for further developments along progressive lines.

Having wiped out partyism, old party methods, shallow party cries and irritating party questions, let us start on broader lines, introduce new ideas, use new terms, and get a new outlook. Let us think of Social Progress now, instead of Party Success. Let us get the true idea of democracy—the building up of the people; securing for the people a good living wage; proper housing; minimum working hours; fair distribution of the proceeds of production; the best possible training towards efficiency; a sound education that will enable them to understand social problems, so that they can intelligently take part in their solution.

Social progress must be secured, at any cost; and the social progress must be made orderly, systematic, purposeful, sure. There must be created in every member of the community—that is, in every man and woman, in every boy and girl—a deep feeling of social responsibility. Selfishness must give place to sociality; all members of the community must learn to work together for the common good; prejudices of class, of rank, of wealth, of race, of religion, must give place to broad charity, to helpfulness. The new standard of patriotism must be willingness not only to die for Canada, but to live for it—to live unselfishly, desire to help in every good work, willingness to teach what we know, to pass on to others what has helped us, anxiety to assist in removing evils, temptations, dangers, and to make our community and nation safe for democracy.

## The New "Orientation."

The key-words of reconstruction are—production and service. Production means doing productive work in the best and most thrifty way, by the most efficient methods. It means the elimination of useless occupations, the turning of every man and woman to useful, productive work. It means, in the final analysis, the examination of every man's work, as to what sort it is, and the turning of unproductive work into productive channels, or else destroying it. National service is coming, that will put a stop to all confusion as to what is real service for the community and the nation, and what is wasteful, unnecessary or positively dangerous and evil.

We must get a new "orientation"—to use the new word, which is so suggestive in this connection. That is, we must turn and look in another direction. We have been taking things for granted too much. We have been doing what we have been "used to," never thinking what it was all about. We have gone to meetings of the village, town, city or county council, and have seen men sitting around the table, and have heard them discuss community matters—the wise men of the community—never a woman. It seemed all right; it had always been so; this was a man's job; why women at such a place? (We never thought "why women?"—fact is, we took it all as a matter of course, and thought nothing at all about it.) Now comes the new orientation; we look for women around these boards now, and wonder—oh, how we wonder—that we never thought of them before. Why, these men are talking about things they don't understand at all. What do they know—the most of them, at any rate—about women's problems, such as the protection of young girls, the care of old women, mothers' pensions, the struggles of

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HONORING MANITOBA'S HEROES.

An interesting ceremony took place at Government House, Winnipeg, when Sir James Aikins, Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, conferred a number of medals on the wives and relatives of several of Canada's heroes. Two returned officers, Captain L. M. Moffatt, of the 44th Battalion, and Lieutenant T. G. Vant, 15th Canadian Machine Gun Company, were accorded the Military Cross for valor at the front. Both were wounded. In all the other cases the presentations were made to relatives owing to the death of the proper recipient. The photograph shows Sir James Aikins, officers of the Staff of Military District 10, and the recipients of the decorations, and was taken outside Government House immediately after the ceremony.