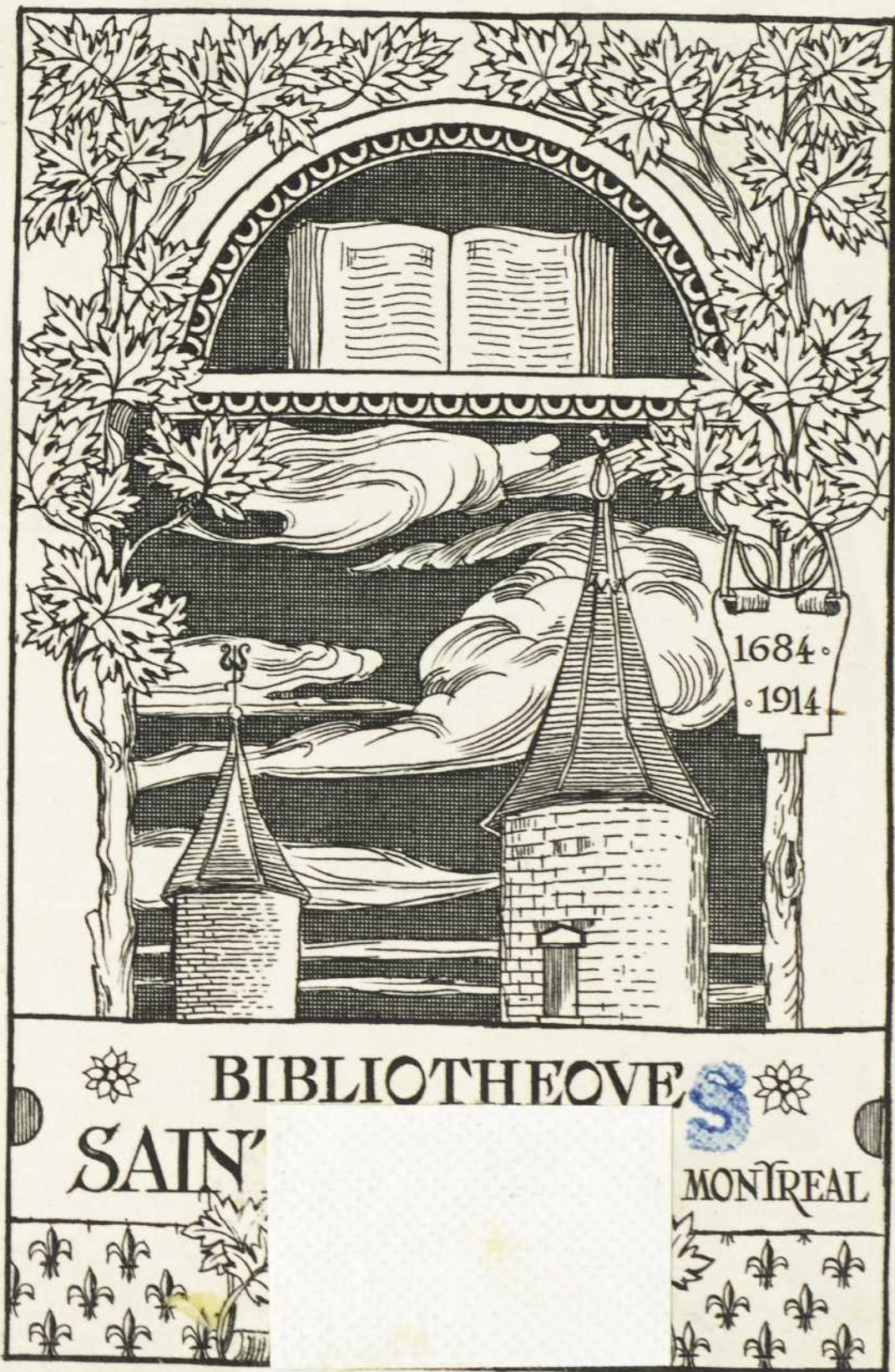


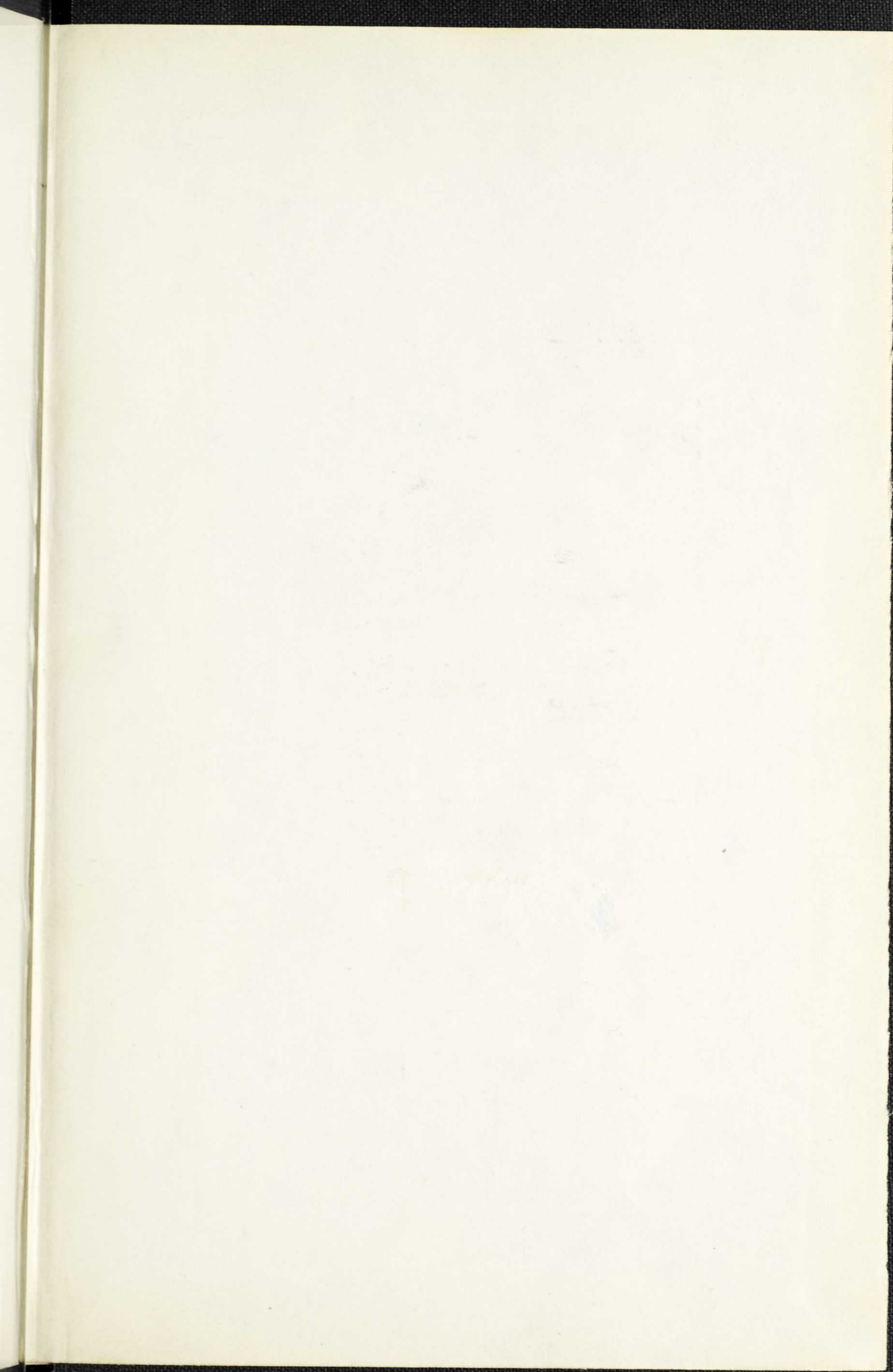
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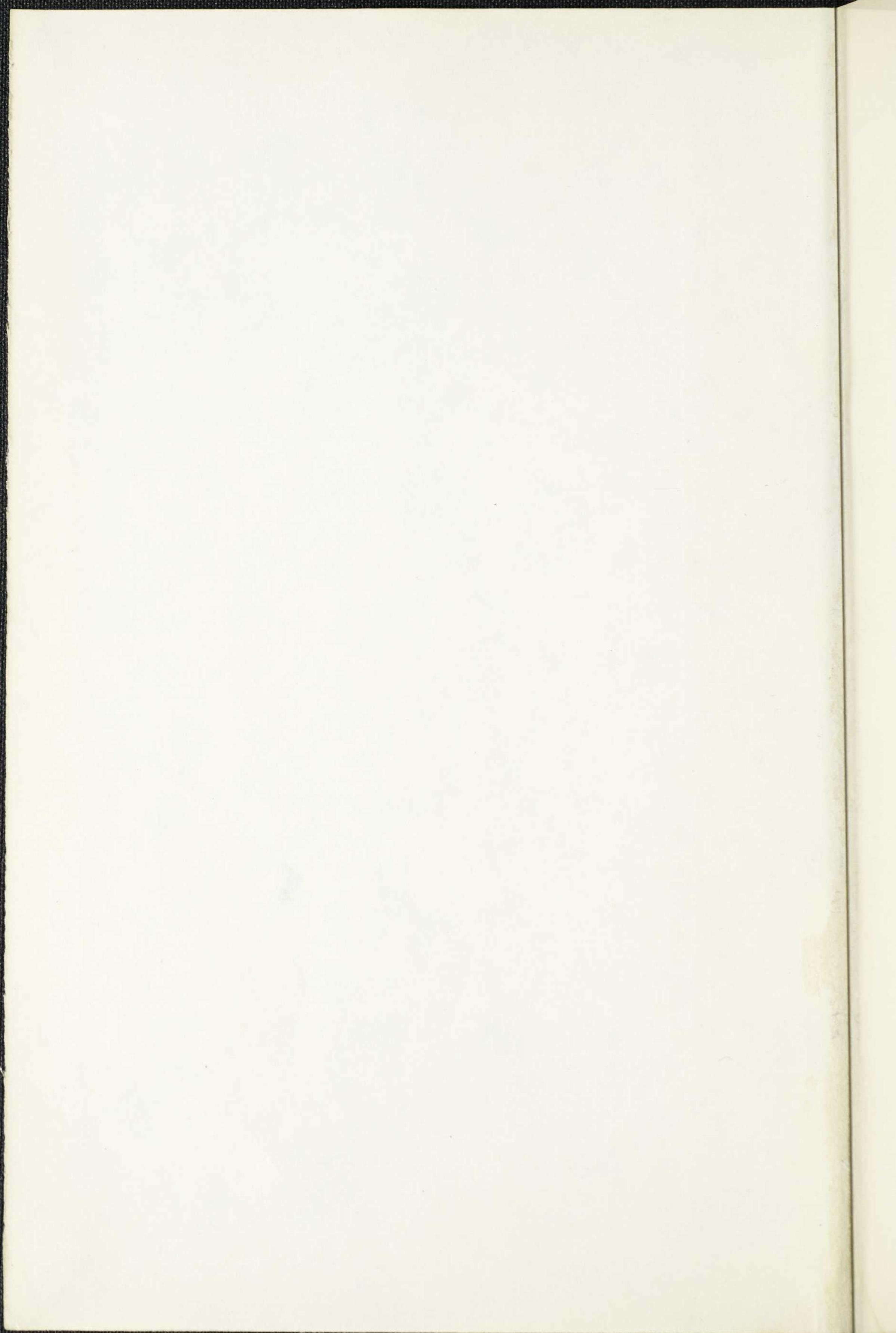
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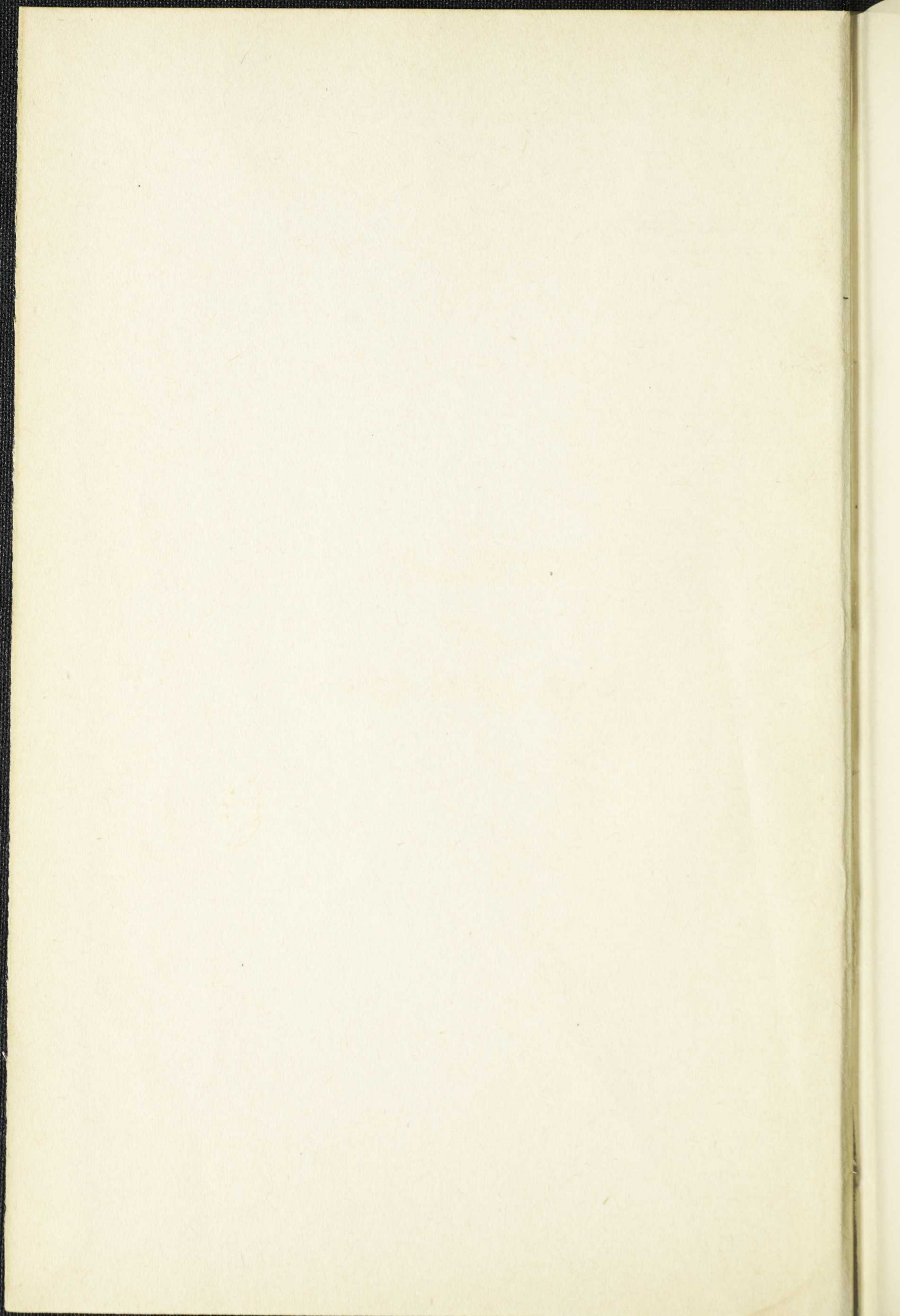














**PROBLEMS  
of  
CANADIAN UNITY**



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# PROBLEMS of CANADIAN UNITY

by

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QUÉBEC

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## BY THE SAME AUTHOR

### Booklets :

MESSIRE EDOUARD BÉLANGER, 12 p., Québec, 1932.

NOTES SUR ROUBAUD, 18 p., Québec, 1939.

LE PROBLÈME PROTESTANT, 12 p., Québec, 1940.

### Books :

PROPOS SUR L'ÉDUCATION, 260 p., Québec, 1941.

TON HISTOIRE EST UNE EPOPÉE, Vol. I. — NOS DÉBUTS SOUS  
LE RÉGIME ANGLAIS, 224 p., Québec, 1941.

FRENCH CANADA AND BRITAIN, A New Interpretation, 122 p.,  
Toronto, 1942 (Out of print).

POURQUOI SOMMES-NOUS DIVISÉS? 220 p., Montréal, 1943.

WHAT KEEPS US APART? 184 p., Québec, 1944.

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*Permis d'imprimer,*

CYRILLE GAGNON, P.A., V.G.,

*Supérieur du Séminaire de Québec,*

*Recteur de l'Université Laval.*

Québec, 30 avril 1944.

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1944



TO THE  
CANADIAN YOUTH

A LA  
JEUNESSE DU CANADA

97945



IT HAS BEEN PRINTED OF THAT BOOK  
1,800 COPIES ON EGGSHELL PAPER  
200 COPIES, NUMBERED,  
ON LAURENTIC JAPAN



## PREFACE

A little book, *What Keeps Us Apart?*, has appeared three weeks ago. The ink is hardly dry and here is another book, about the same question, *National Unity*.

The first book contains the Radio Addresses that I have given to the English-speaking Canadians in 1943.

This one is made of longer addresses and lectures that I have been invited to deliver to the members of various Associations, at Québec, Montréal, Toronto, Arvida ; to this I have added two short studies on the cultural life of the French Canadians, and one printed in *Food for Thought*.

I did not include the lectures I made on the language of the French Canadians, because my purpose is to write a complete book on that subject, so much discussed.

I beg excuse for one thing at least : some opinions have been repeated in the various lectures, nearly in the same form. As there is no literary purpose in the book, but rather the simple language of Action, the reader will, I hope, excuse that imperfection.

I again apologize for the quality of "my" English language : I would feel much more at ease with my mother tongue, the French language!

THE AUTHOR.



# APPENDIX

The first part of the appendix contains a list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of Mayor of the City of New York since the year 1784.

The second part contains a list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of Alderman of the City of New York since the year 1784.

The third part contains a list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of Common Councilman of the City of New York since the year 1784.

The fourth part contains a list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of Justice of the Peace of the City of New York since the year 1784.

The fifth part contains a list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of Sheriff of the City of New York since the year 1784.

The sixth part contains a list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of Clerk of the City of New York since the year 1784.

The seventh part contains a list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of Recorder of the City of New York since the year 1784.



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## INTRODUCTION

The first part of the book is devoted to a general survey of the history of the subject. It begins with a brief account of the early attempts to explain the origin of life, and then proceeds to a more detailed consideration of the various theories which have been advanced. The second part of the book is devoted to a discussion of the various methods which have been employed to study the history of life. It begins with a brief account of the early attempts to study the history of life, and then proceeds to a more detailed consideration of the various methods which have been employed. The third part of the book is devoted to a discussion of the various results which have been obtained by the study of the history of life. It begins with a brief account of the early attempts to study the history of life, and then proceeds to a more detailed consideration of the various results which have been obtained.



# I

## HATES AND FEARS (\*)

I remember very well, Madame la Présidente,† the day I received your letter. It was on a bright day, this last summer. A very fine piece of eloquence, indeed. But I had some reasons, at that time, to fear that I would not obtain permission to accept the invitation. Your name, Madame, the name of your husband, weighed much in influencing the decision, which was favourable.

Since that time events have occurred which might have reversed the decision. In this country, supposedly democratic, in this land where the French Canadians have put up a long and hard fight for the democratic liberties, there are French Canadians who deny to their own fellow citizens the right of expressing their opinions ; who threaten to sabotage assemblies, to burn the halls in which freedom of speech is exercised. These facts are real, they are recent, they are of yesterday. And what is still worse, the motives which inspire the new dictators are to be condensed in one word, the ugliest word of the human language. Hatred. Hatred directed against the bulk of the population of this our country. Hatred condemned by the Gospel, by Christianity, by the Catholic church,

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(\*) Women's Canadian Club, Montréal, February 8th, 1944.

(†) Madame J.-Ed. Perreault.



Hatred condemned by civilisation. Hatred burning in the hearts of a little gang of men who have misread History, who misinterpret their own religion, who frustrate their own interests. Hatred of barbarians who would take back Humanity to the times in which the law was eye for eye, tooth for tooth.

Shall we ever be able to draw these poor people from the moral slum in which they cannot breathe the pure air of christian charity? I hope so, even if there appears to be little hope.

I remember having read, a few years ago, a play written by an American, Maxwell Anderson. The title of the play was *Winterset*. I stopped reading when I met a sentence which seemed to me utterly impossible to realise. One of the Personae Dramatis was saying :

“ I think I am waking from a long trauma of hate and fear and death that's hemmed me from my birth — and glimpse a life to be lived in hope — but it's young in me yet. I can't get free, or forgive ! But teach me how to live and how to forget to hate ! ”

That is what I was reading. That is what stroke me with astonishment. So, said I, there are people who are born and brought up in hate, in fear, in hatred. There are people who live without hope, without love, without charity.

I consoled myself in thinking that such a picture applied only to the lowest slums of the American



people. I had not come to realise that that might happen in our blessed country. I had to realise that that was true also in our blessed country. Right here, in North America, in Canada, the sons of England and the sons of France, at least some of them, too many of them, were burning with hatred; they were in the "trauma of hate".

Can we hope, at the present time, that these poor people will rise and cry "Teach me how to forget to hate"? They are so deeply buried in their ignorance, in their prejudice, that it seems there is but little hope.

Then I took other books, trying to find more information about hatred. I could not reconcile hate with the Gospel, with the Christian religion. Was it then the inheritance of times before the light of Gospel had shone unto this world? I returned to the Old Testament. Had it not been the era of the slogan eye for eye, tooth for tooth? But what did I read in the venerable old books? I read that "Hatred stirreth up strifes" (Prov., X, 12). I read again: "Six things there are which the Lord hateth and the seventh his soul detesteth: him that soweth discord among brethren" (Prov. VI, 16-19). I found the significant words of a prophet picturing those who pretending to "preach peace bite with their teeth". (Mich., III, 5).

So the prophets, the poets, the wise men of the chosen people had in ancient times their blame put



on hatred and on those who spread it in the world. It was then easy to understand the great lessons of charity given to Humanity by Christ, by Paul, by John.

Those lessons were later forgotten, when Barbarian invasions stroke Southern Europe, when the Islamic waves covered Spain and other European countries. Hate, again, was lit in human hearts. The great writers of the Christian church, then, offered the poor people the teachings of Christ. They built up a complete theory of the peaceful relations between citizens. Prudentius, Denis of Carthage, Augustine, Hugo of St-Victor, Hugo Cardinal, Salvianus, Jerome, Anselme, Bernard, Bede, Gregory the Great, and others scrutinize the monuments of the pagan wisdom, the treasures of the Holy Scriptures, in order to quell their citizens' quarrels.

They recall the opinion of a Greek philosopher, Aristotle, saying (in his books on *Politics*, lib. V, ch. 4) : " The discords of influential men must be stopped immediately ; otherwise they will invade the whole Republic ". They expound the beautiful sentence of Seneca, a Roman moralist : " With concord little things grow, with discord great things fall ". (Sen. *Epist.* 94). They use the letters of Cicero, a great man of Rome : " There is nothing more safe, more honest than to avoid quarrels ".

Bernard of Clairvaux condenses the teaching in these words : " the flower of peace is, in recalling



quarrelsome people to concord, in having peace with all other people ”.

Leaving the big books of the Fathers of the Church I wanted to know what had been the practise of the Saints? Were they in accordance with the theory?

Of course, they were. Even in omitting the Saints who have endeavoured to reconcile individual enemies, I found those who had tried to make peace between the citizens as such, between the Kings and the Princes. Would you like to have the names of these peace-makers? Pappon, Peter Nolascus, Raban Maur, Elizabeth of Portugal, Urban the Fifth, Bernard, Ubald, Bernardin of Siena, Ilbergue, Hunna, John of St-Facund, Albert of Castres, Simon of Crespy, John of Capistran, Andrew of Avellin, Adelaïde, Arnoud, Peter Fourier, Francis of Assisi, Charles Borromaeus, all these and many others have spent the best of their lives in trying to restore peace among the various sections or groups of their country.

The greatest of them all is probably Saint Catherine of Siena. She lived in the 14th century, in a time and in a country where strife and civil war were the event of every day life. Read her biography. You will have it in French by Joergensen, or in English by Alice Curtayne. Both books are extremely interesting; the reading is quite timely: political, national, religious divisions were unceasing.



