

Recollections of a Recent Visit to Canada

FOLLOWING is the full text of the extremely interesting booklet, which has just been issued, containing an address on "Recollections of a Visit to Canada," by Mr. George Briggs, a well-known member of the Corporation of London. Mr. Briggs was the guest of Mr. David Spencer while in Victoria:

The beautiful hall of the Salters' company, St. Swithins' Lane, City of London, was filled to overflowing on the evening of Wednesday, December 4th, 1907, when Mr. George Briggs, a well-known member of the Corporation of London, delighted his audience with a two hours' address on the subject of the wonders, beauties and resources of the great Dominion of Canada, from a visit to which Mrs. Briggs and himself had recently returned. The address was given under the auspices of the United Wards club, of which Mr. Briggs is a past president. The members and their ladies were received by the President (Mr. Walter Green) and Mrs. Green in the spacious entrance hall, the subsequent proceedings taking place in the banquet hall, the President occupying the chair. The address was rendered additionally attractive by means of a large number of lantern slides, the majority of which were placed at the disposal of Mr. Briggs by some prominent officials of the Canadian Pacific Railway company. The large audience listened to the remarks of the speaker with the keenest interest from start to finish.

Mr. Briggs said: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:—When in a weak moment I fell to the persuasion of our treasurer and promised to give a lecture on my holiday in Canada, little did I dream of the task I had set myself, and although I have presided over large assemblies of men and women at meetings of all kinds for thirty years, yet this is my maiden lecture, so you must forgive me if I have not arranged it in absolute sequence. The fact is, I found the task so great that I hardly knew how and where to commence. The difficulty was made all the greater, after traveling 14,000 miles, to recall all the incidents of the first 7,000 miles, which were in Canada; and the more I went into it the more deeply did I get involved, because I felt at every moment it was my duty to place before you, as vividly as I could, the great inheritance we have in Canada. I decided, therefore, to divide it into two parts—firstly, to give a short review, and then take you picturesquely through the whole journey. I hope you will bear with me just for about ten minutes, while I place before you my impressions of Canada, as it is and what it may become, so I ask you all to think imperially, to feel imperially, and afterwards to talk imperially all your lives until we bring about that great imperial federation, and link all our Colonies to the Motherland in one eternal bond of unity, so that disintegration can never come, but we may remain not only the greatest but the strongest empire the world has ever seen, with countless millions to protect and love our flag.

I propose to place my trip under various headings—firstly, from London to Liverpool; secondly, from Liverpool to Quebec; thirdly, from Quebec to Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto; fourthly, from Toronto to Winnipeg; and fifthly, from Winnipeg to Victoria.

The Departure From London

Leaving London at 12 o'clock on Friday, June 28th, we arrived in Liverpool at 4 o'clock without a stop. At 4.15 we were on board the "Empress of Ireland." By 5.30 all baggage and passengers had embarked. The last person to arrive was King Edward. I need not assure you I do not mean the King himself, but a large number of our usually red-painted postal vans with letters for Australia, China, Japan and Canada. After they were boarded we sailed down the river. The next day (Saturday) we left the Old Country, viewing the Giant's Causeway and the northwest part of Ireland. From thence to Quebec there was not a single wave, and it was absolutely like sitting still the whole of the way. In fact, sometimes at luncheon and dinner we had to look through the portholes to see if the ship had not stopped, there being no vibration or movement of any kind; but this unique trip was marred by a dense fog occurring at 2 o'clock on Monday. While I was talking to the captain, he remarked: "I must go on the bridge, a fog is coming up," and he never left the bridge again until 12 o'clock on Friday, when we arrived in Quebec, although during the whole of that time she made from 452 to 457 miles daily. At Sydney we ought to have landed the Canadian mails at 12.30 on Wednesday night, but the fog being so heavy we could not make the tender; consequently, they were landed at Rimouski at 10.30 on Thursday night; when the Custom House officers came on board. On Friday morning I arose at five o'clock, when a rare sight presented itself. The whole length on each side of the under promenade deck was piled with passengers' luggage, all in alphabetical order. I found mine immediately, and before six o'clock had got it passed through the customs. We passed the Gulf of St. Lawrence during the night, and from Rimouski to Quebec it was still the River St. Lawrence—a mighty river, but nothing particular in it to strike one's attention. The banks on each side are low, with few habitations except small wooden houses, erected principally for those engaged in the lumber trade.

