

Speeches at the Banquet of the Lord Mayor

REPLYING on behalf of the Navy, at the Lord Mayor's banquet in London the other evening, Mr. McKenna said that the City of London depended, he supposed, for its prosperity more upon an all-powerful navy than had been the case with any other great city the world had ever seen (hear, hear.) In this happy land of freedom, they enjoyed, amongst other privileges, the diluted blessing of criticism, but the navy stood unassailed and unassailable in the esteem, the admiration, and the love of the great public of the country (applause). The navy was fortunate in one respect inasmuch as it had in the Board of Admiralty a whipping boy. The board were given every opportunity for self-improvement which could be afforded by candid expressions of opinion about their actions. If, as was the case this year, they assembled in the North Sea over 300 ships of war for the summer's manoeuvres, they were told they were making a boastful display of their strength. If, on the other hand, the usual dispersion of their fleets in home waters, whether for exercise or for needful repair, prevented their concentrating any great force, then they were charged with not being ready for war. He did not say this in any spirit of complaint, for they gladly recognized on the Board of Admiralty how generously their actions were viewed by the great public, and they believed that the same confidence which had been shown the board in the past would continue to be received by it in the future.

He was saying what he was sure they would hear with pleasure, and what the Board of Admiralty knew he was thoroughly justified in saying—never in the whole history of the country had the navy been stronger than it was at the present moment (cheers). It was only two days since the latest addition to our fleet was launched at Devonport by Mrs. Asquith (cheers). The enthusiasm which such a ceremony invariably evoked was the highest evidence of the strong feeling of satisfaction which the nation felt in the gathering strength of the navy (applause). Constitutional requirements compelled him to postpone any statement as to what the government proposed to do in the way of securing our independence and freedom on the seas in the future as they had been maintained in the past. However, he made no apology for saying in the city of London—where the highest considerations of patriotism had always overborne a natural reluctance to loosen the purse-strings—that the charge for maintaining the supremacy of our navy was necessarily a heavy one. But we had supremacy today, and meant to preserve it (cheers).

In proposing the toast "His Majesty's Ministers," the Lord Mayor said that the traditions of that hall forbade him to pause even for a moment to consider to which party in the State their guests belonged. There must be differences of opinion as to measures and methods, but there would be no difference of opinion when he expressed their grateful thanks to his Majesty's ministers for their conscientious and unremitting labors in the public service. This was the first time they had welcomed Mr. Asquith as prime minister, and the city was proud that one over whose training she exercised some supervision should have risen to that position (cheers).

Mr. Asquith and the Outlook

Mr. Asquith, on rising to reply, had a cordial reception. He said:—I acknowledge with gratitude on behalf of myself and my colleagues the warmth and heartiness of the tribute which now, as always, the Corporation of London is ready and willing to pay to those who for the time being are entrusted with the government of the empire. That task, as you, my Lord Mayor, have said, grows in bulk and in complexity year by year. The burden of responsibility which rests upon the shoulders of the advisers of the Crown becomes heavier and heavier. But to whatever political school they may belong, amid all the dust and tumult of our party controversies, they can always rely in their endeavor to uphold the common interests of the empire upon the generous consideration of their fellow countrymen (cheers).

My Lord Mayor, since my lamented predecessor spoke in this hall a year ago we have had to face anxious times. The tide of prosperity upon which for some three years the trade of the world had floated buoyantly has ebbed, and the great producing interests here and elsewhere have found themselves once more in the shoals and the shallows. The depression, which to any student of the cycles of economic history was not in itself a matter of surprise, has been aggravated by special and exceptional circumstances—the dislocation of the machinery of credit last autumn in the United States, the outbreak of industrial disputes here at home, and I must add, the increasingly troubled outlook in more than one quarter of the political horizon. I am sanguine enough, always provided the peace of the world is maintained—I am sanguine enough to think that there are signs that indicate that the setback of industrial activity may be not of long duration. We can, at any rate, rejoice here tonight that in one of our greatest industries—the cotton trade—counsels of wisdom and conciliation have prevailed, and a calamity of terrible dimensions has been averted (hear, hear).

In the meantime, we are taking, as we are bound to take, all the steps which a generous and even indulgent interpretation and administration of the law can suggest to cope with

the problem of unemployment (hear, hear). You will, my Lord Mayor, be interested to hear that the loans sanctioned by the local Government Board to local authorities, by which fresh employment can be afforded, amount, from August 1 to October 31, to £1,464,000—nearly a million and a half—compared with £42,000 in the corresponding time last year. Grants made to the Central (Unemployed) Body for London alone, and mostly during the last fortnight, have now reached a figure of nearly £30,000, and that body and the Water Board are at present employing more than 4,000 extra men.