Catherine was a young woman. "She had no great gifts, indeed, but she had a women's greatest quality : she was a peace-maker" (Curtayne, p. 29). "She worked feverishly against the tide, crying for peace by word, by letters, in long solitary hours in her room, sweating prayers for miracles to happen. All Italy was now aware of her, standing out against this rush of revolution, sublimely foolish, like a woman trying to dam a flood with outstretched arms". (Curtayne, p. 88).

During the most bloody period of the civil war, she "spent her days binding up wounds. — She bitterly resented the insane fratricidal strife and a strong political programme was slowly taking shape in her ideas". (Curtayne, p. 42).

At that time even the religious and priests would take stand with the various parties, and their words were not always words of peace. One of them, however, a poor and simple monk, expressed the truth when he said : "if religious will once more begin to speak only of God, the spirit of holy fervour will return among us, and we shall set the world on fire". (Curtayne, p. 28).

How true ! The minister of Gospel, when he stands in the pulpit, is no more a citizen, a partisan, a voter, a tax-payer, He is then a priest. He should preach God, Christ, charity, peace, love, concord.

I find a close analogy between these remote times and our own times. We have no bloody revolution in this country, but we are divided in



our opinions on religion, patriotism, national and economic problems. New factions are organised, with tyrannical ambitions. Men, apparently honest, make a religion of their own ideas ; they deny to others the right of expressing their views ; they make violence, threats, slander, misrepresentation, distortion of facts, foremost articles of their programme ; they use letters, circular letters, anonymous letters, telegrams, in order to shoot down those they consider as adversaries. The weapons have changed, but the methods are the same. The highest authorities are not even protected against such attacks. They have to defend themselves.

You know very well that I am not supposing things, but that facts, recent facts confirm my sayings. This is the main evil we have to combat, a new form of civil and civic strife. You are invited, Ladies, to take your share of the crusade. Our aim for men and women of good will, is to bring the people fired with hatred, to say, sooner or later : " I think I am waking from a trauma of hate and fear and death, that's hemmed me from my birth — and glimpse a life to be lived in hope — but it's young in me yet ; I can't get free, or forgive ! But teach me how to live and forget to hate ".

At the present time there is nothing so important as to give that teaching to thousands of souls. I would not like to say millions, but it may be so.



\* \* \*

Is it possible to find the causes of the hate that has accumulated in the souls of so many Canadians, of either language? Many writers and speakers have tried to find explanations, mostly taken from history. I did it myself and I could give you the results, as I did with many audiences. Yet, before I do it, I believe we should try to find some kind of fundamental cause.

It consists, as I see it, in different attitudes of mind. The French Canadian is a *step-child* in the British family. This viewpoint is not enough or not at all taken in account. The situation of a step-child in any family is always a difficult one, and it can hardly be otherwise. Even if the new parent is perfectly just, and loving, the step-child will think that his or her mother would have been better. And with the other children the step-child will have difficulties. On the other hand the English-speaking Canadian feels himself as if he were the son of divorced parents, since the American Revolution (1775). He feels a strong temptation to divide his loyalties between the two.

So, the situation is difficult for both Canadian groups, especially because many quarrels have arisen in the past, that have never been settled and that have left bitterness in the hearts and visible scars.

Difficult, also, on account of the fears conceived and entertained by both groups.



### Fears of the English Canadians : \*

1. Fear of the French Canadian birth-rate, with its consequences : expansion in formerly English-speaking districts of Québec, expansion in Ontario, in the Western provinces, in New Brunswick, with a possible numerical superiority in about thirty years. The English Canadians consider that as a kind of military defeat.

2. Fear of the French Canadian different views on life, fear that the standard of living may be lowered, the French Canadians being considered as old fashioned and narrowminded.

3. Fear that with the French Canadian expansion Roman Catholicism will oust Protestantism.

4. Fear, because the French Canadians do not care to learn to speak English.

5. Fear and bitterness, because the French Canadians believe and say that all the Anglo-Canadians are "British-minded" and that all the Anglo-Canadians are just like the European English people.

6. Fear and bitterness, because the French Canadians do very little to win this present war.

What is the other side of the medal ? What are the fears entertained by the French Canadians ?

1. In their opinion the Conquest of 1760 is the main point of their history, and the process of conquest is always going on.

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(\*) As explained by an Anglo Canadian protestant scholar.



2. Fear of being assimilated by the vast Anglo-saxon ocean in which they are just a small island.

3. Fear, because of their being a minority of only 30%, less than a third in a country continually growing.

4. Fear that any change being made to the B. N. A. Act will be at the expense of the French element, at the expense of provincial autonomy.

5. Fear that liberalism in politics, economics, education will finally decatholicise the country.

6. Fear of the trends followed by Trade Unions or Workers' Associations, especially under the pressure of American or Russian theories and practices.

7. Fear, because they feel they are practically excluded from the Federal Civil Service, and from other situations in the Army and Navy, on account of not being free-masons.

8. Fear of being eventually confined to a Québec Reserve.

9. Fear of being entangled in dangerous affairs, through External Affairs, through imperialism, through an excessive loyalism to the British Crown.

Both lists may be incomplete. I believe that each of you will admit that this picture is not too far from reality. But, if you consider the lists as being incomplete, you would help much in writing on a sheet of paper your own views in order to discuss them later.



What to do with such a situation ? How can we teach the people not to hate, not to fear ? Or, is the situation desperate ?

There are Canadians who consider it desperate.

One man, in a Toronto street car, told me that all the French Canadians should be put on board a ship and sent back to France.

One lady, of Montréal, wrote me that the difference between the French and the English was so wide and so deep that they could never meet.

I have read in English Canadian newspapers that Québec people are slackers, lotus-eaters, the curse of Confederation.

On the other side there are those who never fail to curse the "Maudits anglais". There are those who foster Separatism ; who want a union or an alliance of the French Canadians with nations of Latin America.

Those are the desperate. Among them are the leaders and the misled. The leaders are the heads of various organisations ; they are conscious of their aims. The others are poor souls fed up with absurd theories, with misrepresentations. They follow the lead, as long as there is nobody to speak to them the truth and to put the light in minds that have been covered with the dark clouds of propagandas.

Are such people in great numbers ? No they are not, but all of them are great talkers. They spread their poison in all public places, trains, steamers,



barber-shops, general stores, in a few periodicals, dailies, weeklies and monthlies. Nearly all of them are voters and they may, they do influence the elections, the representatives, the public opinion.

Nothing, yet, has been done to cope with that problem. For the purpose of a better conduct of the war there has been a Clinic of Rumors. There should be a similar clinic for treating ignorance, prejudices, anti-Canadian propaganda. No nonsense of that kind should be printed in the newspapers, not even as Letters to the Editors, and that is the responsibility of the Editors themselves. If the poison is offered in the periodicals, we should immediately write to protest and to explain the truth.

\* \* \*

Most of the Canadians have a different opinion. They do not consider the situation as desperate. They believe there is a place for hope. They hope, indeed, even if the task is great and difficult. They admit that they should « teach how to forget to hate ».

How is it that being the majority they do little, so little, whilst the desperate do so much? The reason is that the latter are organised in cells, in clubs, in associations, of which the principal aim is political action ; the reason if that the tie that binds the members of such groups is hate : they hate other people ; they are anti-somebody or anti-something. Consequently their energy is



restricted to one object, as the waves of a radio station being directed towards some point of the horizon take thereby more strength and may go much farther.

The citizens of moderate opinion are not organized at all, or not enough, at least not for an action on the public opinion. It may be through some loftiness, or a certain "academism", or a certain "dilettantism", or even indifference or apathy towards the exigencies of our democratic ways of life.

These are taken for granted and the citizens are satisfied with the casting of their vote, if they go so far as to vote. But the vote is only a part, and the smallest part of a citizen's duties. Much more should be done to influence public opinion.

There has been a time when the health of the public was in the sole hands of physicians and surgeons. These men were not in sufficient numbers and we have now nurses of various kinds, dieticians, Social Service women. We have discovered that we should go to the poor, instead of waiting for the poor to come to us. What we have done for physical health we must do for national ailments. It is our duty to go to the people, to give them the light of truth, freedom from prejudices ; we must teach them not to hate but to love. We have to treat and to cure a wound, the trauma of hate. We have to treat and to cure a psychosis, the psychosis of fear.



Alice Curtayne, in her biography of Catherine of Siena, compares the group headed by that woman, which she calls the Fellowship, with other groups, for instance the famous 15th century salon of a poetess, Vittoria Colonna, the equally famous 17th century salon of Madame de Rambouillet, and that of George Eliott ; one Italian, one French, one English, and she concludes saying :

“ Here is the supreme difference between the Fellowship and every subsequent group resembling it. Although formed in the first bright dawn of the Renaissance, the “caterinate” did not pursue letters, or culture, or foster their own genius, or even seek holiness for their own satisfaction . . . They were training for Action”, action springing from one of Catherine’s slogans “ We can express love of God only in love of our neighbours ”. (Curtayne, p. 60-61).

Here you are a group of women. Throughout Canada there are other similar clubs of women, Canadian Clubs, University Women’s Clubs, Association of Authors, and many others. Is it not in such organisations that we could, that we should find the Nurses who would accept to treat the spiritual wounds of our poor people ?

They could be new Florence Nightingales, new Jeanne Mances, working on a higher level. They would have, of course, to change their habits, to a certain degree. They would have to study a situation, to go down in the field, to do things ;



perhaps also some of them would have to fill their hearts with the Christian charity, which is the root from which springs a flower, Study, and a fruit, Action.

Charity. To meditate on that great virtue, on that great precept. Charity to the neighbour, to the poor brother or sister, who ignore that a moral T. B. is undermining his strength. To return to the Gospel, to the writings of Paul, to memorise their sublime teachings on charity, on peace, to understand what is hate, envy, jealousy, to see that these cannot be the basis for the development of a nation. To make oneself able to eradicate hatred, to seed charity. This should be the first article of a national programme.

With charity, let us put Study. A study of the causes and of the expressions of Hate, Fear, Indifference, for such are the three main evils of our national life. Why do some Protestants hate the Catholic religion? Why do some French hate the English? Why do some Anglo-Protestants hate the French and the Irish and the immigrant Catholics? Why does an Ontarian or a Western curse when he sees one, two or three French words on a penny, a dollar bill, a postcard, a stamp? Why does a French Canadian forbid his children to learn the English language? Why do the Westerners oppose French radio programs? Why does an Anglo-Canadian agree politely, as an individual, about the benefits of the French culture, while as a voter or as a member of a club he will oppose,



utterly oppose, any move favourable to that French culture? Why does a French Canadian boy throw stones at an Ontario motor-car or at a Protestant church? Why does a Protestant merchant refuse to sell merchandise to a French Canadian? Yes, why? Where do we imbibe such attitudes! In the family circle? in the school-room? at church? in the clubs? in the newspapers? in books? Don't you think that this is the matter for a serious study? Traumas of Hate!

Psychosis of Fear. Our fears should apply to Germany, to Japan, to ganster-nations, and only to them. Yet, they apply to our very country, to Canada. But, why should we fear each other?

There was cause for fear from September 1759 to September 1760, for one year, during which the French metropolitan troops were in New France. After the capitulation of Montréal there was no fear. The French Canadians had given their word of honour to be quiet till came the final Treaty and they kept their word; they observed the law, the military law, and there was no punishment inflicted upon them. Then came the Treaty of Paris in 1763. The French Canadians were given the choice either of returning to France or of remaining in New France. They knew that from now on there would always be English-speaking people here, but they did not fear them any longer. The new comers, the English, knew that the sons of France, a glorious country, would never give up their own culture and language, but



they did not fear them. The French Canadians chose to stay ; the English accepted their presence forever. Except for a few fanatical minds both groups wanted to live peacefully and to agree. The fanatics have had children and grandchildren. Can we not educate those children ?

Shall we bring in the problem of assimilation ? Should the French in Québec fear of being assimilated ? Not at all. They have successfully resisted all previous attempts, when they were poorly organised. More, they have their own power of assimilation, which they have constantly used and are still using, even without the help of the school or the church. The English Canadians are afraid of being flooded by the French Canadians. Where ? In British Columbia ? Nonsense, there are only 30,000 French-speaking people in that Province. In the Prairie provinces ? Nonsense : The French-speaking people, in those three provinces, are at most 150,000, a very small proportion. Is it in Ontario ? But the French there are less than 10%. Is that a real cause for concern ? The Québec people are interested in colonising their own province ; they will need all their hands for a rapidly industrialising territory. Even if the French would come to have the majority in all nine provinces, they have no desire of domination though a few braggers make sometimes noise about that.

A few others express fear in regard to external affairs, to the relations with the Empire, with the



rest of the world. Their name is Isolationist. A very surprising attitude, indeed. Let us suppose that the city of Montréal would need more firemen, more policemen ; men would come, be examined, and the best, being retained, would be offered to sign their engagement. Suppose Mr. A. would say : Look here, Mr. Mayor, I am willing to sign, but I'll put one condition ; you know that I live in Ward One ; so I am ready to fight fire in Ward One but not in the other wards, and especially not in Ward Five because the people there do not speak my language, not in Ward Fourteen because it is too far from my own home ". The man who would hold such opinions would certainly not be hired as a fireman and he would not be entitled to protection against fire. The same applies to a policeman who would care for the only burglars who dared to come to his own home.

In modern communities safety requires that all citizens, and especially all civic employees be interested in the whole community and not only in one section of the community.

The world, at the present time, is and will be still more in the future, just a great city, which should organise itself in order to fight fires and burglars, that is war. The last wars have conclusively proven that war spreads rapidly to the whole world and that neutrality is either impossible or costly or even stupid. No alderman would dare to make his electoral campaign on the platform that there will be no more fires or bur-



glaries and that firemen and policemen should be discharged. No wise politician should ever have told or should not tell the people that there will be no war in the future world, or that a European war is none of Canada's business.

I might easily go along, taking other fears, and indicating how foolish they are, but I must leave to you some study to do of your own.

With Hate and Fears I have mentioned indifference. Recently I was conversing with a Western French Canadian. I asked him how they got along with the Anglo Canadians. His answer was this: "As individuals the Anglo-Canadians are good and nice people ; if we discuss some national topic, each will politely agree that our French viewpoint is right. But as a group they just make a solid block superbly indifferent to our condition, indifferent with a variable dose of contempt".

That man gave me a long series of instances to illustrate his sayings. In my opinion that attitude is still worse than fear or even than hate, because it involves either a very excessive pride or a decidedly remarkable contempt of culture itself, an immense ignorance of the history of this country. Nothing can be more painful to French Canadians than to be put on the same level as any group of recent immigrants, when their share has been so great, for more than three centuries, in building the Canadian nation.

Add to this a certain amount of aggressiveness, which is particularly remarkable in Ontario. Being



in Toronto, I take my seat in a street car ; I open the newspaper I have just bought ; my neighbour immediately puts his finger on the word Quebec which appeared in a title line, and he loudly says : These people, they are worth nothing to the country. Being in Toronto I was invited by a prominent citizen in his private house. While refreshments were served one of the visitors, a young officer, comes right to me and says : You know, of course, that Quebec people are slackers. Yet, no whisky had been served. On board the train from Montréal to Toronto, a man, who according to his conversation was a pretty big business man in Toronto, spent half an hour in telling the vilest things against Québec and its people.

Recently a convention was held at Québec. One businessman from Toronto used the most bitter words about Québec, throwing them at the face of those whose guest he was.

I'll agree that a man who has been provoked is quite right in answering back. But the man who, unprovoked, starts yelling against his fellow-citizens gives plenty of work to those who are interested in politeness as well as in National Unity. And what to say about those who tell the French Canadians : Speak white !

British pride, even if great, could not alone explain such attitudes. There is somewhere a teaching or the equivalent of a teaching that induces people to make such blunders. It is neither



better nor worse than the constant cursing of the Anglo-Canadians by French Canadians, as if the English Canadians were the sole cause of all our troubles, as if the Anglo-Canadians of to-day should be held responsible, after four or five generations, for the things that happened in 1760.

\* \* \*

I beg your pardon for taking you, if only for a while, in the slums. How different it is if we speak of the *élites* ! It has always been to me a delicate pleasure to converse with the Anglo-Canadian *élite*, and that throughout Canada, from Sydney to Victoria. I would not say that we have always agreed. But in both groups the minds are receptive, people are ready to understand. Both *élites*, French-and English-speaking, constitute a *terrain favorable* in which to put the seed of entente. The seed will grow if all educated Canadians resolve to look at the situation in a very realistic manner, to look at the facts with a scientific attitude, to submit humbly their mind to the historical realities of our country.

One of these realities is that two great racial stocks, the French and the English, have retained, during nearly two centuries of common life, their peculiar cultural characteristics, none being able to impose its views to the other.

It is a fact that each of the two groups possesses a great treasure of civilisation, let it be the British



or the French ; each group is quite conscious of having a treasure. None will ever give up its treasure. And why should they ? Is it not better to use both cultures to the advantage of the country ?

France and England have been in Europe neighbours influencing each other in the fields of Literature, of Science, of Philosophy, of Politics. Great numbers of Frenchmen learn the English language. On either side of the channel the knowledge of both languages is the ear-mark of higher education. The Canadians can at least reach that level. The British tradition has been retained by the immigrants going to Australia and by their descendants, since they have made the study of French a compulsory subject in all Australian schools. Yet it would be much more practical for the Australians to learn the languages of their neighbours, the Dutch, the Siamese, the Hindus, the Chinese, the Japanese. But here in Canada the learning of French is an absolute necessity if we want to reach a minimum of understanding. Yet the study of French is not compulsory in the English Canadian schools, which was a great surprise to the Australian representatives and journalists who came to Canada last year. Are we less realistic than the Australians ? Or are we too quarrelsome ?

In retaining both cultures how should we proceed ? Will it be by melting ? by welding ? by making an alloy ?



Some of the Canadians like to look outside for finding solutions to their problems. Well, if it is necessary, let us look over the fence. What do we see? The melting pot process, applied in the United States, in many countries of South America. Many thinkers, many economists, many men devoted to Social Research, still doubt the value of that process. I will not take stands. I will say only that even if the melting pot process is good for the neighbour, it is not necessarily good for our country. The history of the United States is not at all the same as our history. Mimic or aping is not at all a Canadian attitude.

Let us look farther, much farther above the fence. There is Russia. Is there another country better suited than Russia for experimenting the melting pot process? The communist central authority has always been much stronger than that of the Washington federal power. Nobody would have been surprised if the Russian government had tried to merge and melt all its nationalities in one. Yet Russia chose not to do that.

Read the last issue of *Free World*, February 1944. Nicholas Vakar, a distinguished Russian scholar, author, lecturer and journalist, writes on "*Soviet Russia, a welding shop for nationalities*". Russia, he writes, has 70 different nationalities; newspapers are published in 68 different languages and dialects; sixteen Republics join to make one country, sixteen republics "equal in right and honor", as says Vakar, "despite the fact that



some of them, like the Russian Union Republic, are almost twice as large as the United States, whereas others are as small as the state of Maryland ”.

All the Soviet states are bilingual. Yet national unity in Russia is an obvious fact, as shown by the conduct of the war. “ In America, however strongly the new immigrants may be attached to their native land, the original national ties are bound to disappear gradually and to give place to a new national consciousness . . . In Russia a new national consciousness, that of Russian, (or Soviet) citizenship, gradually supplants nationalities and, without destroying them, makes them operate on common ground for common good. Russia may be called the welding shop of nationalities ”.

So says Vakar. Consequently the process of the melting pot is not the only one, it is not the best one. It certainly cannot apply to the French Canadians in any of the nine provinces. It certainly applies to other groups, to immigrants from central Europe for instance; they have left their country of origin ; they have deliberately chosen to live in another country already shaped and governed by its different laws. They came in a country that was British *in toto*, but made of two groups, one French, one English.

The immigrants, in the province of Québec, have been given the choice between English and



French culture. They should have been given the same freedom in all Canadian provinces.

But even the French Canadians have been denied, in most localities outside the province of Québec, the right to develop according to their civilisation, their language, their history, their great contribution to the building of Canada. The process of the melting pot has been most unjustly applied to them. They resent it, they will always resent it, and they are right in doing so. As long as that wrong has not been redressed the friction will remain, the wound will remain unhealed.

There is only one policy, it is to consider Canada as a country of a dual language. Switzerland, Belgium, other Dominions are, such as South Africa. Other countries as New Zealand for the Maoris, such as the Dutch possessions in the East. But Canada has, or at least may have, a unique characteristic in the possession, in the exploitation of the two greatest cultures of Modern World, the French and the British. No other country in the world could boast of such inheritances.

Yet things happen as if the French Canadians would say to the Anglo-Canadians : " Your mine gives gold, but I don't care for gold ", and the English Canadians would answer back to the French Canadians : " Your mine gives pitch-blende ; what is it worth if compared to our gold ? "



But both gold and radium are very useful. You could not buy a loaf of bread with a tiny bit of radium, but you could not cure a wound with a pound of gold.

The country that could produce large amounts of gold and of radium could lead the economic life of the world. The country that possesses the gold of the British culture and the radium of the French civilisation could lead the whole world.

But the English and the French Canadians are separated by dark monsters : Indifference, Fear, Hate, sinister demons always active in private and public relations, that can be conjured only by charity, mutual trust, humility.

All ministers of all religious denominations should preach charity, with a gentle obstinacy like John the Apostle.

All educated citizens should take their share of such priesthood in chasing the monsters out of the Canadian house, such as Christ did send the demons in the lake of Genesareth.

A British philosopher, Charles Caleb Colton, more than a century ago, said :

“ Many know what they hate ;  
few know what they love. ”

Oh ! indeed ! It is very easy to collect the items of a long list of our divisions, our jealousies, our quarrels, our hates. How many Canadians, of either group, have that black list in their pocket book ; at the first occasion, at every occa-



sion, they draw the list, always ready to fight, to answer outrage for outrage, to take eye for eye, tooth for tooth.

Oh ! the good Christians we are ! Would it not be better to try and be good Samaritans, generous enough to stop near the wounded and to put a soothing oil in the wound ? Not only we are not Christians, we are not even Samaritans ! We are plunged up to our necks in the dirty waters of pagan ethics. And we are proud of the situation, as it seems.

Thomas Watson, in the last issue (January) of *Think*, writes two lines that come to the point. Says he : " Let us not waste time on the things we hate, but devote our time and talents to the things we love ".

Haters are losing their time. They do nothing good, nothing useful. They do much harm. But they believe they are right. They are blind. They want to be blind. If a blind man leads a blind man both will fall in the ditch. Blind haters cannot be taken as leaders of the nation, of the public opinion. They should be put behind bars, forbidden to speak or to write.

But we cannot hope for so much. So we have to undermine their influence, to circumscribe their action. The best would be to go directly to those of them we know and try to enlighten them, with all the patience that love may inspire.

Ladies, do not leave the task to others. Make it your own affair. You have assumed responsibilities



in public life. You are citizens. You are voters. As members of a nation-wide organisation, the Canadian Clubs, your responsibility is greater. I have not concealed the truth ; my words may have been rude. I do not pretend to have given to you much new information. I rather painted a large fresco, pointing out the hideous figures that spoil it. My object was not so much to teach you as to move you toward Action.

I do not promise you success. That young woman, Catherine of Siena, gave her life for bringing Charity and Peace to the Christian world. Did she succeed ? Listen to Alice Curtayne saying: "The judgment of later centuries must not obscure the truth that in her own day, in the general view, she failed disastrously. Her real story is one of overwhelming disgrace and disappointment".

But the seeds she put in the bloody soil of divided Christianity did not perish. It became a plant, with flowers of Sanctity, with fruits of Peace and Charity.

This delayed glory may be our sole glory, yours and mine. But let us forget glory for the moment. Florence Nightingale, Jeanne Mance, Catherine of Siena never dreamed of Glory, only of Love and Sacrifices.



