





PROSPECT AND RETROSPECT

*Imperial Order
Daughters of the Empire*



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THE Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire, may fairly be called a Twentieth Century institution. Founded as the Boer War was closing, it was an outgrowth of the new imperial feeling which had led to the sending of Canadian contingents to South Africa. It will be admitted by all who remember the early years of the Order's history that the patriotic momentum of the first days came from a realization of what the nations within the British Empire had done to defend citizens' rights in a remote and (then) little-known community. After peace was declared it was necessary to find varied tasks for the newly-formed Order, lest the enthusiasm following the years of conflict should be forgotten, or should dwindle into an unavailing flow of words.

To-day the Order faces a situation of great difficulty, for the Boer War was a passing and casual affray in comparison with even one month of the Great Conflict. There is exhaustion, depression and a tendency to fall into a "what's-the-use!" mood, wherever one may look. While this is a condition to be expected after such a struggle as that which kept us strung to our highest endeavour during fifty-one tense months, the state of social and industrial circles is none the less disheartening. If we look back, however, at the way we have come, we shall gain courage for future problems.

Let us consider what the Order was enabled, owing to its Dominion-wide organization, to do during the war. Over five million dollars—a sum raised, in the main, by small contributions—showed the earnestness of the workers in the Order. The value of the supplies sent to the soldiers and to sufferers from the war, can hardly be estimated; but it, also, must be in the millions. There is an expression, "cold cash," to describe a money contribution; but, surely, the millions which the I.O.D.E. sent overseas were warm and throbbing with the love and hope that thousands of Canadian mothers sent with it. With the outbreak of war in August, 1914, there was an intense desire on the part of the women of this country to help the men who were to bear the brutal brunt of the struggle. It was then that the value of national organization was realized, for, in nearly every community, women who wished to help turned to the I.O.D.E. to know what could be sent—and how—and when. It was natural then that new chapters should

spring into existence, over night, as it were. When the Armistice Day, November 11th, 1918, arrived, there were in Canada four Provincial chapters; twenty-four Municipal; six hundred and forty-two Primary; eighty Junior—a total of seven hundred and fifty chapters in the Dominion of Canada, as compared with one hundred and eighteen chapters in 1908. It may be said, without any undue exaltation, that the members of the I.O.D.E. in Canada tried to play a supplementary part to the fighting men who saved the Allies from the Hun. Had the women failed—the month of November, 1918, would have told a different story. Not only did the I.O.D.E. play a gallant part in those fateful days, but it formed a centre of inspiration in many a community and helped to keep up the courage of those who were disheartened and distressed.

Now that the Great War is over, the question is—what work should appeal peculiarly to I.O.D.E. sympathies? The answer came more than twelve months ago when the plan of the I.O.D.E. War Memorial was framed and submitted for general approval. The committee during the year has held three meetings at which eight provinces were represented:—Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia. This Memorial means, in large, educational opportunities for the children of soldiers, sailors and airmen who gave their lives, or were disabled, in defence of the Empire.

That we may realize how fitting such a Memorial will be, let us consider the present condition of our schools and colleges. The president of one of our universities said last October that he had not seen a more moving sight than the overcrowded chapel at the opening of the academic year. Scores of young men in that institution had laid down their lives for the sake of freedom and righteousness. Many of the women graduates had gone overseas to help in hospitals and soldiers' homes—and, after all the stress and suffering of those years, the chapel was once more filled with young students, many of them returned soldiers, eager for what the university could give her children. There were in the young faces the hopefulness and the courage which had carried Canadians through the horrors of Ypres and Vimy and Courcellette—and professors, president and chancellor felt a thrill of homage for the indomitable spirit of the students who asked fresh tasks. Everywhere last autumn the story was the same, told by our schools—primary, secondary and university. There were more students than ever before, all of them eager for the year's work, with a keener interest than other years had known, for the studies of the class-room or the play of the campus. The educational world is awake and alive to this ardent spirit, which means research and an enthusiasm for intellectual effort. The I.O.D.E. is therefore entirely in keeping with

the demands and the desires of the times, in making its War Memorial an educational opportunity—a Gate Beautiful, as it were, into a land of greater freedom and deeper knowledge. There is nothing more pitiful than the denied craving of the young student—there is no finer gratification than that which comes from bestowing on the aspiring scholar the opportunity to learn more and to follow farther trails. Wherefore, it was a desire to bestow a gift of the “things that are more excellent” that led the I.O.D.E. to form the plans for this War Memorial.

The leading features of this plan are Bursaries in Canadian Universities, Post Graduate Scholarships in British Universities, the placing of historical pictures and libraries in schools. Nine bursaries—one for each Province—will be offered annually for a period of eighteen years. For these, only the sons and daughters of deceased and permanently disabled soldiers and sailors and men of the Air Force are eligible. One hundred thousand dollars has been apportioned for this purpose, and a second amount of the same figures has been allotted to the post graduate scholarships in British universities. According to the resolution passed at the annual meeting of 1919, this is to be the permanent memorial of the Order. On its own scale, this memorial has the same ideal as that put in practical form in the will of the late Cecil Rhodes.