We then viewed the falls of Montmorency, and approached Quebec, where we anchored at 12 o'clock, not being allowed to land until 1.30, as all passengers for China, Japan or Australia were landed first with the mails, and also fifty-four marines for the Far West. I may mention here that the Canadian Government is endeavoring to establish what they call "an all-red line," that is, that the British mails can be carried from London to Australia, China and Japan all over British territory (applause). That, you will see, will be a mighty thing when achieved, and most beneficial in time of war. We stayed in Quebec three days. The old part, or French part, near the docks, which is all in the Lower Town, and where all the large wholesale houses are, is badly and ill-kept. The upper part, where the houses of parliament, the town hall, the great Frontenac hotel, the fortresses, the principal shops and fine wide streets and private houses are situated, is well kept.

From Quebec to Montreal we took the steamer up the St. Lawrence, which, as a river, has little to present for itself, except as a mighty waterway. It was on a Monday night, and there appeared to be a great many weekend people going backwards and forwards. I was interested, especially in a large party of happy young men who sang a number of glees in fine style up till 10.30 p.m.—and made no collection (laughter). At the conclusion of their vocal efforts, they all sang "God Save the King," and then quietly dispersed. The banks are still low, dotted with houses at intervals, until we approach nearer to Montreal, where it is much more beautiful, there being many islands and interesting villages on its broad surface. Montreal approached by the water bears its finest aspect. You see Mount Royal, Dominion park, the great elevators, ship-building, and all the colossal warehouses that are on the port side. In the old parts the streets are narrow and badly paved, while the newer part is nearly all built in squares, with fine wide streets, the whole city presenting a progressive and wealthy aspect. We visited every point of interest, and especially the Bank of Montreal, which has its head-quarters here. It is one of the finest banks I have ever been in with regard to its internal arrangements, but I rather wondered that a bank in a young country should have sunk so much money in enormous marble pillars, which, although giving it a dignified, rich and beautiful aspect, must represent dead money.

From Montreal we went by train to Ottawa, which is a more classical city, being the seat of government, and it stands in a picturesque and beautiful position. From Ottawa to Toronto, we went by train. Toronto, like Montreal, is the buzz of Canada, the houses being very fine, and the men are all energetic and full of business. I visited all the large stores and all the warehouses, and was impressed by the general progress of the city.

Some Impressions

From Toronto we went to Winnipeg—a journey of thirty-six hours (555 miles) by the Lakes Huron and Superior. Winnipeg, let me say, is one of the marvels of the West. It can only count about twenty-five years of age, and yet has 100,000 inhabitants, and the intentions of the people seem unbounded, for it is laid out with fine streets, and allotments are to be sold for a distance of nearly ten miles around. With regard to Lake Superior, the traveling people we met, especially the ladies, were very fond of reminding my wife that England could be dropped into Lake Superior, and as we were nearly two-and-a-half days on that boat, she was told the same tale so often that at last she replied to one person who was not quite polite in the telling, "Well, I will grant that you have quantity, but we certainly have quality" (applause and laughter). I may here mention that in Quebec, Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg, and indeed in all Canadian cities and towns, there is the most perfect system of electric tramways. There is scarcely any need for cabs, as you can see most of the city from the tramways, and your baggage is always carried by express companies. From Winnipeg to Banff is a journey of thirty-six hours, and during one-half of that time the railway runs through nothing but wheat fields, which is called "Manitoba," or "The Great Northwest." Then the next half of the time is through prairie-land, where you see nothing but cattle and horse ranches. The journey from Winnipeg to Calgary is of a most uninteresting character, except for a few villages that you pass through; but it is a great food country, and a great horse and cattle breeding country. For the whole of that distance you scarcely ever see a tree, and certainly never a hill; and the railway has not a single cutting or a tunnel from Winnipeg to Calgary, unless there were some during the night journey which I did not see. Calgary is the most important town between Winnipeg and the Rockies, it having now about 15,000 inhabitants, although but a few years old, and it is from there, at the foot of the Rockies, that the interesting part of the country commences, as far as mountains, lakes and rivers are to be seen. From Calgary there is a branch line, 250 miles to Edmonton, the capital, direct north of Alberta.