## II

### SURVIVAL, NOT DOMINATION (\*)

From the beginning the French Canadians were far from being internationally-minded. The first settlers who came from France in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were mostly craftsmen who became farmers in New France. Even in the homeland their outlook had been local rather than national. They were more interested in Normandy, Perche, Anjou, Poitou, Aunis, Saintonge, than in France as a whole. Other countries were of little concern to them.

In New France they virtually lost sight of Europe. For them Europe meant only wars into which they were forced against their will and against their immediate interests. France controlled their life, dictated policies, and forbade the development of desired industries. The result was that the settlers soon became North American in outlook. That spirit grew stronger with the cession of Canada to England in 1763. Then they were really Canadians in name as they had been in feeling and tradition since perhaps 1698 or the Treaty of Ryswyck.

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(\*) Reprint from *Food for Thought*, June 1942.



The "new subjects", as the English called them, had little to expect from their former motherland. England objected to French interference in any form. France, itself, cared little for a colony which had been very costly and had yielded little in return. Consequently the French-Canadians concentrated upon the maintenance of their nationality, or culture, by their own efforts, a fact which explains their willing participation in the wars with the American colonies in 1775-1783 and 1812-1815, "American" wars, not European.

The first influence which one might have expected to develop an international mindedness amongst the French Canadians was that of the French Revolution. Not that they liked the Revolution. Quite the contrary. The Clergy and the mass of the people detested it. But a few leaders followed the course of the Revolution through American newspapers and friends, and through English newspapers. French books were also available. To the works of Voltaire and the "philosophes" were added revolutionary works, including later one particular book of the Abbé Lamennais, "Paroles d'un croyant". This last was condemned by the Church but it enjoyed a fairly wide circulation in French Canada none the less.

Lord Durham, in his famous Report, states that such leaders had made friends with the radicals of the whole world. But, in fact, these



leaders, notably Papineau and his group, were not the whole people. After the rebellion of 1837-1838 the "revolutionists" were practically forgotten, and, as François-Xavier Garneau puts it, the French Canadians turned again to their own affairs and were concerned with their own survival. This meant an attitude diametrically opposed to that of international-mindedness.

### **Attitude Towards France, Britain and the United States**

After 1855, however, and the easier introduction of French books into Canada the French Canadian élite paid close attention to the French Romanticist writers. Crémazie, Fréchette, and Casgrain imitated these writers and tried to inspire the people with a love of France the old motherland. They were not without success. The coming of French consuls to Québec and Montréal did much to consolidate such feelings. At the same time diverse views toward France arose amongst the French Canadians. Those who favored radical ideas approved of French radicalism and the Third Republic. Others looked to French Catholicism as a source of new strength for their ambitions in Canada, though many French-Canadian Catholics felt that the Catholics in France had made a poor showing in their struggle with the Third Republic.



At the same time an imposing group of French Canadians studied British institutions with keen interest and were, as Laurier puts it, "British to the core." Some, on the other hand, like Henri Bourassa in his first stage of development when he bitterly and cleverly criticized all forms and expressions of British imperialism, turned to French Canadian nationalism.

Toward the United States there were similar differences of opinion. The presence in that country of a large number of French Canadians, with consequent mutual visits, gave French Canada a better insight into American life and politics. Some people began to hope for annexation. But on the whole French Canadians looked upon the United States with scorn.

### **"Ourselves Alone"**

Such a variety of opinions about other countries might have been the source of a vital interest in international affairs but it was not. French Canadians were immersed in local affairs and local politics. They found enough satisfaction in their own life so that they had little concern for the outside world. They did not turn envious eyes abroad, nor did they aspire to any important *rôle* in world affairs.

When the war of 1914-1918 came along it offered the French Canadians a major opportunity to become interested in international



affairs. The enlistment of thousands of French Canadians in the army, their presence in England and in France, and their gallant fighting, — witness the glory won by the famous Twenty-second Regiment ; the part played in the settlement of international questions by the Hon. Ernest Lapointe, by the Hon. Senator Dandurand, and by French Canadian members of delegations to Geneva and other European cities ; all these events were well suited to arouse French Canadian interest in international affairs. Yet the vast majority of French Canadians remained and remain quite indifferent to great problems of international significance.

A large number of French Canadian students have crossed the Atlantic to study in France, Italy, England, Belgium, Germany, Scandinavia, and other countries. Upon their return these scholars might have become leaders in broadening the political horizon of their fellow citizens. But some of them entered a strictly private life and refrained from any attempts to influence the public opinion. Others became civil servants and as such were practically forced to keep silent. Others were appointed professors in colleges and universities and were in a better position for enlightening the people, and many of them tried to do it, but against a strong current of opinion.

The great majority of the representatives of the people in the Legislative Assembly and in the House of Commons themselves lacked know-



ledge of international affairs and have rarely attempted to use their influence for other questions than those of local interest.

Consequently, the French Canadian people as a whole are little concerned with international affairs. They are rather fundamentally concerned with one thing, their survival as a people.

### Survival, Not Domination

After the great French Language Congress at Québec in 1937 the delegates who had come from all parts of North America were desirous of creating a society to promote common study and action. The name they chose for this society is significant. They called it the Comité Permanent de la survivance française en Amérique (the Permanent Committee for French Survival in America). The fact merits attention. The purpose of the French-speaking people in North America is *survival*. Not aggression, or conquest, simply *survival*.

How English-speaking Canadians could fear domination by French-Canadians has often been a source of wonder to me. Such people should read French-Canadian writers, poets, journalists, and scholars. They should listen to French Canadian speeches, sermons and radio talks. I would dare say that not a single French Canadian has ever expressed the aim or desire of domination in Canada or North America. So far as I know



from conversation with people from all social groups in French Canada, the idea of domination is quite absent from the mind of the French Canadian. His ambition is not to dominate Canada. Even if he should outnumber the other racial groups put together he would not use his numerical strength to dominate.

If he wanted to dominate he could well do so in the Province of Québec. There he could very well try to impose his ways and views upon his English-speaking and Protestant fellow-countrymen. Yet it is a fact that these are left entirely free in the matter of religion, education, language and manner of life. If he wanted to dominate Canada he would make use of the Pact of Confederation in a very different way than he does. This year of 1942 marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of that pact. When it was drafted and adopted in 1867 there were in Canada only two races and two religions : the French and the English, the Catholics and the Protestants. The pact was an entente between the two groups, both having historical rights. Neither group was to dominate the other one. And certainly the French group never tried to dominate. Since that time waves of immigration have sharply turned the balance of numerical strength against the French Canadian. The overwhelming bulk of the "New Canadians" became English-speaking, only a scant few joined the ranks of the French Canadians.



### **Influence of New Canadians**

This influx of foreign elements should not in my opinion have upset the relation established in the Pact of Confederation. The spirit of equality between the two groups, French and English, should have been retained, and should have inspired all Canadian policies. But that spirit has been altered. At present many French Canadians seem to aim at securing representation in the federal civil service just equal to their numerical proportion in the total population ; i.e., about 30%. And English-speaking Canadians are not lacking who are willing to take much more than their proportional due, and leave the remainder to the French Canadians, if that is unavoidable. On the part of the French Canadians there has been the pressure of an inferiority complex ; and, also, a lack of proper vocational training, especially in the natural and social sciences. Now that the French Canadians are making good some of their past deficiencies, their English-speaking compatriots must be ready to trust them further than they have done, and to accept them as partners. That is the need, to accept the French Canadians as equal partners. No more, no less.

They need fear no intention of domination from the French Canadian. Such an aim is a myth, as I have said before. The fact that some French Canadians think in terms of "separa-



tism" is further evidence of its mythological character. If they really wanted to dominate there would be no question of separatism. Such an attitude nips in the bud all pretence to domination. The few adherents of separatism believe that separation would bring an end to friction and discontent on both sides. It is not an aggressive movement. I do not believe they are right in their estimate of the results. On the contrary, I think that they overlook the main difficulties. I mention them only to make it clear that there are no French Canadians, not even the extremists, who aim at the domination of any other group.

### **Fear of French Birth-rate**

A certain group of English-speaking Canadians has recently expressed fears about the birth-rate of the French Canadians. They say that by the end of the century the French Canadians will be in the majority in Canada. They say that the Canadians of British origin are only 49% of the population, and by this statement they leave the impression that the other 51% are all French Canadian. This, of course, is not true. In the census of 1931 the French Canadians represented only 30% of the total population. If they really have increased, — which I doubt, — it cannot be more than 1% to 4%. On the other hand, the New Cana-



dians, i.e., all those of other origin than British or French, who were 20% in 1931, may have increased quite as much or more than the French Canadians. And this group must certainly be classed with the English-speaking Canadians, whose language and culture they absorb in the public schools, and for their own interest. Certainly the French Canadians do not look upon the New Canadians as any friends or allies of theirs ; least of all as possible tools of French domination in Canada.

### **And of Roman Catholic, Domination**

This same English-speaking group expressed fear about the Catholic religion stating that Canada should not risk domination by Roman Catholicism, particularly of the brand practised in the Province of Québec. Such fear, and such derogatory remarks are certainly quite out of place. It was this same derided Roman Catholicism which effectively advised its adherents to stand by the British Empire at the time of the Pontiac rebellion in 1764, during the American revolution and the war of 1812-15, and against the "Patriots" in the rebellion of 1837-38. Its voice was clear and firm during the great war of 1914-18. And it is no less clear and firm when it speaks by the mouth of His Eminence Cardinal Villeneuve and the whole Catholic Hierarchy in this present war. Again it was that same derided



Roman Catholicism which earned the praise of James Murray, Lord Dorchester, and Lord Elgin, to mention only the most prominent of past governors. Above all it gained the unqualified praise of Lord Durham in his famous Report of 1839. Roman Catholicism has always stood as the solid bulwark of civil authority. Any bona fide Britisher will admit that fact. If anyone has any doubt that it is a fact let him take the long series of official mandements of the French-Canadian Bishops. Therein he will find abundant proof of the loyalty of the Catholic hierarchy in Canada, in French Canada. It is worth pointing out that Lord Durham also remarks upon the high level of morality amongst the French Canadians. This morality is the product of religious teaching in church, school, and home. It is certainly nothing to be derided or to be feared,

In this article I have tried to offer to my fellow-countrymen, both French and British, certain new facts and ideas for their consideration. The war will prevent the celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of Confederation. One thing we can do. We can concentrate our minds on the problem of a better understanding between French and English, between Catholics and Protestants. Our main objective must be to rid our minds of at least a certain number of prejudices. Once the ground is cleared of biases it will be possible to erect the solid framework of National Unity.



### III

## CANADIAN AUTHORS AND NATIONAL UNITY (\*)

The kind of English language I use is not Oxonian, nor Victorian nor Shakespearian. It may go back to Chaucer, or only to Drummond. But I will use it just the same and without any shame. It was very hard for me to reach even that level. If you find faults you are given full permission to smile or to laugh. The first lessons I had in English I received with the fists of my young playmates in the county of Megantic, the Palmers, the Johnsons, the Ryans ; it was a language fit for action rather than for literature and it may be found in better accordance with this meeting, since you intend to put literature to action in order to win the war.

Such a view is bound to please me very much. Personally I prefer action to literature. Moreover the experience I had during the other war confirms me in my opinion. I was then in Paris, studying at the Sorbonne and at the Institut Catholique. The old Sorbonne was very quiet and, it seemed, wanted to keep out of difficulties

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(\*) Montréal, Canadian Authors Association, September 1942.



and stick to academic activities. The Institut Catholique was far more active. Its Rector and leader was the late Monseigneur Baudrillart, a strong mind, a warm heart, a powerful speaker. As soon as the war broke out in August 1914 he put himself to work, started doing things. He had been, up to that time, a writer, an historian. But now he became a man of action, in Paris, in France, in Spain, everywhere, and he took with him in his work most of the students of the Catholic University. I was, at that time, the only Canadian student. Mgr Baudrillart used to ask from me information about the attitude of the French Canadians ; he felt quite puzzled with the editorials of one of the Montreal French newspapers. The German writers having issued a manifesto Mgr Baudrillart got busy, with other French writers, to publish an answer. As he wanted the answer to spread over the world he had it translated in various languages ; when it came to the English translation he asked me to do it with a young Irish priest, Father O'Halloran, who was studying catholic theology in Paris at the expense of the non too catholic French Government of that time.

I received there a very good lesson on the ways of putting literature to action during the war, and from that point of view Mgr Baudrillart stands for me as a great example to follow.

I had another lesson, and a very good one, with Maurice Barrès, a great French writer, as you



know. Barrès was considered, before that war, rather as a dilettante, as a man of pure literature. He had come to action as a member of the *Chambre des Députés*. When the war broke out he became in charge of the editorial column in the great Parisian daily newspaper, *l'Echo de Paris*. Barrès was really the support of public morale. During the sombre days of la Marne, of Verdun, Barrès would find every day the words to comfort the aching hearts of the civilians, to lift their minds, to strengthen their hopes. Barrès stands as a great patriot, as an example to the writers during the hard crucial days of war.

Baudrillart and Barrès, two great examples of what the authors can do and should do during the war. Both are dead. Both continue to preach us, the French- and the English-speaking writers of Canada.

If one will examine the war-time writings of these two men, he will find that their influence came from the fact that they maintained very high the spiritual values and from the fact that they were appeasers of the quarrels in which their fellow citizens had indulged before the war.

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That is what we have to do here also. We, Canadians, have had and still have too many quarrels between ourselves. Time for quarrelling is over, it should be finished. Our quarrels are like



weeds that come from the ground with the wheat and with the oats, spoiling the crop. Our duty is to uproot them. Most of our difficulties come from a wrong interpretation of Race, Religion, Language, National Ideals. As I am trying to explain my views on these subjects through the French network of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, I will not go to details here.

But I may say that all the Canadian Authors, of either language, have a duty in the matter. We are citizens of this our country. We have weapons, our pens. We can contribute to the war effort. Our first contribution consists in abating the quarrels that arise between our fellow countrymen.

Some of the quarrels have their origin in the way History is taught to the children. I know very well that the Past may teach us lessons. But what lessons? Is it a lesson of hatred? Not long ago a friend was trying to explain to me how and why Monsieur X had conceived hatred against England. My friend told that Monsieur X's ancestors had a farm, that their house had been burnt in 1760 by the English troops, and that Monsieur X could not pardon such brutality. I answered : Very well, Sir ; then I know what I will do ; one of my ancestors has been killed by the Iroquois on the Island of Orléans ; I am going to buy a revolver ; I'll find out where are the descendants of those Iroquois ancestors, and I will go and shot all of them on the spot ”.



Of course that is silly talk. That is nonsense. I am sorry for my ancestor having been killed, but I am not going to put the responsibility on the offsprings of the Ancient Iroquois. Same for the English troops, in which perhaps there were more Germans and other foreigners than English proper. I condemn their ways, taking in account the crudeness of their time but I cannot put on the shoulders of the English-speaking Canadians of to-day the brutalities of the 18th Century ; and this is the way it should be told and taught the youth of to-day in our schools ; this is the way the Canadian writers, journalists and educators should put it in the minds of their readers and pupils.

One great piece of appeasement has been done by our friend Mr. Emile Vaillancourt. You know, I hope, the pamphlet he wrote about William of Orange? If not, please get a copy and read it. There you will learn that William of Orange could hardly speak English but spoke French fluently. There you will learn that William of Orange, though a Protestant, had no hatred against the Catholics, and did not want to persecute the Catholics. So we, the Catholics of Canada, can turn to our fellow citizens of the Order of Orange and just ask them to stand by their master and Patron, William of Orange's policies about the French language and the Catholic religion. If they did so, much of the bitterness that exists presently would be wiped out. If the newspapers



would spread that information throughout the Country, I feel sure that the members of the Order of Orange would change their mind. This is one example of what the writers can do in the matter of public service ; their's is the role of appeasing the prejudices that brood in the minds of some of our fellow citizens.

Some may be surprised when I take the newspapermen amongst the authors. But from the viewpoint where we stand to-day anything coming from pen and ink has its influence on the course of events, on the destinies of our country. Rumors, bad news, paid advertisements containing libels or slanders against any national or religious group of our country, should not take place in our periodicals, and if they appear there, we, the writers, we at least should have the courage of writing to the editor so as to counterbalance the evil effects.

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All this amounts to serving the Truth. One Ancient Roman once said : Virtue, thou art only a word ! How many of us think or say or act as if they were saying : Truth, thou art only a word !

The people, the nation needs to be told the truth. But there seems to be a conspiracy to hide the truth from the people.

Shall we expect the politicians to tell the truth, all the truth and only the truth to the people ?



How many of them will not dare. It is the greatest curse of Democracy that the people's leaders will stand by reelection necessities rather than by country's real needs.

Shall we expect the newspapermen to say the truth? How many of them are bound by the ties of political party allegiance, or by the proprietors' orders, or by circulation necessities.

The rule is to flatter the people ; the rule is to please at any cost. The rule is not Truth. Such rules are bad seeds, seeds that in time produce a harvest of prejudices, a harvest of quarrels, of bitterness, of hatred. On the fire we put oil instead of water.

At least the authors can be independent ; they are in fact independent, they are the priests of Truth ; they must hold to their high vocation. Let them read extensively, collect the errors, the bad news, the wrong statements, the false rumors ; let them take their pen and spread the light of Truth in all the dirty corners where prejudice broods. That is, evidently, our function in these times. If we only do that, we have won glory, we have done more than guns and bombs towards a better world.

But, is that enough? No, it is not enough. Our responsibilities go farther. Our duty is to teach the spiritual values.

That world in which we live is far too materialistic, too much given to sensuality. Do not be afraid : I am not going to preach a sermon. I



have preached very few sermons in my life and I feel no inclination to begin now. No, I just want to speak here as an ordinary citizen.

I would like you, my dear colleagues, to come upon the heights and, from there, to look to ordinary life and judge it according to eternal principles. I say "eternal" if you practise any form of Religion. I'll say "sound moral principles" if you are free thinkers. At least, all of us can agree on one thing, that is that pleasure cannot be the rule of life ; not in time of war, where so many sacrifices are asked from all citizens, not even in time of peace, where sacrifices are necessary in order to prevent other wars.

If you are a novelist, why should you preach free love? why should you depict love and sex so as to corrupt the minds and the hearts of the young people? You may say for your excuse that young people should not read that stuff ; but you know very well that they read it, they choose it, they prefer it, and they fall a prey to their own evil instincts.

If you are an historian you will not choose, amongst the facts, those that are apt to make divisions, to start quarrels in the country, especially if you write for the younger generation. I do not mean that the historian will deliberately conceal certain facts, but his duty is to put them in the proper light, to explain them according to their epoch and not according to our present



opinions. He will, above all, endeavor to raise the people's mind up to a higher life.

If you are a poet, please ask Erato to inspire you, not with sex, but with the spirit of sacrifice, with Glory, with service to the Country.

If you are an economist, try to get out of the strictly materialistic viewpoint. Even Economics have a spiritual side, a moral value ; why not, then, present that side, set up that value, so as to inspire the people with noble feelings.

But you may be just a philosopher, and there lays the thorn. You, my English-speaking and protestant dear colleagues, don't you pity us, the French Canadian Catholics, for that poor scholastic philosophy that we study in the Colleges, Seminaries and Universities? Still, I think you are wrong. That "poor" philosophy is a very rich one. Who are those, amongst you, who ever read the *Summa* of Thomas of Aquinas and the splendid philosophical literature it has produced? And why should we stay so much apart in such an important field? Do you know that Adler, in Chicago, Adler, not a Catholic, is an admirer of the scholastic philosophy? Do you know that Maritain, Gilson, and other French thinkers, have come to the conclusion that the scholastic and thomistic philosophy is the best one for our world? There is, in that philosophy, a light, a strength to apply to our problems. Why should you let us alone, the Catholics, to dig in that treasure? We have not shut the door ;



it stays opened for you. Come in and take your share in the fat of the land. If we once studied the same philosophy, there would be union and unity in our heads, and from the head of the nation union and unity would descend in the members of the community. The spiritual values of all times preserved in the scholastic philosophy would fill the community chest for the benefit of all.

Another spiritual value is to be found in the classics, the so much despised classics, the so wrongly despised classics. Was it not very foolish to abandon them? An American writer said, about two years ago, that our Democracy was founded on a double basis, Religion and the Classics ; he said that we have degenerated in the very measure we have parted from that basis, and I believe he was right. Classics have practically disappeared from the curriculum of most of our Universities, and this I consider as a real disaster. I will not dare to put on the table all the praises that have been given the Classics. Most of you know them very well. Most of you regret their fading away. Most of you would like to see them reinstated in their place of honour. But who are those who would dare to speak in favor of the Classics?

I believe in the Classics for making stronger minds. I believe in the Classics for maintaining the clarity, the purity, the beauty of our languages. And, listen to the surprising statement,



I believe in the Classics for promoting national unity in our Country.

The Greek language is the basis of our enormous scientific vocabulary. The Greek Democrats have written about Democracy truths that we, writers, should put again under the eyes of the youth and the adult.

The Latin language is the root of our two official tongues, the French for 95%, the English for at least 66%. If the pupils entering the High School were obliged to take Latin, and if Latin were properly taught, the boys and the girls would have a better knowledge of both languages, they would learn them much more easily.

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If there must be unity in that Canada of ours, if Canada must stay a country of a dual culture, the French and the English, then the better citizens will have to learn both languages ; otherwise it will be impossible to understand each other, and if we do not understand each other, the entente, the union, the unity will ever stay as a dream, they will never become a reality.

We should, then, favor the study of both languages, in the Universities, in the Colleges, in in the High Schools, in the elementary schools. If we want to make that study easier and better there is only one way to do it, and it is by the obligatory study of Latin at an early stage in



life. Your Association, it seems to me, should take up that proposition and influence the Educational authorities. Some of the audience might consider that affair as practical rather than spiritual. Let me then be clear about it. France, in this war, has received a terrible blow. But England, even victorious England — and we all hope and pray for her Victory — will have received a blow. Both these countries will take much time in recovering from the war. The Dominions, and especially our Dominion of Canada, did much to help France and Britain in their war. We have given money, ships, ammunitions, men. We are proud of that help we gave to a sacred cause. But let us not forget that such sacrifices will in return bring privileges, and the one privilege we, the authors, will most appreciate, is the help we will give for restoring to their full glory the civilisation of France and England. The study of both languages and both literatures, here in Canada, is the surest means towards that end.

However there is another field that has hardly been cultivated, I mean the field of translation.

There are many Canadian books, there are French and English books that should be translated. Canada is in the best position for a work of that sort.

Presently the public at large is deprived of real good reading because there are practically no translations.



This came to my mind last Sunday, when Lady Fiset, the Châtelaine of Spencer Wood asked me if I would translate Miss Elliott's very good book, *Women Pioneers of North America*. I feel sure that the French Canadians would appreciate Miss Elliott's wonderful narrative in their own language. The Association of Canadian Authors and the Société des Écrivains canadiens might organise a joint Committee for the selection of the best books in both languages and for having them translated. I think it would mean much for a better understanding between Canadians.

My last words will be about other spiritual values.

We, the French-speaking and the English-speaking Canadians, we got married, in 1867, after a pretty stormy courtship. We finally agreed to live together in this part of North America, pretty much as husband and wife. We had a contract of marriage passed before a venerable notary, Queen Victoria, at London, England.

And then we started a new life ; then, also, we began to have mothers-in-law. The English-speaking Canadians considered France as a mother-in-law, and the French-speaking Canadians looked at England as a mother-in-law.

The two mothers are fine old ladies, rich and learned. They wanted to interfere in our *ménage* and they did interfere to some degree. I could develop that view, but is it necessary? *Intelligenti pauca*. But Canada has come of age.



Canada has a house of her own. Canada wants to live by herself.

We turn our eyes toward our two mothers, our two mothers-in-law. They are learned, I said, and they can teach us in many ways. We are ready to learn, but we must take the knowledge, not as being French or English, but as being fit for our needs in this country. To canadianise the best that can be found in Europe, that is a very important task for the Canadian writers.

I wish I could go farther, but I have reached the limit of my time.

