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Editorial

Christmas

The silvery snow glistens with sparkling star-light, the ghostly landscape is calm and expectant, then the bells of the steepled churches begin to swing to call the faithful to midnight mass. Merry Christmas! In the country the sleighs swish through the white snow, and the bells keep time to the impetuous rushes of the impatient trotter. Now is a time of giving and receiving presents while the houses are profusely ornamented to make a joyous background for such merry festivities.

But amid all this joy do we ever think of the poor child who perhaps fatherless sleeps on his bed of rags in some wretched abode. Ah! he is the one who is more like the Christ Child of nearly two thousand years ago. When he wakes no gay Christmas tree awaits him, no toys, no feast, but taking his poverty-stricken mother's hand he goes with her to church and adores his Lord who

one time was so much like himself. Claspings his cold little hands he prays that God will help his mother and his dead daddy and make him a better little boy; and if it wasn't too much to ask, would God please send a little coal for his mother because he felt so cold. He is very glad that God made him a strong boy who isn't lame so he won't ask for anything more because he wouldn't mind the holes in his shoes if they had some coal for a fire.

Such families as this exist everywhere today. We wish our friends a merry Christmas but never attempt to aid those needy people to whom a few cents may mean the difference between happiness and utter want. Make this Christmas our first real one by imitating the Magi who travelled over mountain and desert to lay their gifts before the Christ. This is a festive season, but we can enjoy the festivities with a lighter heart when we can look back at some charitable deed to allay suffering. Then we may stare complacently at the browned, delicious fowl and say like that great, little character of Dickens', "God bless us, every one!" Real enjoyment will take place, the merry quip, the gay jest, the old memories brought back while the family are cracking the Christmas nuts. Fun and peace will be reflected on all faces as we extend the season's greetings, "Merry Christmas."

The Presidential Election

Since early summer most newspapers and periodicals have contained a good deal of matter regarding the presidential election in the United States. As it neared election day public opinion was worked up to a feverish pitch even here in Canada for the result of this presidential race was supposed to have a great bearing in the bringing back of prosperity.

The result of the election was hardly a surprise, although when President-elect Roosevelt enters the White House he will be the first Democratic president since Wilson. The government for the next four years will be in his hands; one of his promises was the repeal of the eighteenth amendment, and whether this move will help the economic and moral condition of the world is another question which will be answered in the future.

Incidentally it may be said that to practically all Canadians and also to a great many Americans the method

by which a president is elected is a mystery. People read and talk of electoral votes with only a vague idea of the real significance. In fact, the president is elected not by the number of popular votes but by the majority of electoral votes. The country is divided into electoral districts according to population, each of which makes one electoral vote for the candidate getting a majority there. If one candidate gets the majority of electoral votes in a state all the electoral votes of that state are added to his list of votes, and the one getting the most electoral votes wins. Thus the larger states such as New York and Pennsylvania play a large part in electing a president.

Nowadays we hear much being said about the voice of the people, the wishes of the people and so on. The countries are supposed to be democratic and the people the rulers, but just how much of this is true we wonder? Most of the present day governments are plutocratic or oligarchic, and these systems usually lead to deism and atheism. The few rich have the reins and the horde must follow them or suffer the whip, and under such governmental forms nearly everything is more or less unbridled—the literature becomes a medium for filth, the stage rotten, and daily customs of life unspeakable.

The world has a severe headache, and perhaps Mr. Roosevelt may have the necessary remedy, at any rate he has our heartiest wishes. Some say that this depression is a blessing in disguise, others a punishment. Perhaps it is both, for punishment is often a blessing for the one corrected. Doubtless, the real relief exists in the proper governing of the world's resources. The different governments owe this much at least to their subjects for it was for the purpose of doing this that people voted for these governments. These men who unite to rule the countries have a great deal to answer for, and some day they will be called to account for their stewardship. Governments may come and go but the people go on till the last day and it is the latter who must be satisfied or else revolution will ensue. Moreover, we have seen the results of revolution in such countries as France in 1789, Spain of the present day, and the terrible turmoil of Russia where socialism, nihilism, and chaos reigns. If the central governments of these countries had been strong enough these disorders would not have followed, and a stupendous amount of innocent blood would have been spared. There

fore we see the necessity of choosing strong governments ruled by dynamic, fair-minded men. The American people have made their choice, and most believe that they have made a correct one.

The Imperial Conference

Economic and political problems of world-wide importance gave rise to the Imperial Conference, which convened at Ottawa on July 18th. The various commonwealths of the British Empire had, for some time past, been pursuing a spirit of nationalism, which was seriously hampering imperial trade, and which at the same time, was gradually weakening the political bonds within an empire comprising one quarter of the globe.

