

Germans in Canada

To harmonize Canadians of German birth or descent with other Canadians is a useful and patriotic work. This kind of service Professor Riethdorf, of Woodstock College, has done. Professor Riethdorf is a native of Germany who is strongly opposed to German militarism. In a speech in Berlin, Ontario, he said:

"The Germans are imbued with the spirit of militarism. The German jingolists and German militarists are to blame for the war. They have come to believe that Germans excelled in civilization over all other races, and that they are the God-chosen race to force Germanism on other nations. The German Government and militarism are doomed never to rise again after this war."

Professor Riethdorf takes the stand which every German ought to take in this new world. If a German settles in the United States, he ought to be an American. If he settles in Canada he ought to be a Canadian. As to the Germans in Canada, Professor Riethdorf said at Berlin:

"For Germans in Canada there is no middle road. They cannot be neutral in this war because the land of their adoption is involved. Canada must have her whole-hearted support. Canada is now my fatherland. Of course, I retain a love for my native land; I would be a scoundrel if I didn't, but I am opposed to militarism. There have been many people who have been pro-German in their sympathies, but I am pleased to know that I have been instrumental in removing doubts."

As to removing any doubts that may have troubled Germans in Canada, we have some evidence in the report of an incident at one of the professor's meetings in New Hamburg. A German clergyman arose in the audience and said he had been referred to as pro-German. He did not know that he was pro-German. He was born in Switzerland of German parents. "But whatever my feelings may have been," he said, "I now see the matter clearly. My duty is to the land of my adoption. I want to state here before all my people that from this day I am unreservedly with those who would overthrow this war spirit that has brought such grievous things to Germany and to the people of other countries."

Canada has many citizens of German birth and descent. It is estimated that there are more than half a million Germans and Austrians in Canada, of whom nearly half are in the Western Provinces. We are naturally keenly interested in the attitude of these people during the war. Of at least equal importance is their attitude toward us and our attitude toward them after the war. Together we are striving to build up here a great nation, which may some day be the equal of any of the nations of Europe. To harmonize all the elements of this growing nation is a work of patriotism and statesmanship. In this respect Professor Riethdorf is the real leader of the German citizens of Canada. He shows the way to harmony, and to useful and honorable citizenship.