Events in the Near East

But, my Lord Mayor, I must pass to a much wider survey of the situation which confronts us at this moment. The attention of Europe has for some weeks past been occupied by the situation created by recent events in the Near East. We have been the witnesses in Turkey of one of the most amazing revolutions in the annals of history. I am glad to see here as a fellow guest tonight his Excellency the Turkish Ambassador (applause). I am certain that I am interpreting the feelings not only of this company, but of the whole British nation, when I assure him that we are at one in sympathy and in congratulation with him and with his countrymen in the establishment of freedom and constitutional government in the Ottoman empire (applause). We recognize to the full the magnitude of the difficulties that have had to be faced; the tact, judgment, prudence, and consideration with which they were successfully encountered and overcome; the happy absence of the violence and the vindictiveness with which changes so far-reaching and so fundamental have, as a rule, been accompanied; the sagacity, patience, and tolerance which have so far distinguished the new regime (applause). My Lord Mayor, we are here tonight in the very centre and citadel of the capital of liberty, and we may claim, as the oldest of the free countries of the world, that we have the special right to welcome the birth of free institutions in Turkey.

I need not concern you with what followed in Bulgaria, Bosnia, and Herzegovina. Our position from the first has been clear. We have taken our stand upon the opinion reached by mutual agreement of the Powers at the conference held here in London in 1871, that international treaties cannot be altered (hear, hear) by the act of one of the parties without the consent of the other parties concerned (applause). We hold that this stipulation covers the alterations of the Treaty of Berlin, which were involved in what has recently been done, and that the assent must be obtained of all Powers, including Turkey. Subject to this, in our opinion, all-important principle, we shall do all we can to promote the general agree-

ment by which nations can be restored to a normal and reconciled condition. Let me say here that the British government have no prejudice against and no preference for any particular method by which a settlement may be reached, and that, from the beginning, there has never been even the shadow of a foundation for the suggestion that we have not proposed, but deprecated or discouraged direct negotiations between Turkey and Austria, or between Turkey and Bulgaria. It is true, as I have said, that we hold that any arrangement involving the alteration of the Treaty of Berlin arrived at between these Powers alone must be countersigned by the other parties to the treaty (applause). We are of opinion, as Turkey is the Power which has been most prejudiced by what has taken place, that it is for those who have prejudiced her to find means of making a settlement which will be consistent with her honor and her interests (applause). But we have recognized from the first that it was for Turkey to consider for herself any proposals which might be made to her, and that if Austria or if Bulgaria were to arrive at a direct understanding with Turkey which would be acceptable to her, the way would be smoothed for a general settlement.

Feeling, my Lord Mayor, is running high now in the Balkan States, and there are other difficulties, I regret to say, besides those I have mentioned which will have to be overcome before the Near East can revert to a normal condition. For our part, we shall do what we can in conjunction with the other Powers to urge on all concerned moderation, and restraint—never more needed than at this moment—and to find some method of counsel for allaying the strong feelings, here of resentment, there of expectation, which have been inevitably aroused. Before the recent crisis it had been arranged that the Russian foreign minister, who was paying a visit to the other capitals of Europe, should include London in his tour. I am glad to have this opportunity of saying that it has been a great satisfaction to us to find in the discussions which took place with him that both the Russian and the British governments approached the Near Eastern question—which has always had an ominous sound and significance in the past—from the same point of view (applause). One of the happiest of the indirect results of our having come to an agreement with Russia in Asiatic affairs has been that we should have been able, as we have been, to talk frankly and sympathetically when this crisis arose nearer home, and that in spite of the fact that the crisis came suddenly without giving us an opportunity for previous discussion or preparation.

Situation in Russia

In this connection, my Lord Mayor, may I mention in passing that since the Anglo-Rus-

sian convention was concluded Persia, as you all know, has been in a state of disorder, which has been most felt in the North, in the immediate vicinity of the Russian frontier. The inconvenience and loss caused to Russian interests, the anxiety felt in the minds of Russian subjects, have much exceeded anything that we, as a nation, have been called upon to experience. But his Majesty's government felt—and I am glad to have the opportunity of saying this—his Majesty's government felt that under exceedingly trying conditions the Russian government have acted with great restraint and moderation in the interests of a policy of non-intervention in Persia (cheers). It is, of course, urgently to be desired that these disorders in Persia should speedily be brought to an end, and to secure that object we have joined with the Russian government in pressing the Shah to fulfil his promise with regard to a constitution, and to give amnesty to political offenders.