My dear colleagues, I spoke freely to you. I may have been too bold. If I have hurt your feelings, it was not my intention. I love my Country, Canada, above any other country. I wish her to be a great, prosperous and glorious country. I may be mistaken about the means to reach the end. If so, pardon me for the sake of my intention.

Considering your invitation, Mrs. President, I wanted to propose to your Association the aim that would be worthy of its past merits. Canada is the natural link between two great cultures, the English and the French. If the Association of Canadian Authors and la Société des Écrivains canadiens will some day work together, we may feel assured that a bright future will shine for Canada.



#### IV

### PRIEST-RIDDEN QUÉBEC(\*)

I have chosen a title that may seem strange, *Priest-ridden Québec*. I confess I have been influenced, in so choosing, by the kind of work I have been doing for many years, especially these last years, and still more during the last months, about the question of National Unity.

The more I give myself to that work, the more I believe it deserves the efforts of the Canadian citizen and the more I feel it is in progress. The time is more favorable than ever to try and promote National Unity. From the first Sunday of September last to the end of this month of January I will have given each week a radio talk to my French audience about the various difficulties that are on the road to National Unity. In these talks I have endeavoured to point out the responsibility of the two main Canadian groups about one or the other of such difficulties.

Mr. Thompson, president of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has invited me to repeat the same talks on the English network, which I am doing from the second Sunday of

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(\*) Montréal, January 1943, St. James Literary Society.



January to the last Sunday of May. In these talks I offer subjects of discussion rather than solutions.

I might well have included amongst the difficulties, the subject of this lecture, yet I did not, considering that the series was long enough. However it seemed to me that this evening the opportunity was the right one for studying that particular difficulty which is condensed in one phrase, Priest-ridden.

I think I do not exaggerate in saying that the English-speaking Canadians are much preoccupied about the influence of the Catholic Clergy on the French Canadians. Walter Alexander Riddell published in 1916 his thesis on the *Rise of Ecclesiastical Control in Quebec*. It is a very interesting book ; it is the work of a sincere mind. I would not admit all of his theories and conclusions, but I admire the conscientious effort to grasp a very difficult problem. For the moment I only regard the publication of such a thesis as a sure indication that the problem is considered by the English-speaking people in North America as one of some importance.

I will not try to make here an analysis or criticisms of that book. I only want to examine the field of the French Canadian Literature in-as-much it has been influenced by the Clergy and, if possible, to measure such influence.



There is a great difference, on that point, between the French and the English Régime, because there was no printing during the French Rule. The fact is known to the scholars but I think it is necessary to mention it. Printing was established in the Colonies of New England and the other Southern Colonies in 1639 and the following years. Some might believe that the lack of printing in New France was caused by the influence of the Clergy who, supposedly, would have liked to keep the colonists in a state of ignorance. But it was not so. The fault is not for the Clergy of New France, but that of the general and economical policies of France. There would be much to say about it. I refer those who may be interested, to the excellent work of Cole the title being, *Colbert and a century of French mercantilism*, in which is to be found sure information about the theories and practises of French economists. The whole may be condensed in two words, 'monopolies' and 'protection of home industry.' In 1615 a Frenchman, Montchrestien, published a book, *Traité de l'Economie politique* "Treatise on Political Economy." That was seven years after the foundation of Québec. Cole summarized the author's views as follows: "State regulations and control . . . could right all that was wrong and create all that did not exist. This was the core of the 18th century mercantilist doctrine in France." Colbert himself was imbued with that doctrine and all his endeavours were to



protect home market, home industry and home agriculture. He forbade the culture of tobacco in New France. He wanted all sugar produced in the Islands of West Indies to be refined in France. The policy of paternalism went so far that (I again cite Cole) "when the belfrey of the church in Quebec was in need of repairs the matter had to be referred to Colbert for authorization." France would draw from the Colony only the raw materials she could not find in her own territory. The best she would allow was to make the apparel for clothing, and that only through the Intendant Talon's energetic efforts.

The printing of books was a special concern of the French Government. In 1553 the King of France decided there would be no tax on the export of books, which means a control on books, right from the beginning of the printing industry. Laffemas, another French economist, made a special study of the imports of books. Theatre was a royal monopoly. The writers had a national function, that is to praise the King. When the Company du Morbihan was formed the Minister, Cardinal de Richelieu, made a part of its monopoly the printing of books. "The Flemish, says Cole, had developed the art of printing to a high degree and were underselling the French in the home market." Hence regulations and taxes to protect the French printers.

The same policies applied to the colony of New France. As a matter of fact, printing should



have been established at Québec in 1635, when the Jesuits opened their College and started the writing of their famous *Relations*. But they did not even dare to ask for it. The manuscripts were sent to France where they were circulated. There was always the danger of a ship being wrecked or taken by pirates, and there might be long delays between the writing and the publishing. When Talon stirred the activities of the Colony, the Jesuits believed that the moment had come to organise the printing industry at Québec. Still knowing of the difficulties involved, they were very prudent and they asked, in 1665, only for the printing of books to use for the conversion of the Indians. Even for such a limited object the permission was not granted, for fear, I suppose, it would compete with the metropolitan printing industry.

In 1683, eighteen years later, the Sulpicians, at Montréal, wanted to open a printing shop. They had, of course, to ask permission of the mother house in France. The superior, M. Tronson, who was a very careful administrator, must have taken all the necessary informations before giving his answer, which reads as follows : " It is believed that it would be of no use to send you type for printing, because we have been told that you would not know how to use it and that the books (of instruction) would not give you sufficient information to make a success of the work. "



But who had told that? I presume that Mr. Tronson went to see some of the printers in Paris, asking for buying type to be sent to New France. The printer must have been alarmed at a possible competition, and he told the good priest that the composition was a very delicate and difficult work, that the Canadians were not skilled enough to do the work and that there was no book explanatory enough to ensure success in the operating of the machines.

This is very surprising, when one considers that most of the settlers of New France were craftsmen, ready to do any kind of work, and at least ready to learn how to do it.

The opportunity was then lost a second time. Sixty-six years later, in 1749, M. de la Galissonnière, then Governor of New France, made a last effort; he wanted at least that the official notices be printed in the Colony, but he received no favorable answer.

The lack of printing retarded the birth of a Canadian literature, but it is evident it was not the fault of the Clergy.

The Jesuits, the Recollets and the secular clergy did their best to promote the writing of books concerning the Colony. Firstly they themselves wrote books. I have mentioned the *Relations* of the Jesuits. You certainly know the various editions of that collection, especially the one published by Twaites. The *Relations* may be considered as the first newspaper or periodical



written in New France and about New France, though it had to be printed in France.

Secondly they *have* written books. Shall I mention the Récollet Sagard, who, curiously enough, published in 1636, very early, an *Histoire du Canada*, at Paris, of course. Let us rather mention the Jesuit Charlevoix ; his *Histoire de la Nouvelle-France* appeared one century after Sagard's book (1744). Another Jesuit, Lafiteau, published between 1724 and 1732 a very good book about the customs of the Indians of America (*Mœurs des Sauvages américains comparées aux mœurs des premiers temps*, 4 volumes).

The laymen and the nuns were also favored in their attempt to write and publish books. Lescarbot came too early to be mentioned here. The same applies to Champlain, the founder of the Colony.

But Marie de l'Incarnation should be put on a high rank for her *Relations* of her religious activities and perhaps more for her letters, which are very important for the knowledge of the life of the Colony. These *Relations* and a certain number of her letters were published between 1677 and 1684, not long after her death, in France.

Had printing been established early at Québec many books and collections of letters would have been preserved and published, which would add greatly to the knowledge we have of New France.

I do not overlook Pierre Boucher's *Histoire naturelle des mœurs et productions du pays de la*



*Nouvelle-France*, printed at Paris in 1664. The King himself had asked him to write that book. This was at the time when Louis XIV had made the Colony a regular Province of France. The best gift he should have put in the chest of the New Province was certainly a set for printing. But the King forgot the gift and New France continued to be the little cinderella of the French Literature.

The little I have hereabove said of the *Relations* of Marie de l'Incarnation should not give you the impression that the work has no importance. On the contrary the *Relations* bear a great significance. They are one of the numerous flowers that sprang from the religious Revival that has marked France's intellectual evolution at the beginning of the 17th century. I wish I could enter upon more details, but I shall only refer you to the famous books of Henri Brémond, a French Academician, the *Histoire littéraire du Sentiment religieux en France*, or to the more recent work of Dom Jamet, a Benedictine monk living now in Canada, whose books on the celebrated cloistered nun of Québec are a real masterpiece.

However interesting are these books I believe that the folklore is in some respects of a greater interest.

The French Colonists might have come from one single province of France, say Touraine, or Picardie, or Normandie. They would have then



brought *one* collection of songs and legends. But they came from a score of provinces, each with its own treasure of popular poems and stories. The priests took a strong interest in such a multiple folklore, which was the soul of the social gatherings. The people would easily infer from the variety of songs on the same subject, the possibility of creating new forms. The inventive genius was thus favored and new creations of popular art were made and circulated ; they were applied to the new aspects of the life in a new country, for instance the travels by canoe, the killings made by the Indians, the strange life of the *coureurs de bois*.

This part would require a longer development, but I prefer again referring you to the many good books published on that subject and particularly to the excellent writings of Mr. Marius Barbeau.

My duty is to point only to the influence of the clergy on such a development.

A greater service was rendered by the clergy to the development of literature. It is the evolution of the language.

This point is important and I think you will permit me to explain my views.

The first settlers who came from France were not ignorant people. You may have read in some of our French Canadian books that the French Canadian was born a farmer. If that were true it would mean that the peasants of France were the majority among the settlers of New France.



These peasants were the lowest class in France, as may be ascertained by many sources, especially by one sermon of the great orator Bossuet, by one memoir of Fénelon, and by the curious portrait drawn by La Bruyère in his famous book, *Portraits et Caractères*. These peasants were poor and ignorant.

But they were not the settlers who came to New France. Cardinal de Richelieu, the minister of the French King, had his ideas about colonization. One can find his program in the Charter of the Company of the Hundred Associates, which he drafted himself. He had two objectives in view, the first, of course, being to turn the Indians to Christian Religion ; the second being trade, commerce and industry in order to ensure the prosperity of France. And that was not to be by agriculture. So he made an obligation to the Company of sending here men of all crafts ; according to the Dictionaries of the 17th century "craft" (*métier* in French) could apply only to something mechanical, not to agriculture. In one clause of the Charter Richelieu stated that the craftsmen might, after a sojourn of six years in Canada, return to France and there be considered as masters in their craft and given full membership in some or other of the corporations. About ten years later when was held the first procession or religious parade in Québec, the laymen asked themselves in what order they should take place in the parade, and they decided



to follow the same order of precedence as was used in the corporations of metropolitan France. In fact the ancient documents when they give the occupation of the settlers vary rarely mention the term agriculturist, but they very often mention the various crafts : carpenter, joiner, weaver, brick-maker, the various smiths, hat-maker, and so on.

Those craftsmen had a better education than the peasants ; most of them could read and write and their signatures are found in various registers, even when the missionaries would state in the civil registers that they could not sign their name.

With the craftsmen the soldiers made the bulk of the settlers of New France. Soldiers and officers also had a much better education than the peasants of France. As for the women they had also received an education in France, and their daughters had all opportunities in the Colony for education.

But the colonists came from various parts of France and not from one single province. If they had come from one province only they would have preserved here the particularities of their local language, the dialectal forms and even the patois. It was not so. Being of various districts they had to give up the local characters of language. There were, of course, discussions about the name to give to one thing. In such discussions an arbitration was necessary, and it came from the learned men of the little community ; the



most easily available was the missionary or the parish priest, who being educated could easily teach the people the official language of France. The good influence of the clergy on the language of the people is quite clear and certain ; they have caused homogeneity of language to come soon, sooner than in France itself. The French Canadians of to-day have only one language, whilst in France are existing even now various ways of speaking.

The Bretons, the Alsatians, the Basques, the Provençaux, all speak languages which are not French ; they have to learn French just as you have to do, I mean as a foreign language.

The common people of the other parts of France learn from their mothers a local language, a dialect or a patois ; when they go to school they take the study of the official French tongue nearly as of a foreign language ; just like the Scots do for the English language, or the Welch, or the Irish. The French Canadians are not in a similar condition. The language they speak is nearer to the official French tongue than any other in France itself. Any educated Frenchman coming to Canada easily understands our people ; their difficulties are only with the English words we have incorporated in our language either in their English form or in a sort of Frenchified form.

Consequently, if the French Canadian has been priest-ridden in his language it was for the better and not for worse.



There are various ways of pronouncing the French words, but just as there are many manners of enunciating the English words either in England or in the United States or even in Canada. There is a great difference between Oxford English and Cockney English ; and also between Boston or New York English and Chicago or Mid-West English.

Many English-speaking Canadians, many Americans often refer to 'Parisian French.' But Parisian French is the equivalent of Oxford English. About this latter I would not go so far as Bernard Shaw, who said that "if the King of England would speak Oxford the British people would make a revolution to dethrone him." No, I would not go so far, but I do not feel obliged to speak the Oxford way. Same for you ; you need not feel obliged to speak Parisian French. Even if you spoke just the French Canadian way you could travel easily in France ; you would have minor difficulties in the stores, because certain articles have received a different name in France as compared with Canada ; but it is the same difficulty for a Scot going to London, or for a New Yorker going to England.

The French language taught in the French Canadian schools and colleges is the official kind of French ; it is the official grammar, the official syntax, the official authors ; it is not the wrong sort of French. I admit it might be richer in words,



more supple in its syntax, more colorful, at least on the lips of our educated people.

But you know that the books of some of our writers have been printed in France ; some even have been prized by l'Académie française.

Such merits are largely due to a priest-ridden education going back to the beginning of the Colony.

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The "Seven Years' War" silenced all French voices in Canada. Many of the French-speaking people born in France returned to Europe. Those who remained here were either Frenchmen who by marriage or otherwise had become Canadian or those who had been born here in Canada.

They were Canadians, they were not Frenchmen. Most of them were Canadians since the end of the 17th century. They belonged to the second, the third or even the fourth generation born in New France. They knew little of France ; their relatives in that country, if there were any, were so distant and there had been so few communications with them that they were really strangers. The Canadians were a solid bloc, having gained homogeneity and they were 60,000, left with practically no other leaders than the Clergy. They had very few jurists, since the lawyers were not admitted as such in the Colony. They had a few doctors, notaries a little more.



The Clergy itself was depleted, because the priests, secular or regular, who were known as Frenchmen returned to France, and because the Jesuits College and the Québec Seminary had been closed from the beginning of the war. Still, in the period of reorganisation and later the Clergy would be the leader of the people nearly in all matters, and particularly of its intellectual development. What would be its attitude? Would it be such as to justify the qualification "priest-ridden"?

The first problem the Clergy had to solve was of the political order, the problem of the relations with the new rulers. There was little hesitation, if any. The Clergy took the oath of allegiance and they induced the Canadians to take it. They recognized the authority of the King of England, and ordered prayers to be made publicly in the churches for the King. They promised loyalty to Georges III and they observed loyalty. When a new war broke out with Pontiac and the Indians. the Canadians forgot their old friendship with the various tribes, they obeyed the voice of conscience and they fought in the ranks of the British Armies. The Clergy remained faithful to the Crown in the War of 1775 against the Colonies, and again in 1812, and again in the Troubles of 1837-38. I may refer you to the Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry into the State of Education in Lower Canada. That Report was prepared in 1838. I quote from it :



"It is impossible to pay too high a tribute to the merits of this most exemplary church (the Catholic Church). Its existence has ever been beneficially felt, and its career has been marked throughout by the most faithful discharge of its sacred duties, and the most undeviating allegiance to the British Crown" \* ; and again : "The Catholic church, whose ministers have been the only men of station among the French Canadians who never forfeited their fidelity to the mother Country." †

The Canadians needed a bishop as the head of their church. This matter could not be considered before the final Treaty, but as soon as the Treaty of Paris was signed negotiations were started for the settling of that difficult matter. I have explained my view on the subject in my book *Ton Histoire est une épopée* or *French Canada and Britain*, and I beg you to refer to the chapter about the Bishops Laval and Briand. In brief the Canadians had their bishop, a Catholic Bishop given by a Protestant King and by Protestant offices in England, and the first bishop that they had ever given in any of the American Colonies.

Our ancestors used the best means possible, loyalty, friendship and diplomacy, and they obtained more in this manner than they ever did with the parliamentary machinery from 1791 till the present time. They obtained the use of their

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(\*) See LUCAS, *Lord Durham's Report*, vol. III, p. 241.

(†) *Ibid.*, p. 277.



own civil laws, their own schools, their own language.

The question of language has been too often ill-treated by authors and speakers. Nothing is to be found in both capitulations of Québec and Montréal and in the Treaty of Paris. Nothing was clear about it in the International Law of that time. But there are other factors to be considered. The first is the happy situation of the 18th century. The French tongue was then the language of all the educated people in Europe, in Italy, in Spain, even in Germany, and in England. It would not have come to the mind of any European to try and forbid the use of the international language to a population of 60,000 people. Let us suppose that England would have won over the Germans, in the same "Seven Years, War", a part of the German territory ; there would have been no question of the use of the French language in that territory, for a language that was spoken by the Emperor of Germany was good for his subjects ; the French language was in an equally good situation in England, where the children of the best families studied that language, where the élite of the population spoke French. And there has been at least one King of England — I do not mention the Normans and the Plantagenets — who spoke French only, William of Orange ; Georges II did not speak English, but German.



Consequently it was not very difficult to settle the problem in New France. It might have been one if the language of the French Canadians had been divided in two, three or more varieties ; then the new rulers might have considered it expedient to impose their own tongue as a measure of unity. But it was not so. The Canadians had one language, and a good number of the officers of the occupying army knew that language. Consequently it was easy for both groups to understand each other. One can easily see the importance of the influence of the clergy, on that point, during the French régime, in forcing the Canadians to come to the use of one language, and of the official French language.

One great merit of the British at that time was the establishment of printing, which came in 1765, as all know, with the founding of the *Quebec Gazette*, a paper that was bilingual from the very beginning. The Canadians availed themselves of the opportunity. The priests became subscribers to the newspaper.

Soon also Education was revived. The Jesuits had had at Québec a good College. The Québec Seminary took their succession, and some of the English families sent their children, though Protestant, to that Catholic institution. Later the Sulpicians were let to give the same advantage in Montréal. Through the colleges the clergy were in the position of deeply influencing the Canadian



youth. Was that influence good or bad? I may say it was good and bad.

First it was beneficial because the priests, as teachers in the colleges, made the classics the basis of education. Latin and Greek had the first place; French came after, as had been the practice in the Jesuit's colleges for nearly two centuries. Eloquence or Rhetoric, and History had also a good rank in the program. With such a training the clergy could prepare the young men for public life. As a matter of fact the first valuable manifestations in literature were Eloquence and History. With the constitution of 1791 the Canadians turned from petitions to political speeches, and later François-Xavier Garneau spent most of his life in writing his *Histoire du Canada*, which certainly was a masterpiece for that time.

The priests had gathered a number of books in the libraries of their Colleges. Even the parish priests had their own library. May I refer you to an article I wrote in *Le Canada français* about the library of one of the priests of the Québec Seminary who went as a missionary far down the Mississippi River during the 18th century? It is a wonder that a missionary could take with him a large quantity of books of all sorts in canoes through rivers, lakes and portages.

The first French Canadian members of the Legislative Assembly found natural advisers in their priests and in the colleges.



But what about Literature and Poetry ? There lay the greatest difficulty. There was the great divide between Old France and Canada. A terrific storm, the Revolution, had shaken France ; the old Order had been abolished ; a new Order had come. Catholic Religion had suffered much at the hands of the Revolutionists. The French Canadians could never approve of the atrocities that had covered France with the blood of the best of her children ; and as said de Gaspé in short : ' they had killed the King ', which seemed to the Canadians the crime of all crimes. Napoléon, in their mind, was not better than the Revolutionists : he had dragged the Pope, the chief of the Catholics, from Rome into custody somewhere in France. Decidedly that France was not the Mother-Country of olden times. On those steps French Canada could not follow. But what was the cause of the Revolution ? Was it not the Literature of the 18th century ? Was it not the *Encyclopédie* ? the Philosophes ? and especially Voltaire ? No, this was no longer the dear France of the 17th century. Quite sure it was better to give one's admiration to Corneille, to Bossuet, to Boileau. These three great writers were, in the French Canadian opinion, the true representatives of real France. The best to do was to put the works of those authors in the hands of youth. Corneille was the teacher of heroïsm ; Bossuet had explained the true meaning of History ; Boileau had taught the rules of true poetry and literature.



The New comers in French Literature, Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Victor Hugo, were unknown on the shores of the St-Lawrence River, surely in the colleges. The Supreme Ruler was Boileau with his *Art poétique*. Consequently, for a long time, our poets followed closely the stiff rules set by the French critic, though not with the talent of some of the French poets. Hence the poor works of Marmet, Quesnel, Bibaud and many others.

At least one French writer had made a certain success in following Boileau's rules ; it was Voltaire in his tragedies. There, certainly, was an opportunity for the French Canadians ; their History, the difficulties they had encountered, their present way of life could give the matter for dramas, for tragedies, for comedies. But Drama was taboo. Bossuet and other Catholic French writers had condemned Drama as a source of corruption. If it were possible the French Canadians should be protected against such corruption. The priests would see to it. It was practically forbidden to go to theatre, to operate a theatre, and, consequently, to write plays, since there would be no audience for them. Durham, in his *Report*, expresses his astonishment at the absence of theatres in Québec and Montréal ; he is surprised that a people issued from the French nation which he says had produced many masterpieces for the theatre should be devoid of any sort of theatres. But I am not



surprised. Theatre was taboo for reasons of morality. It is not the place to discuss the severity of that view. One may say, however, that it was not more severe than most of the moral views of the Puritans (\*). The Catholic Clergy was not opposed to theatre as such, since the Canadian students in their colleges have every year prepared more than one theatrical performance.

Opposed to a certain kind of theatre the clergy also opposed a certain kind of French Literature, namely le roman, the novel, in which was seen a danger to good morals. This may account for the much deferred production of novels by French Canadian authors, and this is one instance where has been applied the qualification of "priest-ridden literature." For the same reason the circulation of the works of the French Philosophers and Revolutionists was forbidden by the Catholic Clergy. Many critics have deplored such an attitude, saying that it has killed in the bud many artistic productions. I admit it is true. But this is just one side of the medal. The other side is the morality of the people. The Clergy had in mind that it was better to protect morality than to foster artistic production. And one may say that they had a fair success. As evidence of it I will take the word of the Earl of Durham himself in his *Report*, published in 1839. I quote his words : " Nor were they (the French Canadians)

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(\*) See MYERS. *History of Bigotry in the United States*



wanting in the virtues of a simple and industrious life, or in those which common assent attributes to the (French) nation from which they spring. The temptations which, in other states of society, lead to offenses against property, and the passions which prompt to violence, were little known among them. They are mild and kindly, frugal, industrious and honest, very sociable, cheerful and hospitable, and distinguished for a courtesy and real politeness, which pervades every class of Society." (\*) The compliment is explicit. Yet Durham felt necessary to supplement it in the last part of his Report where he writes: "If the French (Canadian) is not so civilised, so energetic, or so money-making a race as that by which they are surrounded, they are an amiable, a virtuous, and a contented people, possessing all the essentials of material comfort, and not to be despised or ill-used, because they seek to enjoy what they have, without emulating the spirit of accumulation, which influences their neighbours" †.

As to the cause of such a condition of good morality Durham does not hesitate. He finds it in the action of the Clergy. I quote again from his *Report*: "The Catholic priesthood of this province have, to a very remarkable degree, conciliated the goodwill of persons of all creeds; and I know of no parochial clergy in the world

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(\*) LUCAS, *Op. cit.*, II, p. 30.

