



# Saturday Sunset



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## SOWING THE WILD OATS OF BUSINESS

Canada and Canadians have, in the past, been severely criticized in Great Britain and the United States. This is largely the result of misunderstanding and lack of knowledge, but the severest critics are Canadians themselves. In truth there is room for criticism, as must be admitted by the most loyal Canadian of all, and perhaps the most outstanding feature is the lack of commercial honesty which has placed many in a highly embarrassing position. It cannot be denied that our standard of business is not what it should be and that it is not as high as it is in Great Britain. This is not entirely an original criticism, but one which caused a high debate over the luncheon table recently. A Vancouver lawyer, born in Canada and a Canadian, who has the best interests of the country at heart, made the statement that the standard of business honesty in Canada was perhaps the worst he had ever seen. Leaving out Mexico and a few other places where there is no standard at all, there are many arguments which can be advanced to show the truth of his statement. It is doubtful if one could find any other country of repute where a company such as the Dominion Trust would be permitted to flourish in its nefarious course under the protection of the government, and it is equally difficult to find a place where the giving of bad cheques is regarded with such cheerful equanimity.

But there is much to be said in favor of Canada, and after admitting that there is much room for improvement it should be stated, in fairness to the nation, that our worst faults are the result of youth. Canada is a young country and has been, to a great extent, sowing the wild oats of business. We have been exploiting our real estate and carrying on business without the necessary capital or experience. The past few years have been years of hectic gambling, but we have turned the corner. The strong are coming into their own and the weaklings have been weeded out. Business sanity has succeeded a period of speculation. The man who attempts to float a fraudulent business today is running grave chances of finding himself in durance vile before he has gone very far. One can learn only by experience and Canada has had the experience necessary to teach Canadians that permanent success is based absolutely on service. The country is on a working basis and the faults of youth will soon be eradicated. The war has done a great thing for this country. It has made us self-reliant and sure of our manhood, for we are playing a man's part. Let no one be discouraged because of past mistakes. Canada is the country of the present and future.

Despite the fact that international conditions in Europe, and which extend like a belt right round the world at the present time, prevent the erstwhile prominent financier and citizen, Alvo von Alvensleben, appearing without let or hindrance in the streets of Vancouver, the juggler with millions continues to exhibit a warm-heartedness for us which is not at all surprising. But what is a matter for amazement is that while this governor-in-prospect of British Columbia has been said to have been visiting his friends in this city, action by the authorities to terminate these unofficial visits, carried out surreptitiously, has been so long delayed. Since the outbreak of hostilities the methods that have been put in operation to discountenance visitations from gentry of the ilk of Alvensleben have been of a character that should have been effective. But the friend of the Kaiser has proved himself able to surmount all legal, not to mention physical, obstacles. His knowledge of the country and of conditions here, combined with the system of espionage that he has adopted since the war commenced, renders him an individual who should be treated to scant ceremony. Alvensleben is of a type British Columbia can very well do without, though he may, like his master, entertain the belief that he holds a divine appointment. Time was when Alvensleben boosted Vancouver to the seventh heaven. Was it not also a certain gentleman, bearing the un-Germanlike name of Briggs, who made the mountains re-echo with his acclaim of this province in general and Vancouver in particular? And did not the aforesaid Briggs, who was patriotic enough to engage the services of a musical aggregation whose members were of Teutonic birth, do so with the intent aforethought of showing the stranger within the gates what Vancouver was and what she has accomplished to be considered as the foremost city on the Pacific slope, and was not all this performed and carried out with the assistance of the city's and the citizens' finances? Of a truth the records say so. But Mr. Briggs at a safe distance snaps his fingers in derision and tells Vancouver and her people what he thinks of them. It is another case of what's bred in the bone. In similar circumstances we find Dr. Weiss. In comparatively recent times Dr. Weiss gave of his best—such as it was—to support the now defunct Progress Club. If we mistake not, he even went so far as to make a speech on Canadian-German trade relations, trusting that the time would not be far distant when the relationship of the two countries would be closer. The significance of his remarks at that time can now be estimated more accurately and gauged for what they were worth. But Briggs and Weiss were playing a waiting game and playing it with consummate skill.