Before I pass from this part of my subject, may I say that though I have expressed satisfaction at the result of the discussions which took place, I do not wish it to be supposed that we desire to see Europe divided into separate groups in connection with the new situation in the Near East. We have found ourselves in complete sympathy with France, who is the ally of Russia; but at the same time we, and I believe, the other Powers also, have been equally frank in our communications with Germany and Italy, who are allies of Austria. For we recognize that the common object of Europe ought to be to overcome the difficulties which have already arisen without creating new difficulties, and that this can only be done by a policy which springs from general consent. Diplomatic victories may be too dearly bought. One Power's success may be so cheap as to involve another's disappointment and discomfort, and thereby the very friction is generated which it should be the aim of a wise diplomacy to avoid. We, at any rate—let me say this in concluding what I have to say on this matter—we have taken up in these affairs an entirely disinterested attitude. We ask nothing for ourselves. We do not seek to take advantage of the situation for any purpose of our own. Our sole objects are these: To maintain the public law of Europe (cheers); to secure for the new regime in Turkey just treatment and a fair chance, and to promote such an adjustment of the various interests and susceptibilities which are involved as may prevent disturbance of the peace, and open the road to freedom and to good government.

Anglo-German Relations

My Lord Mayor, I must trespass on your indulgence for two or three moments longer while I refer to another topic, which must be

Canadian Women on the Public Health

His Excellency the Governor-General presided at the session of the National Council of Women in the Normal school assembly hall, when Public Health was the subject of a number of excellent papers and addresses.

His Excellency called on the convener of the committee on public health, Mrs. Adam Shortt, of Kingston, for the report of that committee. The principal points taken up were the names adopted by the council to have various municipalities throughout Canada to conduct the great white plague, tuberculosis. The manner in which they had been successful in some of the cities was then gone into. In Toronto, for instance, the council had undertaken a crusade to procure for the city a supply of pure drinking water, and had secured the submission of a by-law to erect a filtration plant there, which had been voted on and passed by the residents of the city. An effort was made to procure the appointment of medical men as inspectors of health in schools, and the struggle was still going on before the school board there. The proper handling of bread had been secured, and the anti-tuberculosis work was also succeeding in a great measure.

The Hamilton branch reported that the water supply of the city was excellent; and the sewage question was also in good condition. They had a splendid health association there, which with the assistance of Mrs. Crerar and the Daughters of the Empire was doing splendid work. A prominent Hamiltonian had given the city one hundred acres with a house on it, and a provincial grant had been secured, and it was now used as a sanitarium, having been opened in May, 1908, by His Excellency Earl Grey. Through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. William Southern a sanitarium for advanced cases of tuberculosis would now be built.

The report went on to deal at length with work being done in other parts of Canada, and among other centres the work in Ottawa was taken up. The report of the local council said that the general public were more diligently observing the laws of nature. A free dispensary had been established and the board of health had improved the milk supply. Work had been done in Montreal a pure milk league had been established, and was largely aided by the press of that city, which also largely by individual work. Medical inspection had been introduced in the schools, largely through the efforts of the council, and twelve medical men had been employed by the city council to do the work. Two lady doctors had recently been added to the work in the high schools. The report referred to the recent gift of Colonel Burland of \$50,000 to provide a sanitarium for advanced cases of tuberculosis. A by-law against expectoration is also before the city council, and is being endorsed by the press.

The work in Ingersoll, Halifax and London was gone into in detail, and showed that the members of the council in these cities had been doing excellent work in connection with the crusade against tuberculosis. A committee of public health had been formed to assist the work of the Canadian Anti-Tuberculosis Association. There was need for great work against this dread disease, and yet of 40,000 people in Canada afflicted with it, 8,000 were likely to die within the next year. There seemed to be an apathy in dealing with this disease, yet no one could escape coming in contact with it at one time or another. The Federal government gave an annual grant to the council to assist in the work, and that for a lecturer, secretary and printing of literature. The report

spoke of the time given to the preparations for bazaars, and said that if as much time were given to fighting tuberculosis as was given to preparing for these affairs much good would result.

In conclusion, the report claimed for the work the utmost public interest, as it was a work of life or death, and demanded the public should show its interest in a substantial manner by doing all in its power to help to enforce municipal laws and in promoting places for treatment.

