

Correspondence

Charlottetown, P. E. I., Canada.

March 9, 1914.

Editor "Red and White,"
St. Dunstan's College.

My dear Sir:—

Many thanks for your courteous suggestion that I prepare material regarding George Washington for your valued publication. I find I shall not be able to get together anything formal; but it is just possible that two or three points stated very informally in this letter may make a more painstaking presentation. Certainly, with the cordial relations into which St. Dunstan's has brought its American and Canadian students, and the hearty co-operation which all its officers have manifested in connection with the Washington's Birthday celebration, I cannot let this opportunity escape to say how greatly I appreciated, as consul, my recent half-day at your institution.

The fact that Washington never told a lie, if true, would have less significance for me than the fact that he never made a jest, which is unquestioned. At least the one joke which has been handed down to prove the exception to his usual habit is sufficiently flat to assure us that he was an extremely liberal-minded individual. The reason (and the result) of this characteristic was his absorption in important and interesting matters. The high spirits which, with most of us, effervesce into nonsense and whimsies, were repressed in Washington to give strength to his emotions of patriotism and to his volition for arduous and detailed work. He was a rather sober-minded citizen.

This brings us to his second characteristic, his methodical thoroughness. As a surveyor, when only sixteen years of age, and with rough instruments, he ran boundry lines in Virginia which the most precise computations of modern science have not been able to vary appreciably. Thus during the formative period of his development he acquired the habit of recording and studying the information on which he based his decisions. It was by his full and faithfully-attended correspondence and entry-books maintained before and during the Revolutionary War that Washington became equipped to handle the responsibilities that found their way naturally to his shoulders.

This will doubtless make Washington seem a rather unattractive and pleasureless kind of person. As a matter of fact he found his pleasures principally in the exercise of his abilities, and these included a number of outdoor sports, as he was over six feet high and exceptionally strong. As a rider-to-hounds he was unexcelled; and as a soldier he was equally admirable. It seems to be the experience of humanity, however, that work is to a strong man what play is to a healthy boy,—something into which he can throw his energies with zest. In saying, therefore, that Washington was a fitting prototype of the present day American business man, — the typical American, perhaps,—we are not in the least permitting the inference that he did not have a maximum of the good of life.

With regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

WESLEY FROST,
American Consul.

Never was there an extremity so pinching, but that a wise man might find counsel, if he was daring to act upon it.