(†) *Ibid.*, II, p. 289.



whose practice of all the Christian virtues, and zealous discharge of their clerical duties, is more universally admitted, and has been productive of more beneficial consequences. Possessed of incomes sufficient, and even large, according to the notions entertained in the country, and enjoying the advantage of education, they have lived on terms of equality and kindness with the humblest and least instructed inhabitants of the rural districts. Intimately acquainted with the wants and characters of their neighbours, they have been the promoters and dispensers of charity, *and the effectual guardians of the morals of the people . . .* The Catholic church has . . . furnished the only effectual support for civilization and order. The Catholic Clergy of Lower Canada are entitled to this expression of my esteem, not only because it is founded on truth, but because a grateful recognition of their eminent services, in resisting the arts of the disaffected, is especially due to them from one who has administered the government of the Province in these troubled times " (\*).

You have noted the words of Durham " the effectual guardians of support for order ", " offenses against property ", and " violence " are little known among them ", " they are " mild " and " honest. "

To me this means much, and I wonder if it were better we had good books rather than good

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(\*) *Ibid.*, II, p. 138.



people. Even in present times the greatest number of French Canadian villages have not a single policeman. If this may be a consolation for our artists I give it to them, though I think we could have at the same time good books and good people !

But new ideas were being born in France, in Literature and in politics. The Romanticists had declared war against Boileau. The abbé Lamennais had declared war against royal absolutism. Would such ideas cross the Atlantic and come to Canada ? They would indeed, not directly, because commercial relations between France and England have not yet been officially reestablished, but from London, Bruxelles and through the United States. The French Canadians could get the French books from Boston, Philadelphia or New York. There is no doubt that Papineau and his followers had on their shelves many French books considered dangerous by the clergy. Voltaire and the Philosophers, Lamennais had their readers in Canada. Such reading was forbidden, but to no avail (\*).

It is a common belief amongst the English-speaking Canadians, that their French-speaking fellow-countrymen are easily priest-ridden. Being a French Canadian and a priest I can hardly reconcile my views with their opinion on that subject. The French Canadian is mostly Normand,

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(\*) See MARION, S., in *Le Canada français*, vol. XXXI, No. 7 and 8.



he is a "rusé matois", it is very difficult to persuade him, in the financial administration of a parish or a school, in politics, and sometimes in religious affairs. You know very well that pretty often good Catholic habitants have turned Protestants because the parish priest or the bishop wanted the parochial church to be built in such a place rather than in another. You know that very commonly the French Canadian voters have turned down the candidate favored by their parish priest. You know that if the parish priest had his way in the School Boards the teachers would have a higher salary. You know also, perhaps, that the temporal affairs of a parish are in the hands of a special board, "Le Banc des Marguilliers" and that it is not easy for any parish priest to control such a board. Indeed it is very difficult for me to accept the idea of a priest-ridden Québec.

Lamennais' paper, *L'Avenir*, and book, *Paroles d'un croyant*, were very popular with the French Canadian leaders. The newspaper came through New York quite regularly; the book had been condemned by Rome; yet not less than eight editions were printed in Canada. Lamennais' theories about Religion, Politics, Philosophy, Literature and Social questions, have persuaded many of our leaders from 1830 to 1850, in spite of the opposition of the Catholic Clergy. May I advise you to read an excellent study of that question by Canon Couture, present professor at



the Sherbrooke Seminary? You will find it in the Annual Report for 1939-1940 of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association.

The French Romanticist movement came to Canada later than the political one. There had been a certain infiltration easily found in Garneau's History, but after the Crimean War, in which France and England had fought together against Russia, and after the arrival in the port of Québec of a French frigate "La Capricieuse" in 1855 and the Treaty of Cobden, that the French books entered Canada still more freely. It was the signal for a revival. Boileau continued to be taught in the colleges, but the Romanticists were followed in practice; they inspired the Literary movement which began at Québec in 1860. The Catholic Clergy were not indifferent to the revival. Two priests deserve a special mention; the Abbé Ferland, an historian, and Abbé Henri-Raymond Casgrain, an historian and a biographer; both were professors at Laval University; Casgrain has the honor of having been the first to occupy the first chair of Canadian Literature. Both encouraged the laymen to write books and to write in various periodicals. Other priests, as Laverdière, Taché, Dugas, Verreau, Lindsay, Gingras, Provencher, Trudelle, Laflèche, Bégin, Hamel, Raymond, Paquet, Racine, Gustave Bourassa, participated in the movement with books of various kinds, on History, Eloquence, Poetry, Archaeology, Science, Theology.



Yet I consider that the greatest service they rendered to Literature is the fact that the clergy were the best customers for books and periodicals. Even if they opposed certain forms of literary expression, they certainly lavished their time, their money, their advice for the sake of fostering Canadian literary production.

This is true for the whole 19th century. If time permitted it would be interesting to make a similar study for the present century, where the same spirit prevails. The catholic priests have taken their full share in the literary production. Amongst the dead are to be found the Abbé Auguste Gosselin, the Abbé Scott, Monsignor Amédée Gosselin, the Abbé Caron, and Morice, Lecompte, Magnan, Huard, Douville, Couillard-Desprès, Charland, Plante, Huot, La Palme, Gauthier, Paul-Eugène Roy, who have left considerable works in various fields and who have been animators for many of the laymen.

I have named the dead. I think I should refrain from mentioning the living for many reasons and especially because I believe you know them well. I am sure it would give offense to no one if I praised the excellent works of the veterans like Monsignor Camille Roy, the Honourable Sir Thomas Chapais, Brother Marie-Victorin. This last name leads me to say a word about the new scientific moment amongst the French Canadians. The participation of Brother Marie-Victorin is certainly beyond praise. And how could I forget



to mention the name of the Archbishop of Ottawa, His Excellency Mgr Vachon, who took a prominent part in the creation of the Faculty of Science of Laval University? Both of them have been creators and animators. They have made disciples, priests and laymen, who have gone to Europe, to the United States, in order to get a long training, and who are now at work with the purpose of giving to Canada a sound French Canadian contribution to the scientific movement. Most of those trained scientists are professors in Colleges and the Universities, where they are endeavouring to raise the level of scientific training.

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The evolution may have come late, perhaps too late, but once started it proceeded at a rather quick *tempo*. And not without many obstacles, the story of which might easily fill a book of a fair size, the main obstacle being a strong attachment to tradition. There was a time when it was no use to propose the slightest change in the programs of studies. The answer was invariably the same: "You are going against tradition!"

I remember having once proposed five motions, all of which were turned down for that same reason. I answered: Gentlemen, I am ready to accept your traditions, but on certain conditions; you will tell me, for any given tradition, firstly the year it was established, secondly for what rea-



sons it was enforced, thirdly, whether the reasons were good at that time, fourthly whether they are still good or not. If your answer is good I will accept the tradition ; if not I regret I must reject them. But it was impossible to have an answer, and the motions were finally adopted.

I will finish with an anecdote. Not long after the Union of 1840 the bishop of Québec asked from the Seminary the privilege of buying one house. The bishop considered it was necessary for him to have more space, more vital space, I should probably say. The Seminary would not sell the house, which was adjacent to its buildings. Finally the good bishop wanted to know the real reason for the Seminary's queer attitude. The answer came back immediately : If we sell that house, said the Seminary, we will lose the only space we have for the teaching of English.

Remember this was not long after the Troubles of 1837-38, not long after the Union Act of 1840, in which the French Canadians had seen an attempt to crush their Nationality. The clergy might well have complied with a section of the public opinion and have neglected the study of the language which Durham and others thought the best means for assimilating the French Canadians.

Yet the priests of the Québec Seminary considered that for the welfare of their people, as well as for that of the whole Canada it was better



to learn the two languages of the country. And they turned down the bishop's earnest request.

If that is a definition of Priest-ridden Literature or priest-ridden people, you will agree with me that the same policy might very well be ours, yours as well as ours, in the present time.



V

CANADIAN PROGRESS AND CANADIAN  
UNITY (\*)

The aim of your club is to make Canadian affairs and interests progress. There is a great significance in such an aim.

At first sight it is surprising. Is it not the duty of all and each citizen to make things progress? If it is not so under dictatorship it certainly is so under the democratic way of life. For in a Democracy every citizen is born with rights and privileges and also with duties, obligations and responsibilities. One of these duties, and may be the most binding, is to work and toil in order to promote the common welfare and to assure the constant progress of the Country.

Yet, in spite of that evident truth you have organised a *Canadian Progress Club*. What was the motive? Probably the fact that too many citizens shrink from their responsibilities and you want to stir them up, to awake in them the sense of duty.

In that is your merit and your praise. So many people are only too prone to let the government do everything instead of doing the things them-

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(\*) Canadian Progress Club, October 1943, Montréal.



selves. If there are so many complaints about Democracies, if Nazism, Fascism and other distatorships have been born, is it not because most of the citizens forget their duty and think just of their privileges?

You want something different and better. You want a sane opinion ; you want public action ; in so doing you show yourselves true citizens. If nobody told it to you I will not miss the opportunity of telling it. I wish similar clubs would be formed in all cities, towns and villages from Coast to Coast throughout Canada.

\* \* \*

The way towards progress is open for Canada. Material, intellectual, moral, religious progress invite our activities, the efforts of all citizens. Each of these points would require a long development, but I should not forget that I have one particular subject, that of National Unity.

I know, of course, that National Unity would soon be achieved in the Canadians would only bring about more progress in their own life, in their religious, moral and intellectual life. But if we are to reach that goal we have to win over many obstacles.

Hence the first thing to do is to know well the obstacles that hinder our progress. Generally speaking people are not much interested in the study of difficulties and obstacles. They are only



too prone to go head first at the risk of falling on the first stumbling block. This at least the more educated citizens should carefully avoid. The main obstacle to progress is disunity in the nation. Let us face the problem with a strong determination to solve it.

About disunity we should find out what are its degree, its various forms, its origins, its influences.

First, its degree. Some people, as you know, think and say there is very little disunity in Canada, not more than in any other country. Comparisons are not always bad ; they may even help much. It is a fact that some other nations are more divided than the Canadian nation but we should not forget that disunity works differently in the various national organisms. Some are older and stronger ; they may suffer a heavier dose of disunity. Some are younger and weaker, and consequently their very life is menaced by a much lesser amount of disunity. This, I think, is the case for Canada. We should then consider the Canadian nation, our nation, and try to find out how much it is menaced by our quarrels. Such a study is the work of historians and sociologists, but if it is granted that they make the research work, it must be conceded that all the educated citizens have to convey the results of the research work to their less favored fellow-citizens. This is a first kind of work I suggest to the members of your club.



What are the various forms under which National disunity presents itself to our eyes? We find it in racial origins, in religion, in language, in commercial competition, in the lack of cohesion of the professional bodies, in the disinterestedness of the learned bodies, in the misconception about Democracy, in the diverging views about national ideals, in the interpretation of the Past, in provincialism, in the influence of our mother-country, in the political parties, in education, to mention only the main difficulties.

As for the origin of the obstacles to National Unity it is to be found either in the Past or in the Present times. For the Past we should rely on historical research work ; we should study the more reliable books and papers ; we should promote research work in the points that have become more important from the viewpoint of our difficulties. For the conflicts of recent origin most of them come from the economic field and we should encourage the economists to give their attention and time to those conflicts rather than to purely academic work.

Then we come to the real value of the obstacles. As a matter of fact it varies from place to place, from one social class to the other. For instance there is no opposition, amongst the educated Canadians, to the study of both languages, but there is a strong one amongst the members of the Order of Orange or with some descendants of the Empire Loyalists ; businessmen may oppose



the compulsory teaching of the French language in the English schools, but only for practical reasons. The exact value of each of the obstacles should be weighed and a serious study should be made of the best method for removing the obstacle as it is in the mind of such or such a group.

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The idea is to arrive, for a given difficulty, to a short and precise sentence, acceptable to both groups, a sort of slogan, which could be offered to the authors, writers, newspapermen, educationists, members of various clubs, who would use it extensively and sell it to all sections of the nation.

This means a big work. University men have not been trained to sell ideas ; they find ideas and they leave to others to advertise them and to sell them. In this they rely on businessmen who have been trained to bring the goods to **all** prospective buyers.

At the present time the contacts between University men and businessmen are rare, if there are any. We should have joint committees in which both these groups would meet and put together their special aptitudes.

After an extensive survey of this field I feel sure that all educated Canadians are men of good



will ; in an individual conversation, or in a group discussion one finds them ready to consider Canada as a Country of a dual culture and of a dual language. But then they return to their work and forget about action ; they fear to be alone, they do not expect to have followers ; they will not dare to put their views in writing and to have them printed in the newspapers. If they knew that they are not alone, that many other citizens think as they do and are ready to act, they would no more hesitate.

Someone must start the movement for bringing together the various Clubs and Associations of the Country. At least it is urgent to invite each of the various clubs to form a special committee of Study on National Unity. This would serve a very useful purpose in concentrating the members' thoughts and activities on a serious problem. Some Associations are already proceeding in that manner ; they have formed a Committee. How do they work ? They have gathered a series of clippings ; they may have subscribed to some Press Clipping Service in order to have information about the views on National Unity as they are found in the Canadian newspapers. A more precise tool may be found in the *Questionnaire* I have prepared on that subject. It has been admitted that the *Questionnaire* is a very good start for study and for discussion. Along with the *Questionnaire* some clubs use the text of my Radio talks. The French series has been put in



book form ; the first edition, at 2,000 copies, sold in five weeks ; a second edition is coming out next week, at Beauchemin.

My English talks are not a translation of the French ones ; they are different. They will be printed in book form.

Both books and the Questionnaire may be helpful for the study and discussion of the problem of Canadian Unity.

There are also some booklets published by the Canadian Institute of International Affairs ; there are the speeches delivered by the Honorable Mr. Godbout, by the Honourable Valmore Bienvenue, by Laurence Tombs, and others.

However the work of one or of just a few Committees would have but a little influence, if the various committees were not connected in some manner. Let us suppose there would be such committees in all the Canadian Provinces ; suppose the Canadian Clubs, the Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs, the professional Associations, and lots of other groups would have each their Committee of Study on National Unity ; suppose all these Committees would join in a general organization. Then a tremendous amount of information might be gathered ; the results of the discussions would be put together, and we would reach a great precision of expression for the basic principles of understanding, for the peaceful slogans, for the uprooting of prejudices.



Prejudices are like rats. If one town wants to get rid of rats it must undertake a general killing ; one family's efforts will help little.

One of my friends at Toronto thinks we should organise an Order of Merit and give some title of honour to those who would merit greater praise for their work on National Unity. I agree that many citizens would do wonders if they could earn a medal or a title.

But the best means of promoting the Entente would be a special periodical, a weekly ; it would be printed in both languages ; articles would be written in English and in French ; some of the French Canadian writers would occasionally write in English, and vice versa English-speaking Canadians would write in French.

The paper might be the official organ of the general organization of the various Committees. It would be sent to all the Canadian newspapers, with permission to use the copy in their own columns. This would be a powerful means of action, if we could come to a solid cooperation.

Look at the good accomplished by the Clinic of Rumors during the last year. The same method applied to prejudices would make wonders.

Just one year ago an army of 40,000 Commercial travelers started a campaign against false rumors ; is it impossible to train them to fight prejudices ?

On the French Canadian side you have noticed the organisation of l'Institut Démocratique. This is a very good instance of their willingness to



ensure a better understanding between the Canadians. I hope that some day the English Canadians will have a similar organisation to promote Entente in Canada.

I do not mean they do nothing. On the contrary, they do something. I only think they could do much more if their men of good will enlisted in a specific organization.

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Your invitation, I think, is not a matter of curiosity ; it is a sure indication that your Club wants to promote the Country's Progress through a greater Unity in the Nation. If it were only the curiosity of listening to a much-talked-about and a much-discussed-speaker, the matter would immediately drop, and we might ask, as did *the Montreal Gazette* in an editorial of September 20th 1943 : " After the conferences, then what ? Conferences often have a bad habit of passing excellent resolutions about nearly everybody and everything and then pigeon-holing them . . . It is up to each person to redouble his efforts the day the convention ends. It is only by this united and continued effort throughout the Dominion that anything worthwhile will be achieved. "

I agree entirely with the writer of that editorial, and you also agree, I am sure. Then you will have to pass to action. That moment is like the one when a man has to part with his mattress



and his pillow. My duty is like the bell of an alarm-clock. Yours is to get up and to start to work.

If you are, as I believe, National-Unity-minded, you will bring that mind with you everywhere you go. If you go West try to enquire about the westerner's grievances against East and how we can explain or redress them.

If you go to Toronto or other places in Ontario, try to know why most of Orangemen and some of the Empire Loyalists are more British than the King, as some Catholics, here and there, are more catholic than the Pope.

Just around you, in your own home, in the clubs, in the tramways, in the newspapers, on board the trains, the ships, the planes, pick up the grievances, as they are expressed ; note them in your pocket-book ; bring them to your Club's Committee ; discuss them ; ask information from specialists ; then try to formulate the right answer ; send it to the man you heard, asking him charitably if he would accept your explanation. If, by doing so, you can kill at least a part of his prejudices, you will have done a great work.

Entomologists have written big books about troublesome insects, botanists have studied in big volumes troublesome plants. And we, the human beings, the Canadian citizens, we have but little studied the insects and the weeds that spoil and ruin the harvest of National Unity, which can also be valued in dollars and cents.



One of my English-speaking correspondents is agent, in Québec, for a Company of Toronto. Once a Toronto paper wrote a very stupid editorial about the French-Canadians. The agent had a very good prospect for a sale of 8,000 dollars with a French Canadian firm. He went to see the manager, but this one had read the article, and the sale was cancelled. One insect had ruined the crop.

One professionnall of Québec went to Toronto in order to get advertising from a Toronto firm for a scientific magazine. He could not even see the manager. He felt that his French accent had labelled him as just a damn French Canadian. Not long after the agent for the Toronto firm came to Québec, where he used to make big sales, but he was given the same treatment, and his report made the Toronto company much more wise. A prejudice, a weed had ruined the harvest.

I could quote quantity of similar facts, but these are enough to illustrate the case.

The evil, through real and great in the material field, is much greater in the moral, social, political and national fields.

I have clippings from French and English language Canadian newspapers, in which there is enough dynamite to reduce National Unity to a mere dust and to send it outside the sphere of attraction of the Earth.

I was reading, recently, in a Vancouver daily, the *News-Herald*, a very laudatory editorial on



the newspaperman and his sincerity. I do not doubt that sincerity, but I know it sometimes finds very queer ways of expressing itself. I would not go as far as one of my correspondents, and English-speaking lady, who asks : Are there any gentlemen in the newspapers? But much harm is done by editorials, news items, letters to the Editor. Reporters and editors are men and they have, as we do, their weak points, but the better informed citizens should see to it that no bad stuff is printed, or, at least, if it has been printed, that the proper answer be given immediately.

You may say : Sir, the way you put it, it is a hard job to be a citizen. Of course, it is. Under dictatorship, the citizen has only to act blindly and to shut up. In a democracy, every citizen must see and can talk. To look, to see, to value, such is the duty of a democratic citizen ; to speak his mind is his right.

This will be my final word, with my sincere thanks for your invitation and your attention.



## VI

### ON BEING A STEP-CHILD (\*)

A child was born to France when in 1608 Champlain founded Québec at the foot of Cap Diamant on the shore of the St. Lawrence River.

The mother was a noble Lady. She was then in the most brilliant years of her life. France, the France of the 17th century, was the ruler in Europe. The Kings, Louis XIII and Louis XIV, the ministers, Richelieu and Colbert, were great men. France had been the leader in Europe for nearly two centuries. The mother took a certain care of the child, New France, a care impaired by weaknesses, by forgetfulness, by strictness. Most of the blood in the child's veins was Norman, a blood strong and vigorous, a blood made for doing adventures, for fights, for travels and discoveries, for work and craft, a blood that disliked stiff authority and discipline.

In order to give the child a good education, discipline and respect to authority, France took the best of herself, Missionaries like the Récollets, the Jesuits, priests like Bishop Laval, the clerics of the Seminary, the Sulpicians ; women, first choice women, like Marie de l'Incarnation, Jeanne

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(\*) Arvida, Women's Canadian Club, February 18, 1944.



Mance, Marguerite Bourgeois, and also administrative and military officers of great ability, like Frontenac.

These were the teachers of the child. They did their best to educate him, but not with an entire success. They made a hit in matter of Religion ; no other nation seems to have received such a thorough religious education as the French Canadian people. The Catholic Counter-Reform was in its full swing in France during the peak of immigration. The success was also pretty good for crafts and art, in fact the first settlers from France were in majority craftsmen ; such had been the express order of the King's minister, Cardinal of Richelieu. Much less success was attained in agriculture ; most of the colonists were craftsmen or soldiers or mariners or city youths ; very few of them knew how to till land ; and in Canada they yielded to the lure of life in the woods and on the rivers, of traveling for discovery. A school for agriculture opened by Bishop Laval did something. Norman blood and a taste for adventure were stronger. France herself, in the 17th century, was not very keen about agriculture. If one would read, for instance, the two volumes of Cole, *Colbert and a Century of French Mercantilism* (Columbia Univ. Press), one would feel sure that France was then more busy with trade and industry than with agriculture. Olivier de Serres himself, the author of an excellent book on agriculture (*Théâtre d'Agriculture*



et ménage des champs), published in 1600, did not influence much the peasants and the farmers in France.

The child should have received an education in politics, but he did not. Royal absolutism was predominating in France. The King and the minister wanted to control everything in the Colony as well as at home ; experience proved that system to be unsuitable and in 1663 the King made the Colony a real Province of France ; but the good intention did not last long ; Governor Frontenac tried to have the people speak for themselves in an Assembly, but the instructions came right back from France saying : let everyone speak for himself and nobody speak for the others. So the people had no share in the administration and in the government of the country. The child had to stay, even politically, a child.

In matter of Education he was given a better chance, with a college at Québec, — and that very early, in 1635, when the Colony had hardly three hundred inhabitants — with, also, Latin schools, schools for trades and crafts, a school for agriculture, and very good institutions for the young girls. But if he could read and write, he could not print. In spite of the desire expressed by the Jesuits, by the Sulpicians and by one Intendant, the mother would not send here anything for printing books or newspapers. While the English colonies had printing as early as



1639, Canada had it only after the English conquest.

What did the child learn about money? Not much. He was told that riches were dangerous for the salvation of the soul, he was advised to save, but not to invest, for any form of rate of interest was prohibited as being contrary to religion. There were hardly markets for surplus of production. So the child had to be content with a very simple life. Being poor he could not travel; he could not go to France, not even to the Southern Colonies; except for the discoveries down to Nouvelle Orléans where the *coureurs de bois* and the *voyageurs* triumphed, the others had to stay home. The child learned easily to concentrate in himself. At the third generation most of the people knew only Canada; they knew nobody in France; they had forgotten the distant relatives that might live in Europe; at the time of the Treaty of Ryswick in 1698 the colonists were no more European Frenchmen; they were North Americans, they were Canadians; the child was in his teens; he had acquired distinctive characteristics; as a soldier he belonged to the militias, not to the metropolitan troops; he had his own military tactics.

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The teens lasted pretty long; the Seven Years' war caught the youth in that age. In 1759 and in



1760, with the Capitulations of Québec and of Montréal, the young man was forced to doubt whether his mother would continue or at least could continue to care for him ; he began to think that instead of a mother he would have a step-mother.

He was then healthy, strong and vigorous ; his fights against the Iroquois and against the English Colonies, had made for him a glorious record of which he might be proud. His battles against the forest and against the Laurentian shield had given him an enjoyable habitation. The partial abandonment of the mother had made him more conscious of himself and more aware of what future might keep in reserve for him.

He was poor : because he was never helped in gathering and investing money ; because the Intendant Bigot had taken every penny from his *bas de laine* ; because war had taken away a part of his cattle, of his barns, of his houses, of his harvests, of his tools ; because he could hardly hope that France would give him back much of the *papier-monnaie* he had in his pockets.

His best strength he had in the fact that through a century and a half he had gained social homogeneity. They were not aristocrats, they were not *Haute Bourgeoisie*, but they were not peasants ; they were rather all *Petite bourgeoisie*. And they had a great asset in their religious organisation with the parish, the only place where they had had a voice about money to be spent. And they had a



clergy, a national clergy, sprung out of their ranks, a clergy whose power and influence did not come from money or politics, but from spiritual sources and from education. They had Seminaries and Colleges and schools where to prepare leaders. They had a language, one language, not the multitude of patois and dialects that prevailed in France, but a single and homogeneous language, which all Canadians could easily understand in any part of the country.