That much must be admitted. Notwithstanding the slight differences of opinion that periodically took place between Great Britain and Germany, Briggs and Weiss, not to mention von Alvensleben, protested their eternal fealty to the country of their adoption, and what was more remarkable, they were believed. Vancouver had, however, within its borders a few old-timers who were able to see through the duplicity of the triumvirate from the Fatherland and within a month from the outbreak of the war their suspicions were proved to have had more solid foundations than mere surmise. Now we find Briggs and Company throwing hot shot from across the line at those with whom they foregathered in days gone by and preparing for a subdivision of the country in a manner that would make a first-class real estate agent sit up and take notice. And on the top of all this comes Alvensleben armed with the powers of a plenipotentiary extraordinary. The situation would be a humorous one were it not that it possesses features too grave to be overlooked.

When John Oliver talks livestock statistics to Premier McBride he has the latter completely at his mercy. No indignant expostulation on the part of Sir Richard can turn the tables.

Respectable and self-respecting citizens of British Columbia must stand aghast at the spectacle of Attorney-General Bowser bitterly attacking Chief Justice Hunter. The latter, in his brief reply, merely stated that Mr. Bowser had forgotten the whereabouts of the Court of Appeal, which does not sit at Kerrisdale. Further than that he would not, and in his judicial capacity could not, go. How different is the attitude of the "fountain head" of justice in British Columbia!

Consumed with wrath at the well authenticated charge of a breach of professional etiquette, to call it by the mildest name possible, he made Chief Justice Hunter the subject of a vicious attack, in keeping neither with his position as attorney-general nor with his presumable status as a gentleman. This attack was as public as it could well be. There was no attempt to carry his grievance to the proper authorities, but merely an exhibition of bad manners and worse tact. On many former occasions the attorney-general has revealed his opinion of the people of this province. Judging from his utterances on the public platform, he regards the electorate as a mass of uneducated sans-culottes who can appreciate only the most vulgar

and plain-spoken statements. In order to impress his hearers, Mr. Bowser is forced to resort to elephantine jests of questionable humor, couched in the language of the circus barker. This attitude was maintained in his attack on Chief Justice Hunter, a jurist whose opinion is regarded as the most sound in British Columbia. It is almost without precedent that such an attack should be made at all and it is the more astonishing that it was made in such a brutal manner. Instead of creating sympathy for his own cause, Mr. Bowser succeeded only in revealing his own shallowness and in causing a wave of feeling in favor of the chief justice, who cannot demean himself or his high office in making a reply in kind.

The attorney-general pleaded with his audience to support him, but he pleaded in vain so far as the general public is concerned. The bench is a sacred institution in Canada and one in which every Canadian takes a personal pride. The integrity of our judges as a body has never been assailed, and at any time that this confidence is misplaced there is a ready remedy without making speeches in public. If the attorney-general has any complaint to make, and has the evidence to turn his complaint into a definite charge, it is always possible to institute impeachment proceedings.

There is little to be said with regard to the accusations made by Mr. Bowser, but it might be suggested that in future Mr. Bowser refrain from trying to protect himself at the expense of the judiciary. When it comes to a matter of comparison, the records of the two men are so widely different that Mr. Bowser suffers very greatly. It would be a compliment to the intelligence of the people of British Columbia and a highly politic move on the part of the attorney-general if he saves his attacks for the consideration of a higher judicial body than a political association.

If doubts ever were entertained regarding the stability of Canadian banking establishments, the report of the Union Bank of Canada should be the means of dissipating any such opinion. The report which was submitted at the annual meeting of the shareholders last week deals comprehensively with the business of the bank during the past twelve months and indicates that its position in the financial world was never stronger than at the present time. Emphasis is laid, and rightly so, on the liquid assets of the company, in connection with which there has been a substantial and gratifying increase in 1914. This increase amounts to almost a

million dollars, an outstanding feature in the bank's transactions. In view of the world-wide depression it was but natural that the shareholders of the bank should be afforded all the necessary protection. This has led to the maintenance of a stronger policy, so that now the liquid assets are 34.90 per cent. of the liabilities to the public, exclusive of other available sources of strengthening the bank's position.

