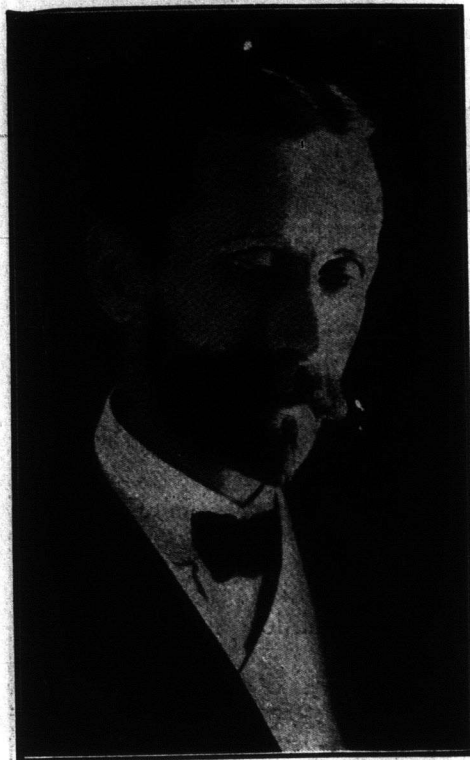


The Conservation of Ancestors.

By Rev. C. W. Gordon, D.D. (Ralph Connor).

'Ancestors determine destiny for men and for nations. Blood and Breeding build Empires.



REV. C. W. GORDON, D.D. (Ralph Connor)

It is a people's primal duty to CONSERVE ITS ANCESTORS. The conservation of a single generation of ancestors would insure for Canada a race of world-conquerors.

For Canada offers an environment as yet untainted by the physical and moral putrescence of decadent civilizations. Our broad spaces of farm and forest land lie as yet unspoiled, a wholesome breeding ground for a great people, a clean, sweet garden for our children's homes. The open country is a place for homes, and homes are for Children. Homes and Children! These words hold the history of a race. Home, sweet and wholesome, where men and women of clean blood and high breeding nurse children of like blood and breeding, producing a people's ancestors.

For the ancestors of a people are a people's children and beyond all concerns, the supreme concern for Canada is that the ancestors of a coming nation should be rightly born and bred. In that supreme concern, the first consideration is that of Blood. And what a strain of rich red blood flows in the veins of the sons and daughters of Canada—the best of the world-conquering peoples of Northern and Western Europe, with the finest of the peoples of the South; the mighty mingled stream of Saxon and Celt, with that which flows from the sunny sons of the Gaul, toned and clarified with three centuries of aeration by the ozone blasts of the vigorous North Wind.

As yet, the stock is sound, the blood is strong; but what of the newer strains of Teuton and Slav? What of those lower breeds from lands of lazy airs and sensuous delights? But never fear. Give time and a fair field, and the Blood that has conquered in the world conflict so far, will win again.

Time and a fair field! And first, Time. Let us not haste too eagerly to grow in numbers. Rather let us prepare to absorb the host of strange peoples, the tramp of whose advance we already can hear, whose onward march we may hasten, but cannot retard. Canadians living now will see the day dawn when the Dominion census will register sixty millions of people. It took the United States only seven years of the last decade to roll up an Immigration list equal to that of the first seventy years of its existence, and the rate of growth for Canada will be that of the United States, not for the first, but for the last decade of its history. Already the Immigration into Canada equals that of a dozen years ago into the United States with all its mighty magnet of seventy millions of people, and never has the stream of Immigration into the Republic risen above 1½ per cent. of its population, while for the past five years the stream of Immigration into Canada has varied from 4 to 5 per cent.

Let us not be concerned to hurry the flow of this current of strange life, but rather to learn how to incorporate it into our present life stream without injury to the nation. Give us time.

And a fair field. Take off the handicaps. "Let us lay aside every weight." Let us provide for the nation's ancestors, not graves and monuments, but breeding places, Homes—Homes. Canada's foundation pillars rest not upon Wheat and Gold, not upon Coal and Lumber, not upon Railway and Industrial Stocks, but upon Homes. Homes where people are born and made; Homes first, Homes last, Homes all the time.

The national resources receive ultimate value from their contribution to the homes of the people. Farms are not for wheat, but are places for homes. Lumber is not for bank accounts, but for making homes. Coal mines are not for corporations, but for homes. Schools and colleges are not for the making of scholars and professional gentlemen, but for homes. Churches are not for creeds and congregations, but for homes. The value of each and every product of Canadian making is to be estimated by its value to the home. Whatever thing in Canada of natural wealth, of custom, or of institution that does not carry back its offering to the homes of our children to make them safer, sweeter, richer, kinder, should be regarded as rubbish, and what things soever in Canadian life or custom impoverishes, endangers or degrades the home, no matter how much applauded or approved, no matter how deeply imbedded in social convention, should be ruthlessly destroyed.

The building place for homes is the broad bosom of old Mother Earth, the land, the farm, the country, the sweet, clean, open country, that is God's place for the making of a home.

It is from the country home that the national life recruits its leaders in thought and in action. Twenty years ago seventy-five per cent. of the University men of Canada came from the farm house. Not more than two per cent. of the great leaders, even of the commercial world, were born in the city. A nation, concerned for the conservation of its ancestors, should make the Country Home rich in comfort, in intellectual and social privilege and in spiritual aspiration.

The Country Home has first claim upon the farm. The wealth drawn from the land belongs first to the land, and then to the home life of those who till it. And, just as it is a crime against old Mother Earth to drain her strength in senseless and rapacious farming, so it is a crime against the nation to starve the farm Home of comfort or beauty or intellectual and social stimulus. And in this day, what with trees to plant and seeds to sow, what with cheap lighting and heating, what with water powers and wind powers, what with mail and telephone service, book and magazine literature, schools, colleges and churches, there is no reason why any Country Home in our land should be bare, dull and comfortless and irresponsible to the throb of the great world lying round it.

But there are the Cities, too, and City Homes where many of our nation's Ancestors must be born and bred. Cities! Places of danger and terror, with their dust-laden air, their overcrowded streets, their dirt and disease, their piteous poverty, their crime and sordid, squalid slums. Our Cities must be redeemed and made livable. For out of a nation's Cities, to a large extent, flow the issues of a nation's life. A Home in God's open country, how easy to make! How easy to guard! But in the City, the making and defending of a home is war. It is a terrifying fact that the world is steadily leaving the country and crushing into the city. At the beginning of the nineteenth century only four per cent. of the population of the United States dwelt in cities; at the beginning of the twentieth century thirty-three per cent. In Canada to-day forty-two per cent. of our people live in the city.

The terror of the city has not yet fallen upon our Canadian-born. Indeed, there are those that yearn for the day when Winnipeg shall be like London. But those who know and remember London, and especially East London, remember it with horror. London! that mighty monster of insatiate appetite for human bodies and human souls! over one million, eight hundred thousand of whose unhappy denizens hover on the ragged edge of extreme poverty, and a million more with only a week's wage between them and starvation! East London! where there are registered upon the pauper roll 125,000 of her citizens, and where one-quarter of the population are buried at the public expense! In London, that most Christian city in the most Christian nation of the world, the children perish in thousands for lack of healthful homes. Of all the children born in East London homes, every second babe dies in the first year of its life, and fifty-five per cent. of all the children die

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