These were, in my opinion, the assets and the shortcomings of the young man when he became a step-child to Great Britain. He was given a fair chance to know the new mother, for from 1759 to 1763 he lived with her, though he might consider as possible a return to France. These four years of apprenticeship were very precious to him. The step-mother was quite desirous to enlarge her family ; she knew the child as a brave soldier, a hard worker, having the gift of intelligence, of good morals, of social unity, and England considered him as an asset.

Of course, England, the step-mother, knew there would be problems to examine and to settle about the child. The latter was Catholic and she hated Catholicism ; he spoke French, and she feared she would not understand him ; he had a different code of laws ; he had not reached political maturity. Amongst her own sons England knew that some would keep peace with the newcomer ; that some, on the contrary, would



dislike him and try to make him suffer, particularly that son of hers, the English group in the American Colonies, which was growing rather turbulent, which had himself suffered much from the neighbouring of the step-child.

England was very lucky in the choice of a tutor for the new member of the family. He was a Scot by the name of James Murray. At the beginning she gave the tutor free hand ; he could do what he pleased, provided there would be no troubles and no emigration. That was most fortunate for the step-child, and we may say that Murray's policies settled for ever the difficulties.

Murray made a careful study of his pupil, first during the long and hard winter of 1759-1760 in Québec, then, after the fall of Montréal. The very first problem was that of the language. Being the head of a military government Murray was in good condition for using only the English language and for imposing it to the newcomer. There was nothing, in the International law of the time, to prevent him from doing so ; there was the natural pride of victory and domination. But there were other considerations. What would be the issue of the war in Europe ? For if war was finished in America with the fall of Montréal in September 1760, it was to continue for another year in Europe. Would England or France be victorious ? If France won the war it was sure Canada would return to her, and then why should he impose a foreign language to the Canadians ?



Why not wait for the end of the war and the Treaty of Peace?

There was another point to consider, also. The French language at the time was highly praised, studied and used in all the European countries. Even in England the best families had French tutors for their children. In Germany and Prussia also French was the medium *par excellence* of communication in the high ranks of the Society. French was the official tongue for international treaties ; in 1713, only fifty years before, the Treaty of Utrecht had been drafted in Latin with an official translation in French ; even the correspondence of the English Sovereign and ministers had been made, on that occasion, in the French language.

Moreover, James Murray was not infected with the modern mania named Parisian French ; he had no contempt for the language of the French Canadian ; he knew very well that the Frenchmen and the French Canadians understood each other without no difficulty. He had, in his army, officers who could speak French, either Swiss or Huguenots, whose language was French, or English officers, who had learned the French language at home or even in France, and these people understood well the language of the French Canadians and had no doubt about the high quality of that language.

Consequently James Murray decided to talk French with the step-child of England. When he



had to choose civil servants for the administration he gave preference to those who could speak French, either Swiss, Huguenots of French origin, or English officers. He went much farther, for he hired, as civil servants paid by the military government, French Canadians ; his book of accounts reveals that he employed and paid, in the civil department more French Canadians than Englishmen. Of course, that was very bold from his part. Murray knew very well that opposition was to arise from somebody either in Canada or in England. Some people would go deep in the maze of the English laws to justify their opposition ; they would not attack the language so much as the religion of the new subjects.

Then came for Murray a crucial point. He knew well the English laws against Catholicism. He knew that the Oath of the Test would prohibit the appointment of catholic civil servants in practically every field of the administration. But Murray was not scared. He decided that the English laws were made for use at home and not for use in new conquered countries. He so advised the step-mother, who was wise enough to have the opinion confirmed by her best lawyers at home.

He did the same about the civil laws of the step-child. The English lawyers found a precedent in the old Norman laws and offered it to the venerable mother Albion, who accepted it without hesitation.



During the time which elapsed between the capitulation of Québec in September 1759 and the Treaty of Paris in February 1763, and even more, till the full application of the treaty in July 1764, that is practically five years, James Murray created a *situation de fait*, a series of *faits accomplis*, which contained in germ the solution of most of the problems set by the coming of the step-child in the British family.

Mother Britain had a long practice of precedents, *faits accomplis* and customs, as modifying the laws, even as prevailing against laws. And there is also the strength of the "*chose commencée*", the "thing begun", a psychological phenomenon, a strong inclination to go on, to continue what has begun, a difficulty to stop, a repulsion to go back. Even under military occupation, the French Canadian had spoken his French language, had practised his Catholic religion, had observed his French and Parisian civil laws, had occupied official positions in the government. So it had begun, so it had continued, so it might go on, so it would go on, under a civil government as well.

When the dispositions of the Treaty of Paris came in full swing with August 1764, the tutor, James Murray, had formed a complete policy toward the step-child, the French Canadian people. That child could be a very good British citizen ; he would not be an English entity. Something, also, had happened, well worth



mentioning : the tutor, James Murray, had nearly fallen in love with his pupil. He would think, feel, say and write : " I love the Canadians ".

Origin of love is hard to explain, as hard as the origin of a fire. There is love at first sight, the *coup de foudre*, and it seems it was so with James Murray about the step-child. This is quite sure all through the bulky correspondence and papers of and about James Murray. One may wonder why it was so. I would dare an explanation. It is not presently warranted by any document, but that may come in later years, with sufficient research.

Murray was married, but his wife lived in England, and she did not want to come to Canada ; she had no idea why the snows and ice of Canada should be more enjoyable than England's fogs. James Murray lived in Canada about ten years, I mean from the beginning of the Seven Years' war to 1766, when he returned in England, he had been ten years without seeing his wife. In Québec, at the Château St-Louis, Murray had to hire women for his personal service, viz. a cook, a chambermaid, etc. These were necessarily French Canadian. It is quite easy to imagine that these women — in omnibus quære fæminam — had an influence on the tutor. Then there was a farm, the farm *Sans-Bruit*, in the outskirts of Québec. We know from a letter sent from London to Doctor Mabane, that the English officers met there nice French Canadian



ladies and had real fun. Was there some Queen Esther holding in her hands the heart of another Assuerus? That is only hypothetical, but it is quite natural, quite human, quite in the line of History.

But even if the explanation does not stand, the fact is certain that Murray had a real love for the step-child. That love was bound to make trouble. England's son by blood, the colony to the South, could not swallow such a situation; Canada, he thought, was *his* conquest; Canada had been the author of mischief, war, fire, killing, in his domain; Canada had to go now by English laws; Canada must be English, Protestant; Canada must have better political institutions. Hence letters, petitions, contrivances against the step-child. The latter was not stupid, though. He knew the use of petitions, the only means he had, with his mother France, against tyranny. So, he also petitioned England, without any harshness, without threats, with rather a great skill, *beaucoup de finesse*. And he got what he wanted. The King of England having said that he would be a father to his new subjects, the French Canadians did not fail to address His Majesty as being their father. And Mother England felt much pleased because she was not bullied by the new subjects as she was by some and even by many of the old subjects.

The French Canadians wanted a bishop, they obtained the bishop, and he was not only the



first catholic bishop, but even the first bishop of any kind, even protestant, in an English colony. That bishop wanted to be sure of a successor ; he asked that a coadjutor be named immediately, and the step-mother did not object.

The French Canadians were desirous to retain their own civil laws and this was granted to them, and so for their language and their schools, for the religious orders of women. In fact only the religious orders of men were not allowed ; the Récollets were extincted ; the Jesuits also, but one should remark that the Order of Jesuits was banned by European Catholic countries before it was banned in Canada.

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When Murray was removed from the tutorship of the step-child, Carleton replaced him. And Carleton followed Murray's policies. He even went farther, for Carleton could not believe that English colonists would stay in the bitterly cold acres of snow ; only the Canadians, in his opinion, were sturdy enough to support the extreme colds of Canada.

Murray's and Carleton's policies were embodied in the Quebec Act of 1774. Much opposition was made to the bill in the House of Commons, particularly under the pressure of the American colonies. When the King of England went to the House of Commons for the signature of the



Quebec Act his carriage was assailed by English petitioners asking that he should not sign. But the King had the horses whipped and he signed the bill. He was young and had received firm lessons from his own mother, who used to tell him : " George, be a king ", which meant " Don't be led by your ministers. " The young king, once, had the visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who complained that a catholic bishop had presided over a formal religious ceremony in the chapel of an ambassador and that, in his opinion, that was a scandal for the Protestants and a danger for the Empire. The King asked if that bishop had talked against the State or the King ; the answer was negative and the King replied : " Let him do, I want all my subjects to enjoy an equal measure of liberty. "

The equal measure of liberty applied also to the step-child of Canada, who in return had a decided consideration for his step-mother. He proved it in 1775, fighting with her against the revolted son to the South. The consideration grew deeper when came the French Revolution with its persecution of Religion and the killing of the French king.

All was going smoothly for a time. But there was another son born to England in Canada with the arrival of English colonists, especially with the immigration of the Loyalists, a number of whom were given land in the province of Québec (or Lower Canada) itself. The Earl of Durham



himself condemned that turn in policy ; for him it would have been better to leave the Lower Canada to the step-child and to establish the other son in Upper Canada only. The cohabitation of both in Lower Canada was bound to bring difficulties.

The step-child, however, was growing rapidly and the time came when he was of age. He then claimed his right to administer his affairs and he was given the tool for that. He had a Legislature for Lower Canada while the other son was given one for Upper Canada. A few years passed before the French Canadian knew well enough the parliamentary machinery, about twenty years of practise, and when the war of 1812 with the United States broke out, the step-son was pretty skillful in that field.

In one sense it was unfortunate that the Assembly was given him as late as 1791, because these years were the worst for learning Democracy. Indeed that was the time of the French Revolution and no good lessons in Democracy could be learned from that poisoned source. And there was also the American Revolution ; the French Canadian leaders were looking over the fence to the liberties enjoyed by the Americans.

French Revolution, American Revolution *have* influenced *some* of the French Canadian leaders. Then another problem for the step-son was the attitude of the *clique du château* who, like a Family compact, tried to take all advantages of



power and influence for themselves and for the English-speaking population against the step-son. Little by little the latter's feelings were hurt. The hurt became a wound, a bleeding wound in which demagogues poured vinegar, the vinegar of both revolutions, the vinegar of a priest of France, l'abbé de Lamennais, a radical whose writings had been condemned by Rome, but whose writings were spread in Canada and read by a step-son still young and craving for freedom. The wound became an abscess, which opened painfully with the Revolt of 1837-1838. Without good weapons and without ammunitions the step-son raised his fists against the *Clique du château*.

The step-mother was greatly surprised and shocked. She had put the young man under the tutorship of good old Sir John Colborne, a soldier whom effusion of blood would not move or trouble. His methods of repression were not liked by mother England. She looked for another tutor and found one in the Earl of Durham. Queer enough, England having to appease the Canadian Radicals did not choose a Conservative, a tory, but a Liberal, a Radical, and even the leader of her own Radicals. Her cure was not allotherapy but homeotherapy.

Durham had received a very good training for his mission. He had no dislike for small nations rebelling against big nations ; he even favored all of them who in Europe had risen against tyranny. He approved much of Papineau's ideas



and he included, in his Report, a number of the famous 92 Resolutions. Durham nearly made a success of his mission ; had he not been betrayed by the metropolitan ministers, had he not been cheated by some of his friends in Canada, he would have reached the goal. When Durham arrived in Québec the step-son was a bit surprised by the kind of Oriental display that surrounded the tutor ; but he at first liked the tutor, till a so-called friend of the tutor opened a filthy mouth against the step-son, while pretending that he had Durham's approval. Then the step-son changed his mind and spoke bitterly against the new tutor.

Durham, who had written the first part of his Report rather favorable to the French Canadians, returned to England, and his cortege also ; there he wrote another part of his Report, in which part he made a terrible mistake about the step-son. He said that the survival of the French Canadian was an utter impossibility. He compared their situation with that of the French in Louisiana and of the Dutch in New York. Both these groups had been or were being rapidly assimilated, and Durham thought it would be exactly the same for the French in Canada. There was the mistake.

Mistake about the largeness of the respective populations, for the French Canadians were in much greater numbers than the two other groups.



Mistake about the strength of resistance, for the French Canadians had a high birthrate ; they had in the parish and in the clergy a solid organisation ; they were socially homogeneous ; they had a clear national consciousness ; they possessed a firm determination of surviving and of playing their part in North America ; they had a high power of assimilation.

Yes, the mistake was great. Yet, Durham did not want to crush the French Canadians. He put the blame of the situation upon Mother England, whose policies had not been firm toward the step-child. Sometimes she had favored him, sometimes not ; she was now in a very bad predicament ; she had finally to take a firm stand. In his opinion the best to do was a confederation of the various provinces, in which the French Canadians would slowly become melted with the mass of anglo-saxon America. But as the provinces did not accept a confederation, there should be a union of the two Canadas, in which, without injustice to the French Canadians, these would also lose their personality.

Unfortunately the plan of Union offered by Durham was not entirely followed. The question of Upper Canada's public debt spoiled the discussion and the decision.

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The Union of 1840 came as a terrible blow on the head of the step-child. In spite of his numerical strength he was put on a much inferior level. The official use of his dear language was, for the first time, denied him, and he would have to pay for the other son's debt. Even his Religion was despised to the point that a special society was organised to deprive him of his religion.

All these measures appeared to him as a formal contradiction to the rules of Democracy. Only one consolation was given him, the responsible government ; and, according to the French canadian of the time, that was nearly enough to compensate for the wrongs done to him, for he had fought for years in order to obtain that essential reform.

In fact that proved to be his salvation. Responsible government became for him the tool with which he broke his chains. Going back to the tradition of *finesse* he had used under Murray and Carleton, he soon won a place of honour and power in the government and in public affairs ; he was, soon also, given back the official use of his language. As for religion the inimical society continued its work, but with very little success ; so much so that the French Canadians made more conversions to catholicism than the protestant society did to protestantism, and that without any special organisation.

The wound closed, but left a scar, a tender spot. Then came the glorious reign of Queen



Victoria. The step-child even began to love the step-mother. The Queen's picture, the Royal family's picture soon could be found in the most humble home of the French Canadians, who love familial life and large families ; the picture of Queen Victoria surrounded by numerous children was quite in the taste of the French Canadian life. France had discarded the Republic for an Empire, and a glorious Empire. France and England had become friends again first in a commercial agreement, and then in a war against Russia. Suddenly a French frigate appeared before Quebec, as a symbol of the alliance, and when victory came for allied England and France, the governor of Canada invited the French Canadian to use the French *tricolore* flag beside the English flag.

The French Canadian writers started writing about France, the dear mother, and inspiring the people with a romantic affection for her. The step-child, who had been partially abandoned by one and sometimes hurt by the other, had now two mothers to love. He felt comforted, and proud.

Proud of his achievements in politics, in religious establishments, in intellectual life with a University and with literature and poets. He was also progressing in commerce and industry. In short, for the first time he could enjoy life. He was now an adult and he felt like establishing himself. He did so with the Confederation in



1867. It looked like a marriage between the two Canadian groups, the French-speaking and the English-speaking Canadians. The wedding was celebrated at Westminster in London. The step-child entered the married life in full confidence and trust. The courtship had been pretty stormy, but the agreement seemed good. Both parties to the marriage promised, as usual, to love each other, to tolerate each other's shortcomings, to help each other.

Was the married life a happy one? Not entirely. No, not entirely. Because, I suppose, married life is rarely happy? Because the husband, I mean the English-speaking party, was a bit authoritarian, a bit despotic, a bit of the "taking-much-place" type; because, I may say also, the two step-mothers stepped too much into the *ménage* of the newly weds. Both tried to influence either the husband or the wife, one with her republicanism and anticlericalism, the other with her imperialism. Because, also, the husband insisted much in giving preference to those of the children who resembled him more by language, by education, by money or otherwise.

And now comes sometimes the question of a divorce, and this is very bad. Shall there be a divorce? Some of the French Canadians — only a few — talk of "separation". Some of the English Canadians talk about putting the French on board a ship and sending them back to France. These are the extremists.



Yet even now an agreement can be reached. Agreement about race, religion, language, national ideals, commerce and industry, professional life and the rest. The moderate opinion, on both sides, is ready to meet, to talk, to discuss, to understand. The loud noise made by the extremists should not prevent the moderates from doing their work.

Canada must survive. The French Canadians do not want or intend to dominate ; they have large families, because they love children, not to use them as a weapon against their fellow-citizens ; they talk much, they grumble pretty much, but that is because they are French and Norman. The English Canadians are also troubled about their own survival as distinct from the Americans. Survival is a problem for each of the two groups, for different reasons.

Very well. But then what have we to do ? We have to accept this country of ours as a dual country, a country of two civilisations — the best that ever lighted the world — a country of two languages — the finest that ever moved human lips — a country of two religions, both able to discipline human life ; a country of two races, which in fact are not different but are close relatives, by the Norman link.

If we did that our sky would be clear. Is it not the case of Switzerland ? where three races, two religions, four languages do not hinder an excellent practise of the Democratic institutions, a real



understanding, a really national unity? Is it not the case with Russia, where 60 nationalities are united and fight gallantly our common enemy?

There are men of good will on both sides, in both groups. They surely are the majority. But they are not organised. If they would form a Society from sea to sea they would make marvels.

Ladies, are we not all, all those present here, people of good will? Are we not ready to talk friendly? Are we not willing to cooperate? The answer is yours as well as ours.



## VII

### FRENCH CANADIAN CULTURE

The father of gods and goddesses, Zeus, was in Greeks' opinion a kind patriarch, leading on the heights of Mount Olympus, an easy and agreeable life. *Nectar* and *Ambroisie*, and display of thunderbolt added much pleasure to a life already very enjoyable. Save for troubles coming from the human beings, save also for the ire — so well justified — of Hera, Zeus' happiness would have been perfect.

But often Zeus had a weak heart for pretty human lassies and the fruit of such weaknesses made continuously larger the population of Olympus. So much so that other mountainous peaks were required. For instance, the love affairs of Zeus with *Mnemosyne* came to people three peaks, Parnassus, Pindus and Helicon. Indeed nine children had been born from that one mother ; nine daughters, called the Muses. With Apollo, their chief, they were the Department of Fine Arts in the Olympian administration ; Drama, Music and Dance, Lyrics, Elegy and *Epos*, Eloquence and History, Astronomy, all these fell under the jurisdiction of these graceful civil servants.

When the pagan world became christian, Zeus had to retire, just like a prime minister whom



the voters did not favour. Fortunately the God of the Christians did not kill Zeus' daughters, hoping that they would give up paganism, which indeed happened.

During a pretty long era the Muses kept silent or nearly so. Finally they moved to Italy, where the Popes gave them a home. From Italy they moved to other places, mainly to Versailles in France, though they also opened offices in England.

The kings of France, always keen in worshipping ladies, organised for the nine Sisters a comfortable and very busy life ; consequently, literary and artistic production rapidly grew up. Not without difficulties, especially for Thalia with comedy and for Melpomene with tragedy, because these two met with a cruel enemy that they had never seen on the Parnassus, that was Jansenism.

*Fame with her Hundred Mouths* used to visit the nine Muses. Through her they heard that France had extended her Empire, in America. But they were not called to cross the Ocean. Had they been called that they would no doubt have refused. Indeed it was Artemis, or Diana, the Hunter, and Hermes or Mercury, god of trade, who were called by the companies and by the very practically-minded Cardinal of Richelieu, to go to New France. But, as it is well known, Mercury and Diana never had much consideration for the Nine Sisters. And, moreover, the ship *Don de Dieu* had hardly left the French shores



that Fame arrived at Versailles and whispered to Muses' ears that at the last moment a most hated goddess had hidden herself in the ship, and that was Eris, the troublesome, the quarrelsome goddess of Discord ; that was enough to inspire the Muses with disgust and they stayed in Europe.

In America Diana and Mercury displayed a great activity. Diana's arrows killed millions of fur-bearing animals and Mercury was busy with trade, while Eris did not fail to light the fire of quarrels in all spheres of activity. That was a serious handicap to Literature and Fine Arts. Let us consider, also, that the men and women who left France to settle in America had a deep cult for the three non-too-literary deities. Diana found worshippers in all ranks of the Society, especially amongst the *coureurs de bois*. Mercury also was much honored by everybody. Trading was the *par excellence* business.

And that had been Cardinal de Richelieu's strong determination ; to the companies he organised he assigned two main objects, the first to preach the Gospel ; the second, to ensure a prosperous trade. That is easy to ascertain by reading the Charters of the Companies. After him Colbert followed the same policy.

In accordance with that specific purpose the colonists who came in New France were not poets or writers, not even tillers of the soil, in whom some are pleased to find mysticism, a sense of



poetry, a queer mixture of Dream and Reality. Our French ancestors were not farmers or gardeners. Not at all. They were quite realistic people ; they were, to take Richelieu's proper words, men of all crafts, whose duty it was to favor France's commerce by their industry and by their energetic work.

Of course, other colonists were not craftsmen, but they were good soldiers and officers. In fact, very soon another god had come here, and it was Mars, the god of War, whose religion was always alive, for our ancestors liked much waging war.

And that cruel goddess, Eris, never forgot to stir the embers of Discord. The matter was highly inflammable, for our dear forebearers, being Normans, had a liking for quarrels and jealousy.

Really, the ground was not a rich one for the Muses, for the peaceful Muses. Had it been rich that they would have found themselves gagged by the absence of printing, to which they had become accustomed in Europe for two centuries. But Versailles would not see fit for New France the invention of Gutenberg. At least the nine Sisters might have relied on the copists, who had flourished in Greece and at Rome, but the species seemed to have perished under the weight of printing type.

Hence the daughters of Zeus had no direct contact with New France for nearly two centuries. They could exert only an indirect influence. They were much considered by the good Jesuit Fathers,



who worshipped them in their many colleges in France, and who had opened one at Québec, at a time when there were more trees than students to listen to their lessons. Clio, muse of History, caused the birth of our famous *Relations*. She had even previously inspired Samuel de Champlain, in his *Voyages*. This may explain the deep religion given to her at all times by the French Canadians. She also sent here men like Charlevoix, Sagard, Lafiteau, Boucher, whom she certainly had inspired.

Of all men and women born in New France, during the French Régime no one felt the whispering of the absent Muses, of the Muses kept so busy at Versailles. Of course they found in France many delicate ears, ready to accept their least murmur. A man like Corneille had studied Belles-Lettres and Law. La Bruyère also. Racine, born in the refined milieu of ancient bourgeoisie, had grown up in the rich atmosphere of Port Royal. Molière's father was tapester of the King. All these men were civil servants to His Majesty, who assured for them spare time and a well buttered bread.

Nothing of that sort in New France. Curiously enough, it is Urania, Muse of Astronomy, who dared to have any care of us, with Clio. Urania had a tenderly beloved daughter, whose name was Science. Pascal had been under the influence of that new deity, whose temples were little by little raising from the ground. Science had its wor-



shippers in Canada : Astronomy, Navigation, Surveying, Botany, Zoology, had here more amateurs that had Belles-Lettres and Fine Arts.

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When the French flag hid the *fleurs de lis* in its folds and crossed the ocean toward France, there was here a deep silence. The Canadian had slowly matured ; he had fixed himself in the frame of a marvelously beautiful Nature, which he loved with all his heart. Now he felt alone ; he was in front of a new mother, a step-mother, possibly unkindly, though she had for him words and attitudes really loving. When our people became an adult, when he was given the tool of political freedom, the vote and the Assembly, then the Muses came nearer to him, at least two of them, Calliope, teacher of Eloquence, and again Clio, teacher of History. From the beginning they found here docile disciples. A new flower, political Eloquence, appeared in a soil which had seemed till then sterile, which at least had never been cultivated. It happened to that flower the same as to our natural plants and trees : it developed very rapidly and in less time under our northern sun than in more southern lands. Our ancestors made themselves England's pupils in political matters from the very Capitulations of Québec and Montréal, more after the Treaty of Paris, still more when they had obtained the Quebec Act.



