

PATRIOTIC SERMON

By Rev. W. T. Herridge, M. A., D. D., of Ottawa.

AN ELOQUENT AND PATRIOTIC DELIVERANCE.

Britons Have Ever Shown Courage in Battle.

"PEACE HATH ITS VICTORIES NOT LESS RENOWNED THAN WAR."

The following sermon was preached in St. Andrew's church in Ottawa, on Sunday, March 11th, 1900, by Rev. W. T. Herridge, M. A., D. D. His text was "Forward!" Ex. 14: 15.

He said:—This is the word of command which repeatedly echoed through the ranks of ancient Israel, which inspired the great world-marches in their march of conquest, which has been heard about the din of battle in many a well-fought field; which is whispered in the deepest instincts of our own nature, and addressed by God Himself to the conscience of those whom His hands have made. It is the one word which rings through Canada today: "Forward! Forward!"

I shall not need to apologize, therefore, if I address myself to those who form but a small minority in this congregation. They are with me now in this temple of peace. They must soon forth to the rude alarms of war. We hope for their triumphant return to our shores, but God alone knows what will be left behind. It is most fitting that an hour of solemn worship should precede the tasks of our soldiers as they set out for the field of strife, and that we should unite in the prayer that God may bless them.

In speaking to them, we are in a certain sense speaking to all. They are our representatives, chosen by us to stand the front of our nation, to carry the banner of the Maple leaf into the forefront of the fight to bear witness of our patriotism and our attachment to the British Empire and to prove that, throughout this wide Dominion there beats a heart of sympathy with our fellow subjects in every quarter of the globe.

I welcome you therefore my brothers, to this service. Your presence shows that you recognize, in some degree at least, the claims of religion upon you. If you are Presbyterians, you have no reason to be ashamed. You are being equipped for your work by a distinguished Canadian who is himself a Presbyterian; and whatever the denomination, you will find that your church need not fear comparison with any other in the land. I should be sorry to see anyone a bigot. Christianity is greater than ecclesiastical organizations and perhaps there never was a time in our history when we needed to tell this truth more than we do today. But the best way to learn respect for the views of others is to keep some respect for your own. If anybody chooses to strut about in boastful arrogance, or to assume airs of fancied superiority, let him do so. The proof of worth is in actual accomplishment, and no need to be too sensitive about his dignity if, by the grace of God, he has the real power. You inherit from your forefathers the courage of convictions, the love of truth, the habit of thinking, the perseverance of moral earnestness. See to it that you keep these virtues, and hand them down unimpaired to future generations.

You are shortly to set out for the field of war, and if your military service is to be enthusiastic, you must be persuaded that the quarrel is a just one. Great Britain has not precipitated this strife. There are even those who think she has been altogether too patient. Every reasonable measure has been taken to prevent an appeal to the sword. But, while the principles of Christianity, when once illustrated as they ought to be, will make us to cease unto the end of the earth, no Christian nation can stand idly by and allow any of its subjects to be denied the full privileges of freedom. This is no war of mere conquest. If it ends that way, so much the better for the future of Southern Africa. But it is primarily a war in defence of justice and liberty. It declares that Britain will not tolerate any form of oppression; that Dutch and Highlander, black and white, must have equal shares in civil rights and civil responsibilities; that neither avarice nor intrigue, nor pious cant shall afford excuse for

THE BLACK HORDES OF EVIL. I charge you, therefore, to be temperate in all things. The military career is one of peculiar temptations, and has been apt to run at times into riotous excesses. But, believe me, that if you wish to be in the forefront in conquering others you must first learn to conquer yourselves. Keep in control every base appetite and passion. Reserve your strength only for noble enterprises. Refuse to listen to any voices which would corrupt your conscience and degrade your manhood. In a word, show yourselves Christian soldiers, banded together in the chivalry of righteousness.

For need you bid farewell to civility, though you are about to take part in the fortune of war. Our religion has destroyed at least some customs of barbaric strife, and has given to battle, when it cannot be otherwise, a more unselfish purpose and a more exalted dignity. You will be quick as others have been, to aid your friends, but you can learn also without malice to comfort your enemies. They, too, feel the meaning of loss and pain, of desolation and broken hearts. And, therefore, though you are pledged to resist their injustice, and to give a good account of yourselves where danger is thickest, that need not prevent you from rejoicing when the conflict is over, nor from cherishing the hope that the hands now lifted in mutual destruction may yet be clasped in a friendship which not only preclaims the prestige of Britain, but adds a new and indestructible link in the chain of the world's brotherhood.

