

BOURASSA SEDITION

Mr. Henri Bourassa has a faculty for specious reasoning. He cultivates dialectic, not for the purpose of discovering the truth and setting it before mankind, but that he may discover the most accomplished way of telling half-truths and producing thereby a wholly false and mischievous conclusion. It may be accepted as fact that Mr. Bourassa, in order to hear some weak-minded sedition-mongers call him "The Master," is prepared to go to any lengths, to twist and squirm like other slimy creatures, to poison the atmosphere that nourishes him and to spit on the flag that protects him. He grows contemptible as he grows in experience.

Recently, in *Le Devoir*, he wrote an article entitled "The English People and Conscription," which began by taking for granted the apathy of the English in this war. That is not to be taken for granted. No nation which raises men in millions by voluntary recruiting is apathetic. The statement of a British Labor man was quoted to the effect that under conscription not more than 300,000 men could be sent to the army without paralyzing industrial conditions. The Labor man meant "300,000 more." That is not made clear in Mr. Bourassa's article. He desired to create the impression that the British army was contemptibly small even as the Kaiser intimated.

Then follows a Socialist tirade on the failures of England, the bad effect of commercialism, the inequality of fortune, and the degeneration of the lower classes, "eaten up by alcohol and syphilis." For these reasons he says that England will not apply itself with stern determination to the task in hand—as the King requested. He is full of sneers concerning British rule and British methods of living. He pours forth his scorn on English officers, and intimates that the troops are recruited in Scotland and Ireland.

Then he devotes himself to sowing distrust between Great Britain and France. By referring to the long wars of ancient times, by dwelling on quarrels long ago wiped out, he tries to stir up French-Canadian anger against Westminster. He intimates that Great Britain was always pro-German, that it regarded Prussia as a model State. He presumes to say that Lord Roberts approved of Bernhardt, knowing full well that Roberts and French alike praised the professional attainments of Bernhardt and never for a moment approved of the cold-blooded terrorism advocated in "Germany and the Next War."

At some length Mr. Bourassa sets forth the alleged natural pro-Germanism of the British people, and continues: "Some are astonished that after this constant and consistent francophobe, anti-Russian and pro-German direction of opinion, the English people, of slow, heavy and stupid temperament, do not express a sudden love for France and see at a glance that the Cossack is a natural ally in the defence of liberty and democracy." Mr. Bourassa's conclusion is typical of his incurable falsity of outlook and his determined hostility to Great Britain: "To create in Canada a grotesque legend of a heroism of which the English people are incapable at present in order to induce Canadians to take in this war a part more active and more heavy than the English take themselves is more than stupid, it is criminal."

If any Editor in France dared to write such a farrago of venomous sedition he would be shot out of hand. We do not shoot our rebels. We are weak enough and good natured enough to let them talk until they conjure up a mob or a few fanatical assassins. There are hundreds of men in internment camp who showed less hostility towards Great Britain than this snarling doggerel known as *Le Devoir*, and its President, who got out of Alsace in 1914 just a few hours too soon.