The introduction of printing in 1765 brought to them views on the international relations ; it also opened to them a large window on the British parliamentarism and on the American republicanism. They were not afraid to read the British political books ; the English language was not an obstacle for them. By some sort of smuggling through Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore they also could have many French books, perhaps not the best. There is no doubt that Calliope had more brilliant orators in France, but she did not entirely despised the French Canadians ; her whispers move the pages written by our first politicians ; their art is poor ; the language also, but love of Country inspired fine passages.

In those times History was still just a department of Eloquence, and Clio was only a younger sister to Calliope. In French Canada, however, the younger had more success than the older. From the start History, indeed, could inspire a man of superior abilities, I mean, as you know well, François-Xavier Garneau, the first of our true historians. His first tentative was really a masterpiece ; do we have better even now ? Do we have something to compare with Garneau's work, if we consider the very great difficulties of his time, and the great facilities we are given in our days.

Still, one may say, the chief merit of Garneau is not so much that he wrote History as the fact



that he caused the other Muses to migrate in Canada. Let us suppose that Clio, so proud of her disciple, could finally convince her sisters that a new artistic domain was then given to their care. Consequently they came to Canada, with the hope of finding a comfortable home on our Laurentian mountains, though much lower than Greece's peaks. We owe to their artistic zeal our first Literary School, that of 1860. Of course the Muses came here all covered with the romanticist attire. They had been for a long time kept tight in Boileau's stiff rules, and they surely felt more free in the romanticist dress, more ample, more supple, even though overloaded with unnecessary or even bloody-red ornaments.

That time, it was Erato, the elegiac Erato, who had the triumph. To shed tears became stylish, to have one's heart on one's sleeve was the rule, just as in France though it was with more talent in France.

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As for me, I regret that the Muses did not change their dress when coming on our shores. The teaching given in our Colleges would have had them tied as ever in Boileau's stiff rules ; but our writers, once out of the Colleges, would give their adoration to the Muses in their romanticist attire. It seems to me that the Muses would have been more at ease, more natural in the



simple dress used by Diana in her roamings through the rich and magnificent Canadian Nature. If it had been so, our literature would sooner have drawn other nations' attention.

On that question I entirely adopt the views of one of our present writers, Georges Bugnet, who, I think, agrees entirely with Sir Charles Roberts. There have been, up to now, in French Canada, very few, if any, literary manifestos. "Prefaces to Cromwell", such as Victor Hugo's have been and are rare things on Laurentian slopes. At least, Bugnet gave us such manifestos. They are to be found in *Le Canada français*, the Laval University periodical. In January 1940 he published there an article "La Forêt"; in December 1940, he wrote another one, the title of which is *Des Valeurs littéraires*, Of Literary Values. These pages, surely, were a delight to the Muses who had become Canadian by choice. These pages deserve the consideration of any who holds a pen in Canada, at least in French Canada.

In Bugnet's opinion, too many literary critics, too many authors give importance to what, in a book, may amuse. He wants us to "give preference to that kind of Art that may make more perfect, not only the mind, but the moral life, that may teach not only the right thinking, the right saying, but also the right doing."

Time, of course, will make the classification that literary critics do not know to make or do not dare to make. "After all, says Bugnet, it is not



hard to perceive that if Plato and Aristotle, Pascal and Bossuet, are put at the top row of the writers, it surely is not because they amuse us ; it is not at all because their words inflame our imagination and our passions, but it certainly is because they move the highest faculties, the noblest aspirations of our mind and of our heart. ”

Hence if Literature is not always a sermon, it must never go against morals ; to put it straight, it must show itself christian, or at least “ supra-material ”, it must push toward moral progress. Once is finished the reading of a book, one should ask himself : “ Does my mind see greater, farther, higher ? What in that book can make my life, my conduct, less sterile, broader, more useful ” ?

And the Muses, who became christian nearly twenty centuries ago, will readily accept that first rule of our thinker. They have learned, through a long experience, the immense influence of book, for evil still more than for good. Let us look, through their experienced eye, the present world and see the ruins it has suffered and is still suffering from the few writings of one Karl Marx, one Engels, one Hitler.

We must also, according with Bugnet, walk out of the paths of imitation ; we must be decidedly ourselves. “ Instead, says he, of lighting our own lamp, of studying on our own table and in our own room, we are going after other people’s candles. ” So, we should not put Edmond Rostand above Pascal, just because fashion did



it in France. Note, please, that Bugnet was born in France ; he is not, as we are, a Canadian since three centuries ; he became a Canadian less than fifty years ago. His advice is then of great importance.

If we would make a new scale of the literary values in the Canadian literary production, taking as a rule originality instead of imitation, how many surprises for us ! How many pseudo-Hugos, pseudo-Lamartines, pseudo-Mussets, pseudo-Claudels would fall from the pedestal where they were put by our insignificance.

Bugnet, a Frenchman now made a Canadian, agrees, as I said, with Sir Charles Roberts ; he agrees also with an English-speaking Canadian, who lives in the United States, I mean Brebner. Brebner also wants the French Canadians to be at last and decidedly themselves. Read yourself his views as he put them in *Le Canada français*, of December, 1941. He upholds that the French Canadians have their function in North America, they have their threads to put in the pattern of North America. We have our religious views ; we have our philosophy, our logic, human and christian at the same time. " It seems to me, says Bugnet, that on these lines our literature could take a quite canadian character, a more really human also. Perhaps also our authors could come to think broad, deep and original. Let us give up borrowed lights ; let us have our own light, and a brighter one at that. Let us not be deceived



any more by ornaments that are void of substance, and in which true love, love of God, love of Humanity, is rather obscure and cold. ”

Not a single one of the Muses would go to the contrary. All of them would give applause.

But to be ourselves might just mean not being like all others, and that would be a mere negative character, and hence insufficient. There must be, also, a positive character. What will it be? Canadian books should have a distinct taste, something real, refined, rare, unique, whilst apt to be universally appreciated, through the introduction of the aroma of Good, of Truth, which all human beings like to breathe.

The peculiar character of the European Literature is “the eternal fight of man with man.” Here in Canada it is fight of Man with Nature. In Europe Nature has shrunk to such an extent that it is nearly nothing ; man’s victory over it is easy ; here, Nature is the stronger ; Man looks at it with awe, with a sort of religious feeling ; that feeling cannot be found elsewhere ; it is proper to Canada.

“As soon as the Canadian is through with his daily task, says Bugnet, he, more or less consciously, feels that the relations between himself and the country are not the same as elsewhere. Just a glance at the map of Canada shows that in spite of all his efforts, or all his perseverance, the Canadian has, in the same time as his neighbours, conquered only a slice of the southern



part of his domain. He knows that in vast regions he will be able to settle — if he ever does — only at the cost of hard and ever-recurring sacrifices. ”

Man, in other countries, sees easily his strength as compared with Nature. In Canada, man sees rather his weakness.

“ From everywhere he is surrounded by forms that are equally tangible and untangible ; they are ancient, they come from so far that their origin stays unexplained ; yet they are young, extremely beautiful, their beauty is either distant or smiling and tender, yet it is silent, closed, full of mysteries. When he contemplates those aenigmatic presences, that activity so ample, so strong, yet so delicate, so different of human activity, the Canadian, far from finding in his relations with Nature reasons for feeling bigger and satisfied does only measure his smallness and his poverty. ”

Again, I may say, the Muses, though born and brought up on the Greek peaks, will not contradict Bugnet's view. But we, shall we come to think as do the Muses ?

Our ancestors have followed Diana in the provincial forest, but with Mercury's pursuits. Let us take again the same paths, with Diana, in Nature's splendid domain, but let the Muses and not Mercury, let the Muses, now Canadian, inspire us. Of all the daughters of Zeus, they should be our guides !



## VIII

### CANADIAN WOMEN AND UNITY (\*)

Of all the invitations which I have received to speak during the summer holiday yours is the only one I have accepted. I considered it a duty on account of the very friendly relations I have had with the Québec Club during the last few years, and on account of the high importance of the education of women in general and especially in the Province of Québec.

It is not my purpose to deal with any of the technical or professional aspects of the problem of education of women. I feel inclined rather to continue the course of my activities in the cause of a better entente between the two main groups living in Canada, the French- and the English-speaking and it is about that I should like to speak to you. Women in the United States, in England, and in other parts of the world, are all equally interested in our Canadian problem of National Unity. Canada has made great strides in many ways, but her main purpose now is to achieve Unity throughout the country. A strongly united Canada is an asset to the world. A divided

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(\*) September 1943, Québec, Convention of University Women's Clubs.



Canada would be a burden to the other nations, as is or would be any other weak nation. International peace and security can only be secured and maintained by a solid group of strong nations, and it is the ambition of our dear Country, Canada, to become a very strong people and to contribute generously to the welfare of the world.

My aim, in my speeches, lectures, radio talks, and in the books I have published, has been to bring about a better understanding between the French Canadians and the other Canadians. I am glad to say to-day that my words have not fallen on a barren soil. The seeds are sprouting and look healthy, the plants will grow and bloom in time and will bear their fruit.

Amongst the hundreds of letters I have received in connection with my radio-talks I have noticed numerous letters written by women. Canadian women are interested in National Unity ; all my correspondents, save one woman, have discussed the problem very seriously, and have proposed interesting remedies and solutions. It is a duty and a pleasure to me to acknowledge publicly to-day this constructive contribution of Canadian women to the cause of National Unity.

There is much more that can be said on this subject. In my public addresses I have hardly mentioned women and the role they are playing in the nation's life. Since they have answered so well when not called upon, what would they not do if directly invited to do their share ? That is



what I want to do now, addressing myself equally to French- and to English-speaking women, to those who are present in this distinguished audience, and to those who are listening by radio throughout Canada.

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The worst enemies of Canadian Unity are ignorance and prejudice. This I know for sure from the letters I have received and from the conversations I have had with citizens of all callings and from all the Canadian provinces. Those who are learned and those who have travelled are not prejudiced ; the others are either ignorant or prejudiced ; amongst them some are willing to learn, others are not. We have to take care of both types ; otherwise our hopes will be frustrated, even if we do not place them too high, which would be the case, for instance, if we wanted to eliminate all prejudice from our people, or if we desired never again to see an ignorant person.

But even if we are reasonable in our ambitions the task is great, and the combined efforts of all our best citizens is essential.

To-day let us examine the problem of the French Canadian woman. It is commonly said that she was ignorant in olden times and that she still is to-day ignorant. Is this true ?



In trying to answer such a question we should be very careful about the real meaning of the words. Philosophers and moralists have given us rules and examples to follow in clarifying ideas and words. We should, for instance, make a difference between illiteracy, ignorance, and lack of education. Illiteracy is the equivalent of the French word *analphabétisme* ; it is the condition of one who never learned the alphabet and consequently cannot read nor write. Ignorance is the condition of the one who does not know, whether he is illiterate or literate. To be uneducated is not to observe the commonly accepted rules of social relations, of etiquette, of politeness, of elementary morals.

There are various combinations of those three conditions. There are literate people who are practically ignorant. There are literate and learned people who show themselves uneducated. There are illiterate people who are not ignorant ; some are even refined in their manners.

Whether one is illiterate or literate is not a true barometer of a nation's worth. Whether one is ignorant or not is a better indication. Whether one has good manners, and is educated is a much better one still.

While we should keep these definitions and distinctions in mind we should not forget to guard ourselves against generalisations. What applies to one class of people may not apply to another class ; what applies to a few members



of one class may well not apply to the rest of that class. Another thing to take into account is the difference between periods of time, between centuries ; we are too naturally inclined to apply present day standards in judging the facts and situations of past centuries. Finally we must guard against accepting *prima facie* as true certain statements to be found in ancient documents ; they must be compared with other statements and evaluated according to the standards recognised by Historians.

Of course these things are not new to an audience such as this. I have mentioned them merely as a reminder, for all educated people must repeat these principles again and again if they really wish to enlighten the people.

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What were the women in French Canada during the French Regime ? Like in most respects they were little different from the women who inhabited the thirteen colonies. Most of them came from rural districts, but many came from the towns and cities, many even from Paris, especially the orphan girls, who had been educated in the orphanages of the Capital. Many of the female colonists had received the best education that could be given in France at that time. Very few were what we term "uneducated". Travelers remark in their memoirs on the refinement, which



was common amongst the women of New France. Some of them, perhaps many, were illiterate, as was the case in the whole of Europe at the time, but very few were ignorant. All of them knew the traditional folk-lore, songs, legends, tales and fairy tales, nursery rhymes and proverbs ; they knew at least one craft, weaving ; they were well trained in Religion and Morals ; they knew how to bring up their children ; they knew the laws of the country and obeyed them ; they knew the use of a musket for fighting the treacherous Indians. They might be illiterate, but they were not ignorant nor uneducated. And they were extremely receptive ; simple minds they knew they had much to learn. The parish priest who spoke from the pulpit, the captain of militia who explained public affairs, the notary who came to draw up a contract or to make an inventory or even to teach, the *coureur de bois* and the explorer who came back from distant lands, all had something to tell or to teach and there were many attentive ears to pick up the tale or the lesson.

One sees to-day many people who have been to school for years and yet who never read or learn anything ; they have lost all receptivity and all interest in learning, and, if that is due to the school, that is the worst weakness of our schools.

I have said that not all French women were illiterate. I can even venture to say that most of them were literate, if we consider the facilities offered to the women of that time. A school was



opened in Québec in 1635 when the village had scarcely 250 inhabitants. A few years later, in 1639, the Ursuline Sisters and then the Sisters of the Congregation opened schools in Québec, in Villemarie and in other villages. The girls were keener to go to school than the boys. Each of them on returning to her family would become a benevolent teacher to her brothers and her sisters and the neighbours.

Here someone might well ask for figures and statistics. But statistics had not been invented in those days, and I do not think they would help us much if we had them. Statistics by themselves prove little or nothing ; it is their interpretation that counts.

One of my friends, who specialises in the matter, has a very expressive way of putting it. He says : let us suppose that a man and his wife take possession of an island and make it into a State ; from the very first they would keep statistics. Under the heading " Literacy ", they would enter 100% for the first year ; but the following year they have a baby and the percentage falls to 66% ; the next year, if they are good Canadians, they have another baby, and the figure falls to 50% ; with another baby it falls to 40% and so on, till the first child starts going to school.

We must estimate the influence of the women of New France in terms of their fruit and not of figures and percentage. In less than a hundred years they built a nation which was quite different



from the French nation. At the end of the seventeenth century the colonists were no longer Frenchmen, they were North Americans, they were Canadians. They owed this great change mostly to the women, and to a very small number of women at that. It is admitted by all historians that the French Canadian people sprang from ten thousand married people, hence from five or six thousand woman ; let us add to this number the nuns who took charge of the schools, and the unmarried women who lived with the families, who greatly helped the young mothers. And here I might mention another characteristic of the French Canadian people : they have been brought up by young and by this I mean very young mothers. The policy of the King of France was to encourage early marriages and even to force them. Girls would marry at 16, 15, 14 and even 13 years of age ; they were often grandmothers before they were 35, and great grandmothers before they had reached their 55th birthday ; they were healthy and sturdy ; they were full of courage and initiative, and they soon built a nation of voyageurs, explorers and craftsmen. They managed a home crowded with children. The work was hard but a place was reserved for recreation. The long evenings provided opportunities for social gatherings where their folk-lore was used extensively, and, what is most remarkable, this was done in a creative manner. The habitant had brought here from France a diversified folk-lore,



because they came from a variety of French provinces. Such a variety of songs and tales gave the idea of creating new forms, inspired by the local life, by the Indian peril, by the travels of explorers, by the adventures of the *coureurs de bois*. French Canadian folk-lore is very rich. Mr. Marius Barbeau, of the National Museum at Ottawa, has gathered a large collection, and yet it is incomplete ; Mr. Barbeau has also trained young men and young women who are furthering his excellent work.

As for the more educated women we have what has been left of their correspondence and it is remarkable. It would be easy to dwell on the achievements of those women, but I prefer to refer you to books, either in French or in English, as, for instance, the recently published book by Miss Sophy Elliot, under the title *The Women Pioneers of North America*, a book of 300 pages in 33 chapters.

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The coming of the English Régime, with the Treaty of Paris in 1763, forced the French Canadian women to assume a new *rôle*. They had now to preserve their people's national characteristics against possibly dangerous influences. This was their main occupation until 1840, the year of the Act of Union ; the main, one to be sure, but not the only one, for I consider



of great benefit to the French Canadian people the fact that they exercised and more especially the women, a great assimilative power. Right from the first entrance of the British troops in Québec in 1759 the French Canadian women worked their charm on English, Scotch, Irish and Jews equally, through marriage, and through the educational institutions. James Murray paid a high tribute to them, and Durham, I may say, paid a still higher one, saying that the women were really the men at the head of home and family.

The troubles of 1837-38, the Durham Report in 1839, and the Act of Union in 1840 developed to an extreme the sense of nationality amongst the French Canadians. New and better schools were opened, new colleges for boys were organised, a University, Laval, was founded by the Québec Seminary in 1852, numerous newspapers were offered to the people, congregations for men and for women were established, interest in literature developed or was renewed under the influence of the French romantic movement and under the more direct influence of the great historian Garneau.

During that period, as well in former years, the rôle of French Canadian women was confined to the home, and their education did not rise above the level of what we term matriculation. However in the early years of the twentieth century, the Sisters of the Congregation at Montréal opened a



College of Arts for young ladies. Their example was followed by the Sisters of Jésus-Marie, at Sillery near Québec, where a College for girls was also opened. A second college, the College of Bellevue was established at Québec, by the Sisters of the Congregation, and the Ursulines began a third one at Québec, after they had opened one at Trois-Rivières. Others are found at Rimouski and Nicolet. Montréal rapidly developed College education for girls, with colleges being maintained by various nunneries, both in the town and in the surrounding district. Ottawa and Hull also have their own College and so, at the present time many facilities are offered to French Canadian women for College education, and they avail themselves of this opportunity. In the high schools affiliated with Laval University are to be found more than a thousand girls ; there are more in the institutions affiliated with the University of Montréal ; to these numbers should be added the girls in the public High Schools and those in many private institutions. In the past it has been difficult to induce girls to take the course in the Colleges of Arts ; but to-day the situation is better ; two years ago 181 girls were registered in the Colleges of Arts affiliated with Laval University ; Montréal has more ; Ottawa also has many.

You will probably ask : Do girls to-day register in the University proper ? My answer is yes. For a time they were admitted only to the Schools



of Nursing, Domestic Science, of Belles-Lettres and Music. The other doors were closed to them by the various professional Associations, but the doors have now been opened and French Canadian women now register in Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, Sciences, Philosophy and the Social Sciences.

There are now French Canadian women successfully practising Law and Medicine. Pharmacy has been taken by nuns to ensure a better service in their hospitals. Women are found in laboratories, and of course in positions where they make use of their training in Household Science, in common and higher Nursing, in Dietetics, in Music ; they have also graduated from the State Schools of Fine Arts. They will soon be found in all professional activities.

Yet to me of much greater importance is the presence of women in the schools of Social, Economic and Political Sciences opened by the three French Universities, at Québec, Montréal and Ottawa. That field, in my opinion, is the best one open to women's ambitions, talents and capacities.

I should not forget the contribution of our women to our literary activities. They have published novels, poetry, historical studies and books for children ; they are in charge of women's pages in dailies and weeklies ; they are directors of magazines ; they give public lectures, they speak over the radio.



With the advent of electoral suffrage they have entered into the public life. They vote, they may be elected as members of the Legislature and of the House of Commons ; our people used to seeing women confined to private life, are slow to accept them as deputies, but this will come in due course.

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This then is a picture of French Canadian women in the past and at the present time. What now of the future? What can we expect of them?

I think I am safe in saying that the French Canadian women are ready to cooperate with their sisters everywhere in order to maintain the principles embodied in the Atlantic Charter. They will cooperate with all their heart, provided they are not asked to sacrifice their most cherished traditions and ambitions. These they would never give up. In all French Canadian schools, girls study the History of England as well as that of France. We may ask them to go farther in the study of the British institutions and of the history of the United States. They are well gifted and they like to study and so they could stand a slight increase in the burden they are asked to carry. But they would never sacrifice the study of the French language and literature. They feel they can be good Britishers and still remain



French and Canadian. If they wanted formulas to clarify their position, they could not improve on the words spoken by Mr. Roosevelt, by Mr. Churchill and by the King of England.

Mr. Roosevelt has said : " Canada is a nation founded on a union of two great races. The harmony of their equal partnership is an example to all mankind — an example everywhere in the world. "

Mr. Churchill, speaking at Ottawa in December 1941, said : " Here in Canada where the French language is honoured and spoken ".

His Majesty the King of England, in a broadcast to the British Empire from Winnipeg in 1939, said : " 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. " And speaking at Halifax just before returning to England, the King said : " By God's grace, yours may yet be the example that all the world may follow. "

There are in Canada two great races, the English- and the French-speaking, only two, not three, not ten, not twenty, but only two.

These two races are partners and they must feel and have equality in their partnership. Therefore we must stop thinking in terms of English and French minorities in Canada. There is no English minority in the province of Québec :



our English-speaking citizens are our equals and our partners. There is no French minority in the Maritime provinces and in the Western provinces : French Canadians are equals and partners with their English-speaking fellow-citizens.

Canada has the great privilege of being able to give an example to the world, an example of understanding, of mutual tolerance, of entente, of union, of unity.

When such prominent men as the King of England, the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of England are in agreement, we may rest assured that there is truth in their words, that their words contain nothing but truth. The French Canadian women accept these ideals. All of them without exception want Canada to be a country with a dual civilisation, a dual language. They have faith in the French culture as much as in the English. They want to be equals and partners with their English-speaking sisters of Canada and of the United States. Many of them speak both languages and they want their sisters also to learn the French as well as the English language, so that they may better understand each other, and more successfully cooperate in making Canada a prosperous country.

To you who have University degrees, these truths may appear very simple and clear. But let us not forget that there remain in our country many people who are not willing to accept even a simple truth. They prefer their prejudices. We



have to convert them to think, to speak and to act like Mr. Churchill, Mr. Roosevelt, the King of England, and many other prominent people.

In this connection I feel confident that the University Women's Clubs can do much good. I am glad to say that the Québec Club has already set a good example. Here the club unites the women of both languages and this I believe is in the best spirit of cooperation.

Let us suppose that your clubs, particularly those in North America, took as a subject for study the idea of blending the British and French cultures, of taking the best in each and uniting the powerful strength of both, would it not be the best means of settling many of our post-war problems? Albion and Marianne uniting the resources of their genius would assuredly lead the world. Canada and especially Canadian women, would gladly cooperate in order to make such a leadership possible. This is not too high an ambition for the University Women's Clubs. If you do so your convention may rank in importance next only to the conference recently held at the famous Château Frontenac as a means of bringing about sooner the Freedom of the World.



## IX

### CULTURAL LIFE IN QUÉBEC (\*)

There can be found in the world scarcely no other people but the French Canadian about whose "Cultural Life" so many discussions have arisen and so many different appreciations have ever been made, and are still being made.

In face of the facts such a variety of judgments seems to be legitimate.

The people taken from old to New France were sent here, not for literary or for scientific purposes, but for inculcating religion to the Indians and for bringing riches to the Mother Country. And that policy was in itself an obstacle to cultural life.

But from the very beginning the practical purposes were changed to higher ones : first, a fair number of the priests and of the missionaries particularly the Jesuits, had received in France a very good education ; and then, the colonists were taken, not from the French "paysans" but from craftsmen who had at least a deep liking for their craft and some notions of art. This material was very good for trying to start a cultural life, and the Jesuits were daring enough to establish a College for secondary education when the City of Quebec had hardly 300 inhabitants. Later, bishop Laval gave a vigorous

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(\*) *The Financial Post*, Febr. 8, 1941.



impulse to cultural life by the foundation of the "Seminaire de Québec" and of schools for the various crafts. On the other hand, the Governors, the intendants, the officers of the regular troops and the Seigneurs had also an education, which they were able to impart to the people. This explains the presence, in New France, of rich private libraries and the fact that dramas written by the great French dramatists of France were played at Québec nearly as a matter of course.

