

MEMORIAL

To Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Premier of the Dominion
of Canada

From the Chiefs of the Shuswap, Okanagan and
Couteau Tribes of British Columbia

Presented at Kamloops, B.C., August 25, 1910

Dear Sir and Father,—We take this opportunity of your visiting Kamloops to speak a few words to you. We welcome you here, and we are glad we have met you in our country. We want you to be interested in us, and to understand more fully the conditions under which we live. We expect much of you as the head of this great Canadian nation, and feel confident that you will see that we receive fair and honorable treatment. Our confidence in you has increased since we have noted of late the attitude of your government towards the Indian rights movement of this country and we hope that with your help our wrongs may at last be righted. We speak to you the more freely because you are a member of the white race with whom we first became acquainted, and which we call in our tongue "real whites." One hundred years next year they came amongst us here at Kamloops and erected a trading post. After the other whites came to this country in 1858 we differentiated them from the first whites as their manners were so much different, and we applied the term "real whites" to the latter (viz., the fur-traders of the Northwest and Hudson Bay companies.) As the great ma-

ajority of the companies' employees were French speaking, the term latterly became applied by us as a designation for the whole French race. The "real whites" we found were good people. We could depend on their word, and we trusted and respected them. They did not interfere with us nor attempt to break up our tribal organizations, laws and customs. They did not try to force their conceptions of things on us to our harm. Nor did they stop us from catching fish, hunting, etc. They never tried to steal or appropriate our country, nor take our food and fife from us. They acknowledged our ownership of the country, and treated our chiefs as men. They were the first to find us in this country. We never asked them to come here, but nevertheless we treated them kindly and hospitably and helped them all we could. They had made themselves (as it were) our guests. We treated them as such, and then waited to see what they would do. As we found they did us no harm our friendship with them became lasting. Because of this we have a warm heart to the French at the present day. We expect good from Canada. When they first came among us there were only Indians here. They found the people