I can well understand the eagerness with which you desire to take your part as soldiers of the Queen. You may be too late for defensive operations, but you will not be too late to join that advance which is destined to sweep through the whole Transvaal. Kimberley is relieved; Ladysmith is relieved; the foe retreats from British territory; Mafaba Hill is amplified. But much yet remains to be done, and if the famous strategists still prolonged by an obstinate which does not know when it is beaten, you will be in time to see the British flag waving from the citadel of Pretoria, and to join the shout of triumphant gratitude at the advent of a new and better peace.

Whatever be the tasks committed to you, discharge them faithfully and well. You have reason to be proud that you bear the name of one whose magnificent patriotism has few parallels and whose unselfishness others have been to remember as long as Canada endures. A hard life has equipped many of you for the trials of fatigue and peril. You are capable of rendering a service which is peculiarly your own. Advance, then, to the post of duty, your breasts animated by a sense of noble comradeship, and by an ardent love of freedom.

"Be just and fear not. Let all who ends thou aim'st at be thy country's, Thy God's and truth's." And when the war is over, the Strath-

con Horse will not only be honored by every loyal Canadian, but will take its place in the roll of Imperial renown, and be enshrined in the hearts of future generations.

But while you are fighters, itself is of less importance than the results which are bound to follow it. Britain has been compelled to use stern means, but the end in view must never be forgotten, and, perhaps, no one can now predict how far-reaching its issues may be. We live in the midst of events which are making history. In best years, the taste of the motherland, the new dignity is given to the character of this Dominion. Our patriotic sentiment has proved itself no empty thing. Just as a little while ago we joined in the Empire's Jubilee, so now we are with our fellow subjects everywhere in loyal defence of national rights and liberties. While, therefore, we may regret the circumstances which called forth this display of enthusiasm, and the costly sacrifice of life involved in it, we cannot but see that it will bring us as a people more closely together, that it will rebuke the violence of fanaticism and answer once for all the indifference which would advocate a policy of selfish isolation, that it will add a fresh lesson to the annals of our country, that it will afford to the world an impressive spectacle of the wide-spread strength and love which honour the name of Britain.

There are those who tell us that our Empire has reached its zenith of influence, and now slowly sinks towards its decay. But unless we wholly fail to learn the lesson which these stirring times are teaching us, unless we learn a false pride and forget the God of battles, I believe, that a new century will be ushered in by achievements far more glorious than any which grace the annals of the past. The objection of the sword alone is passing away. Courage is no longer regarded as a mere brute quality, but as a virtue which belongs to the best type of manhood. We must now have some noble purpose, or it will fail to enlist the noble sympathies. And even when it is waged in the interests of justice, the duties which follow it afford the real test of a nation's resources. We are sprung from stalwart sires, and these stirring times may be a rose, let no one touch him with impunity. But "peace hath its victories not less renowned than war." To the English-speaking race the Providence of God has committed no small part of the duty of advancing the civilization and Christian principles of the world. Here we are divided by distance, by local interests, or even by varying modes of government, reason and conscience alike suggest an Anglo-Saxon federation of pure and upright hearts, a federation which is not satisfied until it has made right more easy and wrong more difficult everywhere, until it has given a new impulse to human progress, until it has subdued the demons of vice and avarice, and brought back to mankind the angel-presence which does not fear to look into the face of the Father who is in heaven.

Forward, then, my brother, to the tasks assigned you. Forward in the self-respect which will stoop to nothing that degrades, in the loyalty which does not shrink from sacrifice, in the truth which purifies the temple of the soul. Forward as Canadians who go forth amid the fervent prayers of your fellow-countrymen, and upon whom are turned the eyes of all the world. Forward as one battalion of an Imperial army, fanned at the storm-centre, united in a common cause, and prepared for every hazard until the final victory is won. Forward under the flag which, in spite of Britain's faults and failings, has avenged the oppressed and succoured the helpless which in its track has bestowed the noble of exaltation and intolerance, which has compelled the despot to relax his grasp, which has secured to every honest man his share in an inheritance of glorious rights and liberties, which, though it is an old flag, is being always renewed by the growth and the multitude of sincere and grateful hearts. Forward! Forward! and may God be with you all!

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DEEPLY DUG TO POSSE' ENGLAND.

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PREMATURE TEST.

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SUFFERING WOMEN.

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