When the French Canadians passed under the British Rule their main ambition was to safeguard the practice of their Religion, the use of their laws and their language. Really it seems as though they were first much too fearful concerning the English rulers. Having read, as it is easy to infer, the "Law of war and peace", of Grotius, they must have expected from their new masters anything except leniency.

When the fright was over, with the Quebec Act of 1774 and the Constitution of 1791, they put all their energy to learning the ways of parliamentary routine. But then they were assailed by the "bureaucratie," a kind of family compact composed of dubious elements, and their opposition to tyranny ended with the humiliation of 1837-1838.

An other start had to be made and it came from François-Xavier Garneau, who, due to an insult, wrote his famous *Histoire du Canada*, which inspired so many writers, in fact all the "école



*de 1860,*” and through them most of the French Canadian poets.

The establishment of the “Université Laval” in 1852 did much to stimulate cultural life, and this would have been a success had not the best minds amongst the French Canadians tried only to copy France, instead of trying to apply French science to the very particular needs of Canada.

Such a lack of originality was really the setback to a stronger cultural life.

It may be said, to-day, that the era of servile imitation is finished, the French Canadians now want to be themselves in every sphere of activity.

They have a cult for medieval and thomistic Philosophy ; and this cult they took not from France or from England, but from Italy and Belgium. No serious mind will deny that the study of that Philosophy is a solid foundation to intellectual life.

In sciences the French Canadians have been lagging behind for a period. They did not want a “practical education.” And, queer enough, they came to link together *Literary* and *speculative* education, on the one hand, *Scientific* and *Practical* education on the other hand.

What Durham wrote in his Report has long been true :

“The great mass of the (French) Canadian population, who cannot read or write, and have found in few of the institutions of their country, even the elements of political education, were



obviously inferior to the English settlers, of whom a large proportion had received a considerable amount of education and had been trained in their own country to take a part in public business of one kind or another. With respect to the more educated classes, the superiority is not so general or apparent ; *indeed from all the information that I could collect I incline to think that the greater amount of refinement, of speculative thought, and of a knowledge that books can give, is, with some brilliant exceptions, to be found among the French (Canadians). "*

The developments attained by the Faculties of Sciences whether at the Laval University or at the University of Montréal are the solid proof that the French Canadians now accept scientific education as a necessary means of cultural life.

In the field of literature one may notice that the more valuable works recently published are those which keep far from the imitation of French productions.

After all there is a great truth in the statement made by Durham, viz that the French Canadians possess " the Knowledge that books can give. " Of course, such a knowledge is not sufficient for success in life, and there is reason for the leaders of our people to require a more practical education.

Is there, perchance, a contradiction or an opposition between such a practical education and culture? Hardly. Even practical matters are good stuff for speculative thought.



Now if one wants to know what is the main fault with cultural life in French Canada, I think it is the lack of interest for culture in the mass of the people. The people do not read enough or they read useless trash. Those who have received a higher education spend too much time in so-called social gatherings. Bridge, sports, dancing, moving pictures take a heavy toll on hours which should be spent in reading and studying either at home or in the libraries. Parents do not give enough of their time to their children ; they get rid of the children, in trusting them to schoolmasters, as if the schoolmasters could and should replace entirely and perfectly the parents ; all that is nonsense. They get rid of children for the evenings and nights to be spent in much too long "veillées" which are really of little profit both for the mind and for culture.

If that defect were corrected the French Canadians, well endowed with intellectual talents, would soon take the place they are entitled to and deserve, and this place is not the last rank.



## X

### CANADA, VICTORIOUS, HAPPY AND GLORIOUS (\*)

I have never felt so deeply Canadian as after having visited foreign countries. I have travelled and lived for nearly five years in Europe, in France, in England, in Belgium, in Italy, where I conceived a great veneration for Europe's antiquity, great merits and high civilisation ; yet, the more I saw of Europe, the more I felt I was a North American.

I have visited often the neighboring country, the United States, where I have hundreds of relatives and many good friends ; yet, though I admired the qualities and virtues of the Americans, though they were as myself North Americans, I felt I was above all a Canadian.

I have visited and lived in Eastern Canada ; Québec is my native province, but I know the Maritime provinces and Ontario ; whilst I love Québec with all my heart, I feel at home in all the Eastern provinces. Up to these last months I knew the Western provinces only from books and newspapers ; I did not feel a stranger to them, of course, but the pictures of the Prairies

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(\*) Toronto, Empire Club, April 1943.



and the Rockies were not in my eyes ; I had no personal contacts with the Westerners.

The greatest thrill I ever had in my life came to me with the trip I have just finished, a trip which took me to Victoria. Now I know the two beautiful portals of Canada, Cape Breton Island and Vancouver Island. Now I yield equal admiration to the great harbours of Sydney and Halifax and to the great cities of Victoria and Vancouver.

Between them lie the low mountains of the East, the wide prairies of the West, the high peaks of the Rockies. The more I have seen of our land and of our people, the more I feel proud of my country, the more I feel the urge of proclaiming myself a Canadian.

In each of the nine Canadian provinces I have found the sons and daughters of two great modern nations, the French and the English. The greater number of the French Canadians are in Québec ; but there are about 700,000 of them in the other provinces : 200,000 in the Maritimes ; 300,000 in Ontario ; 200,000 in the four Western Provinces, whilst in Québec live half a million English-speaking Canadians, two minorities practically equal in numbers, two minorities equally proud of their history, attached to their traditions.

Throughout the nine Canadian provinces I have found the same spirit, a spirit of cooperation. I wanted to find words which could express clearly the Canadian mentality under the present cir-



cumstances, while I was singing "O Canada" or "God save the King" with my fellow countrymen of French or English language. In French there was a warlike expression: "Ton bras sait porter l'épée", "Ta valeur... protègera nos foyers et nos droits". And the echo repeated in English "O Canada, we stand on guard for thee".

These words struck me by their profound significance; in them was condensed a glorious military past for each of the two main groups of Canada, in each I found a determination to fight to the last limit for the defence of Canada.

Yet the program of action embodied in these lines was rather negative; it was a defensive attitude. And then sounded on my ears the words of the anthem of the Commonwealth, "God save the King"; one line of that anthem held my attention as being a program of action:

"Send Him *Victorious, Happy and Glorious*". This was our wish for our beloved King, the King of Great Britain, the King of the Commonwealth, the King of our dear Country Canada.

It is also the wish all sons and daughters of Canada will make for their fatherland, the great country extending from sea to sea.

Yes, indeed, may Canada be Victorious, happy and glorious!

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No glory, no happiness without Victory. We have first to be Victorious.



We must conquer the enemies of our Democracy, of our liberties, of our freedom, of our security. They are in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, in Oceany ; they even dare to come in our waters ; their spies are amongst our people ; their propaganda penetrates our ears and the minds of some of our citizens. We must win over their propaganda, their spies, their submarines, and all their strength and all their might.

The English-speaking Canadians have accepted the challenge. They have bended their efforts in all fields so as to keep the enemy far from our territory. They have been told : Democracy is in danger, let us save Democracy, and they have answered the call. In the deep of their national conscience they heard the voice of the haughty barons speaking to John Lackland ; the voice of their ancestors, who for nearly eight centuries have fought for wresting from royal absolutism liberty after liberty ; they have felt the same urge that prompted the thirteen colonies to stand for freedom ; they have followed the example of their forefathers who fought against the non-loyalists in 1775, in 1812-13-14 ; against Germany in the Great War of 1914-18.

I have met many Canadian soldiers and officers of English language while travelling and I have found in them a strong determination and the hope, nay, the certitude of winning over the enemies. I have tried to elicit from them their views about war aims, but their answer was



always the same : they care little about war aims ; they only want to win the war ; they have a deep sense of Duty ; they accept their responsibilities ; they like their life in the army. Listening to them I felt they would be very good citizens because they spoke of their responsibilities, not even mentioning their privileges.

But this war differs greatly from the precedent wars, mainly in this, that the civilians have to take in it a much larger share of work and of sacrifices, than they used to do. I have admired, also, the fine spirit of the English-speaking Canadian Civilians, their work in war industries, their generosity in the loans and the drives. And I thought in myself : They are really the sons and the daughters of the great British Nation.

Then I turned my eyes on the step-children of Great Britain, those sturdy French Canadians, who, though victorious to the end, were given away by France to England. To be a step-child has always been regarded as a difficult and non-enviable situation. If the step-mother is harsh, at times, the new comer in the family will think his real mother would have been loving and sweet under the same circumstances. On the contrary, if the step-mother shows herself kind and generous the step-child will hold that his true mother would have been much more kind and much more generous.



Or, if the step-mother is always kind, it happens that there will be difficulties between the natural child and the step-child ; there are, in any family, difficulties between the children of same blood ; the difficulties will be greater when the children have not the same blood in their veins. A glance at the pages of our national history will tell you that such difficulties have happened between the two main groups in Canada, the English-speaking and the French-speaking, and right from the beginning of the English rule in this country.

The sons of England who lived in the thirteen colonies have rebelled against their mother, old mother Britain, and one of their reasons was that they blamed her for being too kind to the step-child.

Similarly some of the sons of England who were in Canada felt sometimes jealous towards the French Canadians, whom they had liked to be English, British and Protestant from the beginning.

A difficulty of the same kind has arisen in this present war ; the natural and the step-child are quarrelling about the war effort, the first thinking that the other is just a slacker.

Gentlemen, I have praised your effort, very gladly, very sincerely. Some of you, at least, may expect that I will blame severely the attitude of the step-child, the French Canadians. You know very well, by my book, by my articles, by my radio addresses, that I can appreciate with



impartiality my own fellow country-men and blame them when I think they deserve it.

Yet, in this particular case, I have been asking myself if they deserve to be blamed. I see the French Canadians giving their money, without grumbling ; they pay the taxes, they over-subscribe the Victory loans, they give to the various drives, such as The Red Cross and the Russian Fund. I see them giving their time and work to war purposes ; they work on their farms, knowing that a large part of their farm products will go to feed the population of Great Britain and the armies ; they work in the mines, knowing that most of the output goes to war industries. As they take the risk of a dangerous life underground, so they take it in the lumbering industry, being told that wood is necessary for war works, for military needs, for feeding numerous newspapers on the whole continent. In the forest, as in the mines, many lives are taken, many serious accidents take the toll of a foot or a leg, of a hand or an arm, sometimes of the more useful fingers.

I see the French Canadians working in the various war plants. Even the French Canadian women, who have always been confined to home work, are now engaged, in great numbers, in war industry. Both men and women of French language work well ; they are skilful workers ; there is little absenteeism amongst them ; they work with a smile, not with grumbling.



Such activities might very well deserve a word of praise from the part of their English-speaking fellow countrymen, and sometimes I am inclined to think that they receive more bricks than flowers.

But however important may be such a participation to the war effort, what to think about giving men to the various services of the army ?

Here, also, I see the step-child much abused. The French Canadians have, indeed, volunteered for the Army, the Navy, the Air Force. They were at Hong Kong. They were at Dieppe, as, in the previous war, they were at Vimy, at Courcelette, at Passchendaele. They are found at Halifax and Debert, at Sussex, at Valcartier, at Petawawa, Trenton, Brockville ; I have met them in the Western Provinces, as far as Victoria and Nanaimo. They have the same warlike spirit as their English-speaking brothers.

Was it possible for them to volunteer in equal numbers as did the others ? They have been branded as Lotus-Eaters, idlers, slackers, traitors, cowards, isolationists, pacifists, defeatists, and that by English language newspapers from Halifax to Vancouver. Is it really the best method to handle even a difficult case ? I would call it the castor oil method. Let us suppose the French Canadians needed a purgation it was quite possible to choose another drug, or at least to camouflage it with some coffee or orange juice ; but the big brother forgot the sugar-coated



method and he has tried to force the untasteful oil down the throat of the step-child, who naturally, blamed not only the big brother, but also the mother herself, whom he supposed indirectly responsible for the mischief.

But did he really need such a treatment? I think we can doubt it. Is the French Canadian a pacifist? But we have all been pacifists, in America as well as in Europe! Is he a defeatist or a coward? But this is quite contrary to his mentality and to his history; the French Canadian, being mostly Normand, has always been military minded; he has always fought with courage; he was a daring soldier, fighting one against three or even ten, as in the battle of Chateauguay; he has rarely been defeated. Is he a traitor? Is he disloyal? It certainly would be the first time in his life of more than three centuries. He was loyal in 1764, when he answered the call of James Murray and fought against Pontiac and the rebellious Indians who had always been friends to him. He was loyal in 1775, when he answered the call of Carleton and fought against the rebellious colonies whilst English citizens were sent to the Orleans Island because they would not fight the Americans. He was loyal in 1812-13-14, when he answered the call of England against the Americans a second time. He was loyal to the British Constitution, when he fought for responsible government in 1837-38 against a Bureaucracy condemned by Durham



himself. He remained loyal, in 1840, though he was deprived of equality with the English citizens, equality which is the first basis of Democracy.

Are the French Canadians isolationists? But there are surely far more isolationists in Ireland, and even in the United States than in the Province of Québec. The little group of Québec isolationists is quite vocal, I admit, but what has been its real influence till now? Did they prevent the volunteering? In a few cases only. Did they gain the election in Québec East where they were well organised? Not at all, for Mr. St-Laurent was elected. Their only influence seems to have been in the plebiscite, when the Québec people voted No. But I am afraid you have given to that vote a meaning it had not. You think it meant an opposition to the war effort? But, if so, how could you explain that so many French Canadians were volunteering at the very same time they voted No. In my humble opinion the *No* was directed, not against the war effort, but to the politicians; the people told them either not to make promises if they were not to keep them, or to keep their promises if they made them.

The volunteering was affected by other factors. A first factor is the large families with early marriages; out of a thousand people in Québec 47% are under military age, which is a large proportion.

When the family counts five or more children it is very difficult for the father to volunteer and



to leave the family alone or to send them to another house already crowded. A second factor is the high rate of death amongst the workmen and in the lumbering industry, or even unfortunately through tuberculosis ; amongst the persons of military age, in Québec, there are more women than men.\* A third factor is the number of serious accidents, which make a man unfit for active service : in Québec, according to the figures produced at the House of Commons, 41% of the men having been medically examined have been found unfit. The same reason applies, it seems, to Nova Scotia and to New Brunswick, with the mining and lumbering industries.

The true spirit of Québec appears often in little facts. A French Canadian taxi driver of Montreal told me he was very glad his son had volunteered ; he even wished a compulsory service was established after the war so as to make sure that the boys would get a military discipline, which he said was much needed. Three men being asked their opinion about the war answered the same manner, saying that men were surely wanted for that war, that as for the place the men would fight, it did not belong the civilians, but the military headquarters. This sounds like the voice of our good people, like your own voice. The Québec people are eager, as the rest of Canada, of winning over the enemy and they are ready to

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(\*) 1931 census.



fight the enemy even outside Canada. In 1870, when the papal states were invaded by Garibaldi thousands of French Canadians volunteered and went across the Atlantic to fight the enemy in Italy ; the same spirit is in them when they are told that other gangsters are making trouble in Europe. As well as their English-speaking fellow countrymen, they want a Canada Victorious.

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But let us suppose we have finally won over our enemies. What will happen then ? What will be the spoils for Canada ! We will simply have avoided destruction and slavery ; we will continue to enjoy the benefits of Democracy, which we enjoyed before. Shall we be satisfied with such a result ? Certainly not. Another victory is awaiting our efforts, and it is a victory upon ourselves in our own country.

The Canadians have indeed achieved great things in the course of their History, either alone or together. The French Canadians have been great explorers from coast to coast and from the mouth of the St. Lawrence river to the mouth of the Mississippi river. They have organised prosperous trades, especially in furs and fisheries ; their missionary work, in the present as well as in the past, for Christian faith, is beyond praise ; in spite of adverse circumstances they have



built a complete educational system throughout Canada ; they are found in all walks of life.

The English-speaking Canadians may well be proud of their own achievements also ; to enter details here would be bringing coal to Newcastle.

Our common work has been first in the political field, when we have obtained responsible government, and later the constitution of a confederation. Then, in the material field when we have achieved the building of a transcontinental railroad, and this was a great victory over the geographical barriers ; it was a link between regions very different ; we have made it stronger by two other transcontinentals, then by a vast system of telegraph and telephone, later by civil aviation.

Yet, can we say that Canada is a unit ? No it is not. We have made material ties between East and West. The man in Europe or in Asia who looks at Ottawa with its central government may believe Canada is a unit ; the other members of the Commonwealth may also have the same impression, but we, the Canadians, we feel every day we are divided, and we are afraid that the dividing forces will prevail.

What we need, now, is an interior victory over our divisions, and we will find it in establishing spiritual ties between the two major groups of Canada. We yet have a few of them in various organisations, such as the Press, the Radio, many clubs and professional associations. I am glad to



mention here a society originated in Toronto by Mr. J. H. Biggar, professor at the Upper Canada College. The name of the Society is French, it is "Visites interprovinciales". Its purpose is to send in Québec during the summer holiday young men and women, of Ontario, and vice-versa to bring young people of Québec in Ontario. Hundreds of young men and women have benefited, in six years, of this Society's activities ; much more could be accomplished if, with more money, a permanent office could be established. This last winter, through the same agency, an exchange of correspondence has been organised between more than two hundred students of both provinces. The four western provinces are desirous to participate in that movement. They also desire an exchange of teachers between West and East, between French Québec and the rest of Canada, in order to train them in the teaching of conversation in both languages. In this field Ontario has long ago taken the lead, with the summer courses at Sillery, by the University of Toronto, and at Trois-Pistoles by the University of Western Ontario. The Québec Universities and Colleges have followed the example in part, and should show a still greater cooperation.

By so doing we would win a very great victory over ourselves ; the current of exchanges would be like a double track transcontinental facilitating a solid entente between our two main groups.



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A Canada victorious over the external and the internal enemies would be a *happy* Canada, for at least we would have Peace, the first condition to happiness. A fragile condition, I admit, since many forces, especially the economic, may soon endanger either prosperity or peace. It is impossible in a short address to enter into details about that problem ; but other writers have examined the difficulty and have proposed their solutions.

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Would a Victorious and Happy Canada be contented? Though both are great blessings I think it would not be enough for our dear country. We would also crave for something higher, I mean, for Glory.

We would like to make Canada Glorious amongst all nations. Indeed, Canada has achieved great things in the past ; she has acquired a certain amount of fame in this world, in the British Commonwealth. Her share in this war is far greater. Old mother Britain, considering Canada as her eldest daughter, has put in her a great confidence and put on her shoulders great responsibilities. Canada's interest is in retaining that confidence, which will be done only by doing better and greater things than has ever been done.



Do you remember, Gentlemen, the words pronounced by our beloved King in 1939 in an Empire broadcast from Winnipeg? His Majesty said :

“ The sense of race may be a dangerous and disruptive force, but 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 ”.

In these words, Gentlemen, we can take a program of action which may take us on the road to Glory.

Firstly to discard a disruptive force, the one that exists in the sense of race. I have explained my views about race as an obstacle to National Unity in my radio addresses, both in French and in English. The sense of race should not be for our two main groups a disruptive force. By blood we are relatives, we are first cousins, we are brothers, if only for the large amount of Norman blood that runs in the veins of the English as well as of the French Canadians. If we are divided in this matter it would be on account of an excessive sense of race, on both sides ; but we must discard such racial animosities. Otherwise we are doomed to anything rather than glorious.

Secondly, English and French in Canada can retain their distinctive culture. This statement is



of the highest importance for the future of Canada, for the achievement of National Unity. I have received, as a result of my radio addresses, a great number of letters from French- and English-speaking Canadians, at least five hundred. These letters are the mirror of the public opinion in Canada about National Unity. There are extremists, on both sides ; there is a moderate opinion, on both sides. The extremists, in both groups, are a small minority ; the citizens of moderate opinion, in both groups, are the vast majority. The extremists are the violent-minded ; for the settlement of our difficulties they rely on force, not the armed force, I think, but the strength of numbers, the weight of the majority. They are, on one side, the spiritual sons of Papineau, the Papineau of the Rebellion of 1837-38, or on the other side the direct heirs to Craig, Colborne and Durham. Their ideal is Might rather than Right. The extremists, in one group, would crush, once for ever, the French Canadians, or at least be rid of them, and, to take the words of one good Torontonionian, to put them on a ship and send them back to France. The extremists in the other group, and as a reaction against the other extremists' views, would make of Québec a separate state, in which the motto *I remember* would apply exclusively to the wrongs of the other group.

But separation would mean a double amputation ; for Canada, as a whole, would lose a vital



communication with the Atlantic Ocean, and Québec would lose the French groups of the nine other provinces. On the other side the crushing of the French Canadians would be a futile attempt. Hémon wrote, in *Maria Chapdelaine*, that "they are a people who will never accept to die", to which an Anglo-protestant echoed, saying: "they have come here to stay." Various attempts have been made, since the Treaty of Paris in 1763, to annihilate the French Canadians as a nation or as a distinct entity. It was tried under James Murray, and against his views, by some merchants, and it failed. Tried again by the trio Mountain, Sewell, Ryland and it failed. Tried again with the *Royal Institution*, and it failed. Tried also by the Bureaucracy, but to no avail. A new attempt was made after the Rebellion of 1837-38, and this time on a larger scale. Durham expounded the theory in his famous *Report* and various agencies, political and religious, set their hands to the work of extermination. It should have been a success at that time, if it were ever to succeed, but it also failed. Durham's theory had no solid bases and it collapsed. Yet the French Canadians, a century ago, did not possess the strong organisations they now have. No, they have really come to stay, not as a burden, but as an asset to the community, an asset by their culture, their traditions, their philosophy, their language.



They offer them as their share, and as a very valuable share. They admire the British civilisation, but they cannot despise the culture they have inherited from France. They ask from their English-speaking brothers an equal measure of appreciation of the French culture.

The third article of the program drawn from His Majesty's words is this: "French and English in Canada should combine to establish a broader freedom and security than either could achieve alone". We have achieved, I said it, great things separately, but if both groups combine their forces and their spiritual wealth, if they work together, they will reach the goal set by their Sovereign, that is "to establish a broader freedom". Is it not the very foundation of the Atlantic Charter? Yes, indeed, provided the Canadians of both languages will combine their thoughts, their feelings, their activities, without confusing them in a sort of melting pot.

The fourth article of the King's program is to be found in the words he said at Halifax, before leaving Canada to return in England: "By God's grace, yours may yet be the example that all the world may follow." So, Canada may set an example to the rest of the world. How could this be done? Is it, for the French Canadians, to just copy France? Is it, for the other Canadians, to just copy England? Is it, for both groups, to



just copy the United States? No. None of these would give us the Glory we are craving. We have to do better than that. We cannot be an example to the world, if we are only copies of other countries, even though they are great nations. Canada is allowed to have a greater ambition ; she must achieve a civilisation of her own, an original culture, drawing from her double heritage the best elements they contain. Only in doing so Canada "may set the example that all the world may follow."

Let us then join our hands, my dear fellow country men. Let us forget our old quarrels. Let us appreciate to their full value our two great civilisations, the French and the English. Let them become the double basis of a Canadian culture. Let them penetrate the curricula of our schools, of our High Schools, of our Colleges of Arts, of our Universities.

As their expression is set in two perfect languages, the English and the French, let our children learn both languages in all schools, "from coast to coast and from kindergarten to University," as wrote me an English Canadian.

In other countries, after this war, the problem of nationalities and languages may become a serious problem. If Canada retains her dual culture and her two languages ; if doing so she maintains peace and assures a greater security and a broader freedom, she will set the desired example to other nations in a similar condition.

WILLIAM L. BROWN



Who are the Canadians who would scorn a program coming from the Throne itself, a program chosen by our beloved King? Not you, members of the Empire Club, not you, admirers of the British broadmindedness, not you, the partisans of a free commonwealth, not you, who have subscribed to the Atlantic Charter.

Not the French Canadians, who are desirous of reilluminating the motto of France, Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité.

Canadians of both languages, this is the road to Glory, to Happiness, to Victory !



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