Though the profits on the paid-up capital are slightly less than the previous year, it must be borne in mind that securities have been written down by \$215,000, which, as is pointed out, is merely a reasonable precaution in view of the unsettled conditions. Public deposits show a large increase, while amounts due by banks and bank correspondents elsewhere than in Canada total over two million dollars. For half a century the Union Bank has stood the test of time and there is every reason to believe that its future will be as prosperous as it has been in the past. The Union Bank is synonymous with conservatism and at the same time go-aheadness, and is in the hands of a management characterized by shrewdness and business acumen.

The tumult and the shouting are now dead. "Accept our ancient sacrifice," in effect, say the electors.

After all, an election serves a good purpose. What an amount of dirty clothing is put through the washing machine!

News of the frightful earthquake in Italy comes at a time when it will cause less consternation than at any period in modern history. Reports at hand place the loss of life at twelve thousand and the injured at nearly double that amount, yet it finds the general public almost apathetic. News of far greater loss of life has become so common that the world can no longer be horrified by sums in the thousands. Yet when one stops to think of the appalling destruction caused by an upheaval of nature it is impossible to feel other than sick at heart. Men, women and children paid the penalty without having given any cause. They were not carrying arms and seeking the destruction of their fellows; they were simple folk carrying on the daily routine. Perhaps they were paying the penalty of neutrality. Who knows?

Of all nations joining the war, Turkey had the least warrant for doing so when internal conditions and national prospects were considered. Belgium had no time to consider. Turkey liberated even under extreme German pressure for several months. The wiser, cooler heads in her councils held back, fearing possible extinction as a Power, foreseeing disaster to her prestige as Moslem head of all things, and the loss of the crown of her possessions, Constantinople, and her holy of holies, the mosque of St. Sofia. Disaster has promptly emphasized her error, the defeat of three army corps of first line troops, one from Constantinople, at Ardahan and Sarykamish has cost Turkey fifty thousand men and will ruin her prestige in the bazaars, where Eastern opinion and publicity have their only hold on the people.

The state of affairs in Constantinople is worse today than it was when Balkan guns were sounding from Chatalja. Famine is attacking the people in the capital, the twenty millions of dollars sent by Germany has probably all been spent, ammunition is scarce for a severe war. The military authorities have seized everything available, the national defence fund is being subscribed by order. Intrigues in Egypt have failed to rouse the Senussi, the allied fleet is battering the Dardanelles. The Sultan and his ministers are thoroughly demoralized. Germany cannot save Turkey, the Balkan nations have their final reassurance. The Ottoman Empire seems to have committed its last and irretrievable error.

The elimination of Turkey as a useful factor in the war of central Europe clears the issue only in so far as it was hoped she would be able to compel a large Russian force to be maintained in the Caucasus and be able to destroy England in Egypt. Neither of these German hopes have further foundation than fervent desire. Turkish defiance of Italy may be the cause accepted which precipitates that nation into the struggle and ends the present power of Austria as well as that of Turkey in Europe. The world will not be sorry to see the end of the Sick Man, no one will regret when the sublime St. Sofia is once more a Christian church.

At the time of writing the election contest has not been decided. There are four candidates for the mayoralty and in each a certain portion of the community has pinned its faith. When this issue of the paper reaches the readers they will know who is to be mayor for 1915. We hope they all will be satisfied and know quite well that they won't, but it should not be forgotten that whoever has been chosen should be given the support of the citizens in any movement for the benefit of the community. Personal animus should not stand in the way of the general good.

The politeness of the British and American governments in their answers to correspondence would have delighted the late Lord Chesterfield, who was nothing if not a stickler for etiquette in such matters. But politeness often covers a multitude of sins.

## Announcement

**B**EGINNING next week, the Saturday Sunset will be sold at FIVE CENTS the copy and the Annual Subscription Rate reduced in the same measure. The cost of living may be going up, but the cost of good reading is going down. This is the time to join the SUNSET family. The best of good fiction; strong and timely editorials; news of the social world; a multitude of illustrations and the Western Howl combine to make the SATURDAY SUNSET the premier weekly paper in Western Canada.

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