I should like here to touch upon two or three important questions. The luggage question is a thing of great importance to travelers; and having traveled all Europe, I know quite well the systems in vogue there, and

our miserable scrambles in the Old Country on the arrival at stations; but in Canada it is simply perfect. At the hotels on the Canadian Pacific line, and on all others, you simply telephone from your bedroom, and a man comes, and you say, "Check this luggage on to so-and-so." As in my case, with my wife, we never had less than five or six pieces—four too many. The man gives you a number, and you do not see them any more until you find them in your room at the next place you want to stop. I advise, if ever you go—one box each, and one to carry. As regards the hotels and the drink question in Canada, although you know I am neither a prude nor a teetotaler, yet I must compliment the people on their system. You all know that when you arrive at a hotel in Europe and you sit down to luncheon or dinner, before you have time to order what you wish to eat, a man presents a huge card of wines and spirits, and says, "What will you take to drink, sir?" (laughter). Now, in Canada, you enter a dining room, sit down, and the first thing the waiter does is to pour you out a glass of ice water (of course it was the summer time), then he asks you what you will take to eat, and you are never asked at all what you will take to drink—but he gives you as many glasses of ice water as you like to take (renewed laughter). After I had lived on this wholesome drink for some days, I suddenly thought I should like to have a glass of wine, and asked if they had not a wine card (applause). The man replied somewhat cautiously, "I think I could find one," and after a deal of delay he produced a small card which had upon it three kinds of champagne, two kinds of claret, two kinds of hock, and three whiskies; twelve kinds of mineral waters, ginger ales, and all kinds of cordials, non-intoxicant. I think that is a great advance on the European systems, while another curious law is that at 7 o'clock on Saturday evening until 6 o'clock on Monday morning all bars in every hotel, and all drinking saloons, which we in our country call "public houses," are closed. In speaking to one of the principal citizens in Toronto on this question, he replied, "Well, you see, a working man cannot waste all his wages up to 7 o'clock, and he may even take a bottle home; but then, you see, he is at home, and most likely at home with most of his wages, which he might otherwise have dissipated among boon companions before 12 o'clock at night" (applause). So strictly is that law carried out that I have one or two very amusing incidents to relate. A gentleman called upon me at 8 o'clock one Saturday evening at my hotel, and, British-like, I of course asked him to have some refreshment and a cigar. I was told that I could not have any, as the bar was closed, and that they were not allowed to sell it, except in our bedrooms, so I invited him into our bedroom and there we had the desired little refreshment (renewed laughter). Perhaps that is carrying it a little too far, as when a traveler is in a hotel it is generally considered to be his place of residence for the time; still, I must say I admire the precaution which they take. Of course, you can get what you like during luncheon or dinner time.

The Resources of the Country

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to give you a few figures: I know they are often considered dry, and sometimes perhaps, uninteresting, but I promise you on this occasion I will not weary you in that respect, and I think you will find the few statistics I am about to quote will appeal to your imaginations.

The total grain crops for the season of 1906 were over 415,000,000 bushels, of which 125,000,000 bushels were wheat, and over 202,000,000 bushels oats.

The following figures give a few of the principal exports from Canada (Home Produce), during the fiscal year ended June, 1906: Wheat, 40,399,402 bushels, £7,013,000; flour, 562,465 barrels, £1,371,000; fruit, £1,004,000; horses, 2,794, £110,000; cattle (horned), 176,030, £2,429,000; sheep, 244,262, £245,000; the mine (produce of), £7,389,000; the forest (produce of), £8,089,000; cheese, 215,834,543 lbs., £5,091,000; total, £32,741,000.

