

You rush for a seat just as the street car booms ahead and you land directly on an old woman's knee. This old crank, who has a fierce look in her eyes, screeches and kicks you swiftly so that you are obliged to stand for the rest of the trip. People continually push, shove or even poke you, in order to get by, but since you do unto others, not as they do unto you, but as you would like them to do unto you, you offer no resistance. Your martyr complex reappears.

Suddenly a crash is heard! The car jerks to a stop, and your head bangs against the front window. You now know that you are home. It's too bad you didn't remember that old proverb "Look before you leap". This, apparently, is the conductor's friendly way of letting you know where you are. You are hurled out on to the street and when you regain consciousness you are again on good old terra firma. The moral of this story: "If there are buses running don't take a street car".

—JERRY ROBERTSON '51

### MEMORIES

My memories are to me as ships  
Sailing on Life's surging sea;  
Away! Away! blissfully they sail,  
At random come they back to me.

Softly stealing from the inner mind,  
Silently, stealthily, they carry me away;  
Away! Away! blissfully I sail  
To the sunny shores of yesterday.

Following the little stream of childhood,  
Joy-filled, flowing into Life's Sea;  
Back! Back! remorsefully I sail,  
Returning on ripples to reality.

—G. L. KEEFE '51

### NATIONAL UNITY

Most of us will live to see Canada celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of Confederation. The British North America Act represented a unique attempt to build a harmonious nation out of two sovereign and distinct races and cultures. Only in so far as she succeeds in this will Canada be prosperous and successful as a



nation. And yet after over eighty years of partnership, the French and English in Canada cannot be said to share a wide community of interests. Ignorance and its ugly twin, intolerance, too often cause antagonism between the two races. The cure for this is knowledge.

The English and French Canadians get along very well when they know each other. They are in reality very much alike. The English and French racial groups are close relatives, even in the beginnings of their national existence; Latin, Celtic, Saxon and Norman blood strains are found in the veins of each in about the same proportions. The Norman blood that we share in equal measures should be a link between the two groups. Indeed there is no reason why our racial origins should cause disputes. We believe in the equality of all men. Hitler's racial doctrines should find no adherents in Canada.

English speaking Canada has done little to promote a better understanding between the two races. The continuing ignorance of French Canada on the part of English Canada is a stumbling block in the way of national unity. French Canada has made more progress here; over a third of its members are bilingual, while only one English person in twenty-five has a working knowledge of French. The French know more about our culture than we know about theirs. Because they have some knowledge of our language and culture they acquire an insight in our psychology. We, on our part, neglect French culture notwithstanding the fact that it has produced musicians, writers and artists who are at least the equal of our own. French Canadians have an appreciation of beauty that is real and deep. We could learn much from their theatre, their art and their music. We should be familiar with the poets and literature of Quebec. A great French Canadian poet, Louis Frechette, wrote a deeply moving saga of New France, "*La Legende d'un Peuple*." If we read it we should understand the habitant better. The French Canadian culture is the dowry that Quebec brought to Confederation. We should make it part of our cultural heritage as Canadians. Our task should be to blend the best of the English and French cultures, and thus make Canada a country with a dual culture. If there remain wide cultural differences between the French and English we shall never realize our potential greatness as a nation.

Some would wish to apply the "melting pot" theory to the French Canadians. These understand unity as a complete fusion of racial elements. The theory will never be accepted by the French. Their educational system, their newspapers, their religion, and in particular their strong determination to survive are set against it. If the English could not assimilate sixty thousand French settlers at the time of the conquest of New France, it is utterly impractical to talk of assimilation at a time when the French comprise more than one third of the whole population of Canada.



In Canada we have two official languages, which are a cause of dispute between the two races. The partisans of the slogan, "one language," imagine that national unity will be achieved on the day that Canadians all speak the same language. One language is not of itself the solution. Most of the Irish speak English, but they do not like the English any better because of that. On the other hand Switzerland, with its three official languages, has achieved a high degree of national unity. We should be glad that we have in Canada two official languages that are an expression of the two most brilliant modern civilizations. Both groups should learn both languages; and we should regard the possession of the two languages as a great gift that we offer ourselves. We must not neglect either of our great civilizations. Both should permeate the curricula of our schools; and our children from coast to coast should learn to speak both languages. All elementary schools should give their pupils a proper initiation into the second language. In high school the students should, in four years, acquire a working knowledge of the second language, so as to be able to speak with their fellow citizens. It may be true that the French have greater linguistic ability than we have, but it is not true that we have no linguistic ability at all. If we really appreciated the advantage of being able to speak French, surely we could learn it. It would be necessary to change our methods of teaching French in the public schools, but that is not impossible. We should introduce French in the early grades before the pupils become self-conscious. Our efforts should be directed towards acquiring skill in the use of French, not towards passing a written examination. Most of those who pass matriculation examinations at present could not ask a Frenchman how to find the way to college; certainly they could not understand his answer. We should be able to discuss our common problems in either language, read each others newspapers, exchange correspondence. A bilingual weekly newspaper and radio stations using both languages would help us. A knowledge of our neighbour's language is the first step towards understanding his personality. In Quebec City today many large organizations attempt to achieve joint action on matters of mutual advantage to the races. Such attempts frequently fail because all meetings have to be conducted in the language of the minority, and this dampens the good-will of the French majority. We praise the French for their ability to speak English. They learn it because they are determined to do so. If we had the same determination we could learn to speak French.

Both races claim that misunderstandings arise from the teaching of our national history. Our histories do not contain lies, but they sometimes tell less than the whole truth. The French histories present the facts from one point of view, the English from another. The books differ in the events that they stress and in the events that they omit. We should use two closely related and factually similar histories, in which neither race is favored and the errors of both are set forth with their human background of causes and



circumstances. Teachers should emphasize the similarities rather than the differences between the two races. There should be less stress laid on past wars, because children tend to choose sides along racial and religious lines. The social and economic development of the people is a vital and too often neglected part of history.

It would be to our practical advantage to endeavour to know Quebec better than we do. It is part of the Quebec myth that French Canada is rural. Actually there are more farmers in Ontario than there are in Quebec, which, with only one third of its people on farms, is the most urbanized province in all Canada. Today, with Quebec's growing industrial power, French Canada's markets are becoming more and more vital to the economic welfare of Canada. We must understand our business partner if we wish him to cooperate with us.

Canada is anxious to promote orderly relations between the peoples of the world. We must some time achieve true internationalism. This may be regarded as an attitude of mind. It consists in the willingness on the part of the inhabitants of every nation to recognize the good qualities of the inhabitants of every other nation. Like everything else this process must begin at home. All Canadian authors should seek to interpret race and national ideals correctly in their writings. Editors of newspapers and periodicals should make it their policy to promote unity, or at least to have no part in sowing the seeds of dissension. Acting upon the principles of justice and charity, we can build a sound and united nation and enable Canada to set an example of unity in diversity that the world may follow. We have made much progress already, as His Majesty King George VI said in an Empire broadcast:

The sense of race may be a dangerous and disruptive force; but the English and French have shown in Canada that they can keep the pride and distinctive culture which it inspires while yet combining to establish a broader freedom and security than either could have achieved alone.

When our statesmen make speeches at the centennial of Confederation, their proudest boast should be that Canada is a country of two languages and a dual culture where all people work together for the common welfare.

—EVELYN HESSIAN '49