A Great Work

Dr. Bryce, the chief medical inspector for the Dominion, also made the subject of his address the crusade against tuberculosis, and said that of the many subjects open to him to speak on in connection with public health, he chose this because it was the greatest work that had been undertaken by anybody in many years. He had just returned from the International Medical Congress, held recently at Washington, and it was one of the most important subjects taken up by that body. He said that the leaders of the council were on the right track in their manner of dealing with it, for if we could reach the home and family with the fight, we would be nearer the solution of the stamping out of tuberculosis. A great phase of the work was prevention. A municipal council might obtain the power to take hold of any law and do what it liked with it and could force building regulations, but it was left with the municipal council to say whether this could be done or not. The Americans were ahead of us in some regards, for instance, their American Civic Improvement Association was doing a tremendous work which extended all over the country. A large step had been taken by the congress in uniting the public health movement in Ontario. The degree of prevalence of tuberculosis in any family or state was the measure of the amount of its spread that family or state. The result of the prevalence of tuberculosis in families was the loss of the principal breadwinners, and the forcing of the children from school at a very early age. It was a pitiful picture when the financial resources of a family were drained through caring for one or more members afflicted with the dread disease, but it was complete. Referring to the immigrants coming into the country, Dr. Bryce stated that they should be taught at once the manner of living in vogue here, in fact, we should not wait until the slums of our cities were crowded with these strange people to our ideas of life. It should be proved that there should be no over-crowding of houses; this was one of the first great steps to be taken. In the city of Ottawa seven years ago there had been started an anti-consumptive league, which had done splendid work, and producing great results. There were 100 deaths in 1906 from consumption in the city, which had been reduced to 88 for the next year. The doctor referred to the good work being done by the May Court club, which had opened a dispensary in the city, and had already dealt with many cases. It was up to the public to say to the city council: "Will you support legislation by providing overcrowding of houses and proper medical inspection in schools?" If they did not, the public would soon answer them. The way to solve the social problem was to advance the fight against tuberculosis.

Supervised Playgrounds

Miss M. Peters, of St. John's N. B., made several new suggestions as to the treatment of the child at school. "One aid to education would be to reduce the school hours by one half and increase the play hours by the same length of time." Was one of the statements which were received with considerable applause. The playground movement had grown with tremendous strides and playgrounds filled a universal need regardless of the size of the city. Playgrounds

were more necessary in smaller towns where there was so little to occupy the young mind, and prevented idleness on the part of the children. The cities of St. John, Halifax, Kingston and Toronto, had all tried the playground experiment, and it had met with great success. In Toronto the school board had chosen open during the summer months the playgrounds of five of the schools there, and had appointed a salaried supervisor for each, and the results have been very satisfactory.

In Ottawa the matter had been brought before the council five years ago, but no definite action was taken, and permission was obtained to leave the school playgrounds open at all times for the children of the neighborhood. Mrs. Cox, of Montreal, was the next speaker, and she referred at some length to the playground movement. The city of Chicago had spent eleven millions to establish free playgrounds and was annually spending thirty thousand dollars for their upkeep and supervision. It was one of the great playground centres. We must not be merely a nation of workers, continued the speaker, but we must also be a nation of well and fully developed men and women. It was not too late to mend and make provision for this. We were at present spending one hundred per cent more for juvenile reform than we were for recreation for children. The cheap theatre and dancing hall satisfied, while it demoralized a domestic taste. The real business of childhood is not to pass examinations but to grow up. The playground should be organized and recognized as an aid to education.

His Excellency

In closing the meeting, Earl Grey said it had given him great pleasure to take the chair. He was sure that where a few women were gathered together in earnest there were few things they could not accomplish. He was led to believe that if the association could secure ladies of the same calibre as those who had spoken during the evening, they would be able to secure the aid of the Federal government in their fight against tuberculosis and for supervised playgrounds. The teachers and mothers of Canada had the future of the country in their hands, and he depended on them to make it a great nation. One way to do this was to organize the play of the children. The women of Canada had another great responsibility, and that was to see that the rising generation were brought up with good manners. He was a firm believer in the destiny of Canada, and it depended on the coming generation, and they depended on the women to closely attend to the matter of infusing general courtesy, commonly known as good manners. He had found good manners in all parts of the country, but especially in the French Canadian portions, which had installed in him a great respect for them.