The total trade of Canada for the twelve months ending August, 1907, was £133,404,000, an increase of £15,417,000 over the preceding year (cheers). During the same period the trade with Great Britain increased by £1,875,000.

The total immigration into Canada from April 1st to the end of September last, through ocean ports, was 158,598, compared with 109,777 during the same period of 1906. By ocean ports is meant, of course, those people coming by ship; but it is calculated that nearly as many go over from America by train, and it is most difficult, therefore, to calculate their number. The question of emigration is a point I want to specially emphasize, because of the hundreds of thousands who are pouring into Canada, only 10 per cent are British, the remainder coming from almost every land, and know no flag—but simply dollars.

An Appeal to Patriotism

But our government must be up and doing, because as the older generations die off there will arise—there is already arising, a race that does not care to know the Motherland—youth men from 15 to 25 years of age, who either forget, or never knew, what their brave old British forefathers owed to Britain; but, on the other hand, think that they have made, and are

indeed Canada. In my opinion, the sooner Imperial Federation is accomplished the better for Canada, and the better for the Empire. (Cheers.) Too little do the British race, and much more the Colonial race, remember the great men of the British Isles; the statesmen who founded, and the generals and men who fought and died for the colonies, but I must say that Canadians proper are true and loyal to a man. (Renewed cheers.) There is here, in this great Dominion, all that man wants, self-contained and to spare for the Motherland, in exchange for our gold and goods, without depending on foreigners. Our government, I repeat, must be made to understand what its duty is. Ministers should be sent out to see and hear, and feel and grasp the great situation. No man can stay at home and fully understand it. (Loud applause.) From what I saw in all the busy cities I visited, it is of no use for wasters to go out there, because they will go to the wall quicker than in the Old Country. All there is eager, strenuous life; every man is for himself, and those depending on him. They do not want clerks and shop hands so much, and certainly they do not want paupers. (Applause.) They want farmers with capital; they want good artisans; and they want men with money to start no matter what kind of business or trade. I venture to say that with proper, steady intelligence, any man will succeed and grow with the country; but the gold is not for the lazy and indolent, any more there than anywhere else. (Applause.) Sovereigns are not to be swept up in the street any more there than anywhere else in the world.

I wish now to say a word about

The Canadian Pacific Railway,

its system of travel and its fine hotels. That great company has done a great deal for the civilization and opening up of Canada, and all that the Government has given them in the way of lands it richly deserves. (Applause.) Their hotels are equipped in a perfect manner; their officials and everyone connected with the railway are courteous and obliging. The food (remember, I am speaking of summer) sometimes is not all that one would desire, more especially in isolated places, where the people have to resort too much to cold air storage; but that is unavoidable, for even in Toronto at the finest hotel (not belonging to the Canadian Pacific railway) the food consisted almost entirely of cold storage. In Winnipeg, at the hotel belonging to the Canadian Pacific railway, cold storage was rarely resorted to, and, I think, there it was the finest cuisine I have yet seen in Canada. Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, I do not wish to weary you, but I have in this review tried to impress you with the great Dominion of Canada, and if I have achieved that, I shall have added one more laurel to the great Imperialism which must eventually come. (Cheers.) You may ask me now as a last word what struck me most. Well, it is a simple thing, but really vital. Some of you know that I have been in the habit of going to Europe and crossing the English Channel at least six times a year for nearly forty years, and when across that channel my language changes from English to French, just like a duck takes to water, so that when I crossed the ocean naturally the same thing came to me, and for several days I could scarcely realize that I still had to speak English. Therefore, what struck me most was that in 14,000 miles there was but one language—that of the British nation. (Applause.) Even the black attendants in the train, the Chinese and Japanese waiters in all the hotels in the Rockies and elsewhere, spoke English. Now, about their telephones, telegraphs, tramways and electric power; in all the towns the overhead system is in vogue; the wires are all on huge trees, very tall and very thick, about the same size, and all very ugly, because of their immense number, and the cables for carrying special power are as thick as an ordinary man's wrist. In Toronto I spoke to the town clerk and engineer, with whom I had a most enjoyable hour, and said: "In a hundred years the people of that day will blame you for not putting them underground in a proper tunnel, where men can go in to repair them and lay new ones." The reply was, "The first cost?" "Yes," I said, "that was no doubt the reply in London 100 years ago, but it costs us now, yearly, what would have paid the first cost. With us it is now too late, as there is no room underneath; with you it is different. Do it at once and earn the blessing of future generations, not only for utility, but for economy and the beauty of your cities." (Applause.)

