

Apropos of the movement which is culminating at Paris for a possible world-wide League of Nations, it is worth our while in British countries to do justice in word and act to our British League of Nations which already controls nearly half of the globe.

Central Ontario LAURIERITES at their convention last week in Toronto adopted a resolution moved by Mr. W. D. GREGORY calling for the "absolute equality" of Canada, "with every self-governing nation in the world" and declaring that "we regard the present movement for centralized Imperial control as highly dangerous to Canada. If successful it would prevent National development and be subversive of true democracy."

The language we quote is interesting as indicative of the LAURIERITE aim to pander to Canada Independentists, if we may coin a phrase, racialists, alien immigrants, Sinn Feiners, and the rest of that portion of the inhabitants of this country who disapprove in their souls of British connection and would like to cut the British painter, but who realize that their aims would not be furthered by their coming out openly to say what they want.

Canada is already upon a basis of absolute equality with all other self-governing nations except as regards what a majority of the Canadian people have chosen to permit to continue to be the nature of their relations with other self-governing states. The language of the LAURIERITE resolution we have quoted implies that somebody outside is trying to hold Canada down politically in some way or other. Nobody outside is holding Canada down or trying to. The phrase in the resolution is merely a LAURIERITE fiction aimed to gain votes among those of the Canadian people who don't want Canada to have any closer political affiliations with England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, etc., than with the Bolsheviki or the Turks or the Huns—in other words, with people who are anti-British. Canada controls her own destiny and her own policy completely, with complete admission of the fact by Britain. Whatever political condition is in force in this country is in force by purely the will or consent of the majority of our people. If this majority is British in sentiment rather than separatist, as thank God it is British, the fact is not the crime of the Mother Country, and the malcontents among us should have the pluck and the decency to argue openly with the rest of us for the separation they want rather than attempt to cheat their fellow-citizens with dishonest phrases which imply slurs on the Mother Country and her statesmen.

The same criticism applies to the LAURIERITE expression "the present movement for centralized Imperial control." No present movement for centralized Imperial control exists. The contrary is the truth. The only present Imperial movement is a movement to lessen centralized control. The phrase in the LAURIERITE resolution is merely another sample of the manner in which Canadian separatists try to cater to the ignorance or the anti-British prejudices of some sections of our people. Imperial centralized control has been steadily losing ground in the British Empire in recent decades, and never so much as in the past half dozen years. Until well on in this century, Imperial centralized control, alias control at Westminster, was a matter of course in all foreign matters, and active in some matters domestic to the over-seas dominions. All that is gone by the board. The autonomy of the over-seas dominions has been absolutely admitted at Westminster. Britain asks for nothing but co-operation. So astounding a surrender of Imperial centralized control as the immediate gift by the British Parliament of self-government to the newly-conquered Boers was the outstanding world-surprise of the first decade of the twentieth century; and the chief political surprise packages of the second decade, other than revolutions, have been the two great blows at "Imperial centralized control" in the British Empire implied by first the decision come to some time ago that over-seas ministers should confer with the London Government regularly on all Imperial matters, including foreign policy, and by secondly the admission thanks to Britain's effort of ministers of the over-seas British dominions to the Peace Conference at Paris on the same basis as representatives of independent nations.

Sincere and well-meaning people, not anti-British, there may be among us who are liable to be misled by such empty orotundities as these we have quoted from the LAURIERITE resolution at Toronto. To such, we would suggest that they ask themselves what they think of when they applaud the idea which they and all the world except the Bolsheviki are applauding just now, namely that of a world League of Nations. All of us are clamoring for that. Good. Now, what more splendid League of Nations could exist, except as regards mere size, than the existing British League of Nations? What could be more worthy than this League of every intelligent English-speaking Briton's support the world over as a mere matter of common sense, to say nothing of British pride or British patriotism? Surely no self-respecting English-speaking Canadian should carelessly contribute to make this splendid thing a party football among us? And apart from our natural feelings as part of the British stock—apart from anything save our hope of improvement of human conditions in the world, what could be more valuable, as an example and foundation for a possible world League of Nations whose representatives must confer regularly to debate all matters of international welfare and world-policy, than the British League of Nations whose representatives do already confer regularly to debate all matters of common welfare and policy concerning nearly one-half of the world? Yet we suppose that some of the very British people who think and speak with the most honest and eager admiration of the idea of a world League of Nations are the very people who may swallow most unthinkingly the poison of the veiled assaults made upon the continued existence of the British League of Nations by the prating about the bogey of "Imperialism" by some of our politicians and radicals, part of whom are secretly hostile to any political tie with Britain whatever, and others of whom do not care a tinker's

curse what happens to Britain or British connection
or to any old sort of League of Nations either, so long
as they can capture enough votes in Canada to put them
in power at Ottawa or in some Canadian province.