Street car conductors regard inquisitive women passengers with superstitious dread. The other day a fuse blew out in a car, and that car was hitched as a trailer to the one ahead. Presently a woman began to ask questions. "What would happen," she said, "if the fuse were to blow out in that car ahead? What would become of us? Would the car ahead of that be able to drag both of these cars?" "I don't know," said the conductor. "But don't worry. We won't have a chance to find out." A doubt accident of that kind has never happened to a car of mine yet, and it isn't likely to happen once in a hundred years. Just then there came an explosion ahead, and both cars came to a standstill. The fuse had blown out. "Confound that woman!" growled the conductor. "That is all her fault. This wouldn't have happened if she hadn't asked so many fool questions. She's a Jonah."

very near to the minds of every one whom I am addressing. A variety of circumstances have recently caused the relations between Great Britain and Germany to become the subject of active public discussion. It is almost exactly a year since the German Emperor was the guest of your predecessor, whom I see sitting beside me, in this very hall. Some of us—and I was one—who were present on that occasion cannot forget his Majesty's emphatic and impressive declaration that the governing purpose of his policy was the preservation of the peace of Europe and the maintenance of good relations between our two countries (cheers). It is in the spirit of that declaration, a spirit which aims not only at peace but at good will, that we desire to deal with other Powers, with Germany certainly not least. It is that spirit which has guided and which will guide us in all negotiations, actual or prospective, regarding the present difficulties in European politics. And if—as I trust and believe is the case—the other Powers cherish the same desire and intention, then, my Lord Mayor, the clouds which for the moment darken the sky—whether they originated in the Balkans or elsewhere—will disperse without a storm. Peace will be assured, existing friendships will be maintained unimpaired, and it is not too much to hope that the atmosphere all round will be clear of the vaporous suspicion and distrust. Therefore I submit to you, and to others outside and beyond these walls, there should be no talk at such times of isolation, hostile relations, and rival combinations among the Powers—those Powers who are the general trustees of civilization and of its greatest and paramount safeguard, the peace of the world. Nothing will induce us in this country to falter or fall short in any one of the special engagements which we have undertaken, to be disloyal or unfaithful for a moment to any existing friendship. And that, I think, shows the determined and unalterable mind of the whole country (hear, hear). And it is equally true of the temper of the government and of the nation to say that we have no animosities to gratify nor selfish interest to advance, and that we shall not be reluctant to grasp any hand that is extended to us in good will and in good faith.

My Lord Mayor, I have spoken of what is not merely a British, but a European, interest—an interest in which, indeed, all communities of the world have a share. And these shall be my final words: The primary obligation which every government owes to the people of its own country is to maintain and safeguard the national security (hear, hear). No one underrates the important functions which fall in this respect upon our Navy. It is upon the Navy that we here place our main reliance, not only for the integrity of our shores, but for the protection of our commerce and the sustenance of our people (applause). No one who is conversant with the facts can impugn the proposition laid down a few moments ago by my right hon. friend and colleague the First Lord of the Admiralty—that the British Government is at this moment fully equal to any responsibility which can conceivably be thrown upon it.

Naval Policy

I had the pleasure, as he had, on Saturday last, of being present at one of the most impressive and moving spectacles I think ever witnessed—the launching of his Majesty's ship Collingwood (hear, hear), the sixth vessel to take the water of what is known as the Dreadnought type. My Lord Mayor, every foreign Power knows that if we have established—as we do (hear, hear)—indisputable supremacy on the seas, it is not for the purpose of aggression or adventure, but it is that we may fulfil the elementary duty which we owe to the Empire; to uphold, beyond the reach—yes, beyond the risk—of successful attack from outside, our commerce, our industry, our homes (loud and prolonged applause). It is not, in my opinion, necessary—indeed, I think it would be highly undesirable—to attempt to anticipate, by any public announcement, at this stage, the programme which the Admiralty will lay before Parliament next year. It is a matter upon which we are in close and constant communication with our naval advisers, and the country may be assured—for the moment, I hope it will be content to rest assured—the country may be assured that nothing will be left undone to keep our Navy fully abreast of our national, of our Imperial, necessities (cheers). Governments come and go, parliamentary and electoral majorities wax and wane, but there is one conviction which the people of these islands hold with unshaken unanimity. It is that in our unquestioned and unquestionable command of the seas is to be found the best safeguard for our interests as a nation and for the peaceful intercourse of mankind (cheers). My Lord Mayor, I thank you once more and, with you, this whole company, for the cordiality with which they drank the toast of his Majesty's Ministers. I thank you especially for the more than kind—the moving—expressions which you used with regard to myself. I assure you—the sheriffs, aldermen, and councillors of the great Corporation of London whom I see seated around this table—that I for one can never forget the debt of gratitude which I owe to them. It is to me a special pleasure and privilege to have been their guest (loud applause).

The Lord Mayor proposed the toast of the Foreign Ambassadors, to which the Turkish Ambassador replied.

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