Alaska has become a very interesting place, and a burning question has just been settled, but settled in a manner which still leaves it smoldering. You may know that Russia a few years ago sold her portion of Alaska to America for £1,440,000. A few years later the Canadians began to find gold and rich minerals at Klondyke and Dawson City. So then America began to say that portion was in her purchase, so it was referred to arbitration, and you may remember at Paris last year America bluffed us out of thousands of square miles. It made me very angry at the time as I considered it unjust, and I am more angry now than before and simply disgusted at our Government. (Applause.) All Canada blames us and says America bluffed us out of it, and I am sure they did. Prominent men in New York actually said so and laugh-

ed at us, going so far as to say, "Oh, we shall ask for a few more provinces soon on some pretext and you are sure to give them." So much for Alaska. Well, the line was drawn and what is now left to Canada is called Yukon and is 196,976 square miles; that portion they call Alaska and is 590,884 square miles, and Canada lost 12,500 square miles.

The State of Oregon was also bluffed from Canada in 1848 and is 96,000 square miles. Washington also, in 1853, with 67,000 square miles. The formation of public opinion in the Dominion upon this question was a gradual one, built upon an underlying but deep impression that Great Britain had been historically prone to sacrifice Canadian interests—ignorantly, or intentionally, as the case might be—upon the altar of so-called friendly relations with the United States. (Applause.)

A map of Canada, showing the lost territories, was then placed upon the screen and its essentials described. Mr. Briggs pointed out that the total area of Canada was 3,500,000 square miles, or nearly as large as Europe. Quebec to Montreal was 175 miles, Montreal to Ottawa 122, Ottawa to Toronto 320, Montreal to Vancouver 2,900, Halifax to Vancouver 3,700, St. John to Vancouver 3,800, and the distance from Owen Sound, Lakes Huron and Superior to Fort William 555 miles. A large number of illustrations of life on board one of the magnificent vessels forming the fleet of the Canadian Pacific Railway company were then exhibited. Pictures of street scenes, public and other buildings, and views of Canadian scenery followed in quick succession, and proved intensely interesting.

Descriptive Address—"Canada for Ever"

Halifax, with a population of 50,000, and the capital of Nova Scotia, was, Mr. Briggs remarked, from its long association with the Army and Navy of the Mother Country, the most thoroughly English city on the Continent. He then continued his descriptive address in the following words:—

At Quebec, we stayed at the Chateau Frontenac, belonging to the Canadian Pacific Railway. This old city occupies the base and summit of a lofty crag, projecting into the St. Lawrence.

Jacques Cartier, a Frenchman, was the first European who sailed into the river, and spent the winter of 1535 at the base of the cliff; and French fur companies soon after established here headquarters for trading. As the settlement grew, the fortifications were enlarged, and Quebec became the stronghold of Canada; remaining so until captured by the English, under Wolfe, in 1759. No other city in Canada is so grandly situated, or offers views from its higher points so diversified and lovely.

Dufferin Terrace is a huge wooden platform, or promenade, 1.4 mile long and 50 to 70 feet wide, erected on the edge of the cliffs. It was first erected by the Earl of Durham, and was re-built and enlarged during the governorship of the Earl of Dufferin, and opened to the public in 1879, by the Marquis of Lorne and Princess Louise. On the west is the governor's garden, with the Wolfe and Montcalm monument. There are many beautiful excursions from Quebec, such as Point Levis, Isle of Orleans, Falls of Montmorency, and St. Anne de Beaupre, where there is a shrine for cures of all the ills that flesh is heir to, and in the splendid church the pillars are all covered from top to bottom with crutches; waist bands, leg props and every conceivable surgical article ever made, left there by those who were cured—or, rather, who never ailed anything.