Although the conference, presided over by Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett, shone with pageantry and eloquence, it was distinguished from previous conferences by the seriousness of the situation which it faced. Here assembled men representing people of different nations and different customs, all determined to profit, as much as possible, by the agreements reached, yet each conscious that the success of the whole would not depend upon private enterprise.

At the outset the delegates saw that empire isolation was impossible. They realized that the solution of the various economic problems depended upon the diversion of as much foreign trade as possible into imperial channels, and trusted that such an expansion in imperial trade would in turn extend its impulse to the world at large. The adoption of this policy through a system of preferential tariffs was the subject of much heated discussion during one of the most momentous gatherings in the history of the British Empire.

One important obstacle in the fulfillment of the demands of the various dominions was their unanimous desire to obtain market for surplus products, chiefly raw materials, in Great Britain, and, at the same time, to protect their own manufactures. This might appear to be a reasonable demand, but the United Kingdom, although highly industrialized, could in no way purchase the surplus of all the dominions, nevertheless if she conceded to import the major part of her products from the colonies she would be justified in demanding a preference for her manufactured goods. Such a demand, however, seemed

detrimental to the dominions whose manufactures were only in their infancy, and required protection for their development.

Canada presents, to a great extent, the problems of nearly all the dominions, while her size and important trading position make her situation the most important after that of Great Britain. She must trade with the world in order to market her surpluses of raw materials and manufactured goods, such as wheat, flour, and wood products.

During the past, about forty per cent of Canada's exports went to countries of the Empire, while the remaining sixty per cent went to foreign countries. Of her imports over seventy-five per cent were of foreign origin. The most important factor in Canada's foreign trade was her relation with the United States. Due to their proximity and their close financial and commercial relations we find that our Southern neighbours absorb about forty per cent of our exports, and supply nearly sixty per cent of our imports. This arises not only from financial connections but even from personal relationship existing between the people of the two countries, and as a result our manufacturers feel in some way compelled to buy their raw materials in the United States. Each country, to some extent is labouring under the same conditions, and the products of one have become suitable to the needs of the other. Besides, trade cannot be suddenly changed from one direction to another without undergoing a serious loss.

Great Britain, on the other hand, has large interests in foreign countries such as Russia, Denmark, Sweden, and Argentina. The surest way to safeguard her interests in those countries was to trade with them. Not only did her position facilitate such trade, but she saw that any barrier in the way of higher tariff which she might place against these countries would be detrimental to Britain in general.

The first step towards an increase of imperial trade was the adoption of new preferential tariffs, but the dominions felt that, although such were granted, they would not be on equal competitive basis with the British markets with European countries, whose position gave them an additional advantage in the cost transportation.

It was with this difficulty in view that Premier Bennett held out so obstinately against the United Kingdom's

trade agreements with Russia in products such as wheat and lumber. Canada allowed Great Britain new preferences on some two hundred and twenty items, including free entry on articles not made in the dominion, but Mr. Bennett saw that these concessions were useless to Canada unless the United Kingdom denounced her trade treaty with Soviet Russia. He deemed it so necessary in the interests of Canada that he refused to give way on this point and finally declared: no yielding to Russia, no agreements.

This was the most critical moment of the entire conference. Although treaties had already been arranged between the respective dominions, by far the most important were the agreements with the Mother Country, the keystone of the whole Empire.

Advice was sought on both sides, and opinions flowed freely. Finally it was announced that the obstacle had been overcome; Great Britain had conceded to curtail her foreign trade and agreements had been reached. Immediately the news was flashed across the Atlantic, and the conference was looked upon as a success.

Was it a success? This is a difficult question to answer. If looked upon from the fact that the different commonwealths obtained a clearer understanding of each others markets, it was in that respect a great benefit.

However, the conference is over. We have had but a glimpse of the scene and of the task which it set out to accomplish. It was a step taken, we hope, in the right direction in clearing out the blocked channels of trade. The Ottawa meeting has paved the way for future meetings of its kind. It will be followed shortly by a world conference which, no doubt, will have greater influence in retrieving world trade. For the present we can only say that it was an undertaking on the part of the Empire's ablest statesmen whose unselfish efforts led them to believe that they were adopting the surest way out of the economic chaos which had enveloped trade organizations of the world during the present depression. Time alone will reveal the success or failure of their achievements.



Politeness has been well defined as benevolence in small matters.—*Macaulay*.