The Canadian has been averse to anything in the nature of what has been described as “flag-flapping.” More than seventeen years ago Mr. Bliss Carman, a writer who was born in Canada, wrote a musical ode in Commemoration of the Crowning of King Edward VII. In a line referring to his native land, Mr. Carman said: “The proud, reserved Dominion, with a history all her own.” Certainly the Canadian has taken his first of July calmly, and this very reserve has brought about misunderstanding of the real sentiment with which the people of the various provinces regard the Confederation which made the Dominion. Canada does not easily express herself and is rather distrustful of perfervid oratory on the subject of our national greatness or kindred themes; yet she is prompt and eager when patriotism is to be expressed in action. In the early part of this century unfavorable criticism was frequently heard in Canada regarding the great Republic to the south of the Dominion, in its school policy of promptly and obviously instructing the newcomer by means of flag salute and historical text-books surcharged with “patriotism” concerning the nature of United States’ citizenship. Now, that our immigration problems have become more acute, may we not admit that Uncle Sam was wise in dealing promptly with the new citizens and in impressing vividly on the little pupils of the public schools the fact that the Stars and Stripes symbolized the duties and privileges in the new home?

School histories are another matter and have frequently been a source of bitter prejudice, with little of the true "historical" attitude. However, the young Roumanian, Italian, or Greek cannot learn too soon, after his arrival in the New World, what is meant by the flag and the laws of the home on the western side of the Atlantic.

The Great War has opened our eyes to the dangers of allowing the newcomers to remain in ignorance of the nature of our civilization and our constitution, and in this great work of "Canadianization," (awkward as the word may seem), the I.O.D.E. can be and has already been an effective factor. Reference has been made to the placing of historical pictures and libraries in our schools. The importance of these educational guides to citizenship cannot be overestimated. The first Lord Tennyson, a poet who was a true imperialist, said, in one of his "Idyls,"—"Things seen are mightier than things heard." The pictures we see in those formative school years have a lifelong influence on our ideals and aspirations. The mother of a young Canadian soldier, who went overseas with the first force sent in 1914, said of her boy: "I knew he would go as soon as he could after war was declared. You see, he has had a picture of Kitchener on his bureau for years." Surround youth with the faces and scenes which mean discipline, courage and endurance, and you will find these have an abiding influence. A great deal has been said regarding the coarseness of the "comic cuts" in certain daily publications. Children brought up in familiarity with such pictures (and such pictures only) are not likely to have gained anything fine in the association with such debased forms of "art." In the schools the attempt is being made to show the youth of the land better things—and the I.O.D.E. libraries and pictures are giving an artistic, as well as a historic service. Such a picture, for instance, as Sir John Millais' "The Boyhood of Raleigh," is a story in itself, giving, with all the added charm of rich colouring, the background of the young adventurer's boyhood. The portraits of the statesmen, men of letters and soldiers who have made the British Isles, though a "speck on the world's map, a monarch in the world's councils," should become familiar to those who are to mould the future Dominion.

It is not unfitting here to refer to the excellent work the I.O.D.E. chapters have done in commemorating the deeds of the noble in name and record. Rupert Brooke deserves to be remembered for his sonnets no less than for his patriotic passing. We should never forget our imperishable heritage of literature—especially the writings of those poets, who, from Chaucer to Browning, have made British poetry a priceless possession. It is the privilege of the I.O.D.E. to encourage the study and the love of the works of these men whose genius is always allied with our race—and eagerly have these libraries of historical and literary value been received in many communities. The name of that early English printer, Caxton, has been chosen by one of the Hamilton

chapters—and throughout the Dominion we shall find names associated with the I.O.D.E., which remind us of the men, who, with toil of pen or sword, helped to form the British institutions which have been the basis of much of our civilization. It was the greatest Englishman of them all whose Juliet asked: "What's in a name?"—and through the centuries there has been no definite reply.

Speaking of words, let us admit that "imperialism" has frequently been "soiled by all ignoble use" and has been employed to describe a certain type of snobbery which must be offensive to all sane and thoughtful citizens. It is the duty of the I.O.D.E. to rescue that word from any such degradation and to show by the policy of that Order in Canada that the imperial idea means responsibility and service—a sense of the obligation which always must be associated with talents or endowments. The British Empire has known a history of development and enrichment such as the Caesars never contemplated—but such an imperial career implies a corresponding burden of responsibility for those who realize what Britain's power should mean. When the career of a Cromer or a Dufferin is contemplated, there should come to every British subject a sense of gratitude for the utter devotion which such men showed to an ideal of imperial connection. Imperialism, if properly understood, means the highest and most arduous service—and only such a conception of it will make it the ennobling force that it can be, throughout the lands called British. Anything lower than the knightly ideal of fealty and service will mean ultimate disintegration.

In Canada we have a dual loyalty which the foreign visitor sometimes fails to understand. It cannot be impressed too clearly upon the newcomer who decides to cast in his national lot with Canadians, that ours is a self-governing nation within an Empire, and that the overwhelming majority of Canadians prefer the connection with Great Britain. There is no antagonism between the Canadian ideal and the loyalty to the British Crown—as was manifest in the whole-hearted reception which was given our Prince of Wales. The imperial bond has been strengthened, not weakened, by the sacrifices of the war, and, disturbing as many of the elements are in our industrial and political circles, the matter of British connection remains a pride and a partnership.

The I.O.D.E. can do great service for both Canada and the Mother country in defining and illustrating the true imperialism, which means a striving for service, not for mere personal distinction; and which seeks the advancement of the best interests of the Empire, not individual aggrandizement. We are aiding the Empire when we work for Canada's progress; we are helping the Dominion when we seek to understand the development of the Greater Britain and to adopt all that we may for our own use or experiment. The role of woman as guide and

teacher is nothing new. It is more important than ever before that the youth of our country shall know its story and the duties that devolve upon its citizens. That the I.O.D.E. may effectively aid in the heavy but splendid tasks that lie ahead for the Canadians of Reconstruction Days, unity is essential—that unity of which Kipling wrote in his memorable lines on the City of Victoria:—

“From East to West the circling word has passed,
Till West is East beside our land-locked blue;
From East to West the tested chain holds fast,
The well-forged link rings true.”



