

The Valour of Ignorance

A Plea For Canadian Defence.

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Extracts from an address delivered on 9th March,
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As a general introduction, I feel bound to say that I take for granted that you value patriotism above commercialism, and Imperialism above continentalism. That your flag and nationality are in fact and in truth the most sacred thing in life to you, and for which each and every one of you would be ready to fight if it should be necessary to do so. Unless this is the spirit of our people, then Canada is indeed in a hazardous position, for unless such a feeling as this is really in the hearts of all of us, we shall not listen with sympathy to a demand for that self-sacrifice, which alone can keep alive in the world the nationality of any people.

I was much struck by an address by Baron Kikuchi of the Imperial University of Kyoto, given last year at the University of Toronto. The address was on the "Japanese Spirit," which through all the changes in that old and wonderful people they have preserved unimpaired. Their "Spirit" is virtually personal self-sacrifice for the benefit of the State, or, as defined by Baron Kikuchi, "Reverence for the Imperial house or dynasty, and reverence for their ancestors;" the practical carrying out of which includes "inuring the body to hardships and privations, and cultivating discipline, coolness and self-control."

What this national "Spirit" is capable of, was well exhibited in the late Russo-Japanese War. Can we say that this is the "spirit" of our people? Is it not—sad to relate—the opposite, and much more as described in a sermon by