Sous le Cap street is a most curious and interesting old street, and I should think practically remains in the same condition as when originally constructed, it being in the lower part of the town, where all the streets are very irregular and badly kept; it contains many quaint old houses. The Champlain monument is in the upper part of the town, Champlain being the first organizer of the country.

Montreal.—Windsor street station, Canadian Pacific Railway—population, 425,000. It is the chief city and commercial capital of Canada, is situated on an island formed by the St. Lawrence and Ottawa rivers, and on the site of the ancient Indian village of Hochelaga. It was visited by Jacques Cartier, in 1535. A trading post was established here by the French, 250 years ago; and this was the last place yielded by the French to the English in 1760.

It is a magnificent city, with fine wide streets in the new part, handsome shops and churches, a magnificent park called Mount Royal Park, and fine university buildings and grounds; but in the lower parts of the town, where all the large warehouses are, the streets are irregular, and badly paved.

Montreal is 400 miles from New York, and 2,750 miles from Liverpool—300 miles nearer Liverpool than New York—though not even the capital of its own province—Quebec—Montreal exerts great political influence, and it is the seat of the chief banks, trading corporations and universities. The French mainly occupy the east quarter of the city, the dividing line being St. Lawrence main street.

Capital Cities—Old and New

Ottawa, the Federal capital of the Dominion of Canada, is picturesquely situated at the junction of the Rideau river with the Ottawa. It has an immense timber trade, with huge saw-mills at every turning, and the city, like Quebec, is divided into upper and lower towns, standing on high ground, overlooking a fine valley, and contains many fine residences and large hotels, stately government buildings

overshadowing all. Parliament, and were National Public Library. It is made of wood; most beautiful being of the same decorative in shape, and very fine marble staircase Rideau Hall, the residence of the Governor-General, is two miles from where the present lives. We had the house and also Rideau. I loved Washington it self worthy of the place been raised, and are handsome and best. Like Washington come the scientific presence of the during the sitting of cultivated and fast strange, but in all countries the governments sit, aspect to other towns try it is very marked Glasgow for instance tish government, or even London, from then from the Bank different. Then return are now assembled if you could put your City of London, you the civilized world, a nessed lately during plause.) I should say received and despatching one question, "What land do?" than ever it town or city in all the old city of London called the Queen City and of British stock, and has made great progress in a few years, there being all at right angles. of Lake Ontario and importance.

The grain elevator huge dimensions, they Canada and America, either to railway companies. They are farmers, for here they and sell it at the market company to whom they they are paid cash down being the owners of the ous times to different could not quite find ed elevators—I asked, they are not lifts; the ground floor by the fa pipes and stored on at times there are as many more; so you see they it were carried up by moving at least four but by suction all the

In Winnipeg the wide, and the population is flat, being only 750 the country all round capital of the province known as Fort Garry 1871 was only 100 people the confluence of the boine river, and for me of the Hudson Bay co most interesting convey and when I told him Englishman, he said, Brixton road, and can brushes" (loud applause) said he bought a piece shop, which he then took in the country; but of the city, being only town hall, while his house is quite half-a-n streets extend for miles here remark that Winnipeg accommodate a million will become the greatest in the very centre, John, and 1,500 to Victoria the Alexandra hotel dian Pacific railway. best hotels in Canada, peg will become the g for all the railways in become the great eng Canadian Pacific railw 170 miles of train-yard here we visited the gr eight storeys high, a wheat grain at the ing through 100 paces into 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, at the bottom into bag way trucks. We only work, the whole being ery, with the exception bags. The total capacity longed to this company and the daily turn-out rels of flour.

Before leaving the its associations, let me gentlemen, a story that time when scarcely any way thither. The sto farmer arrived at Win ment offered him as m plough round in a day ing taken two or three walked over the best p was practically clear ploughing at 6 o'clock a very wide sweep with o'clock in the evening told him that the day