

THE KINGDOM OF CANADA¹

I AM very glad to have an opportunity of addressing the Canadian Club, but I find much greater gratification in the fact that there is a Canadian Club to address. Effects do not occur without causes, and it is interesting to inquire into the meaning of the somewhat sudden rise of these clubs, of this phenomenal desire for the study of our political situation, of this simultaneous eagerness for enlightenment with reference to the problems that confront us.

To my mind the explanation is very simple. Canada has commenced to realize herself, to believe in herself, and to recognize that for her, too, there is a principal part to play upon the stage of the world. Canada has become conscious of the feelings and aspirations and the strong strivings of strenuous manhood, and, on the other hand, of the utter impossibility of full expression and assertion in mere colonial status. Divine discontent (the necessary pre-condition of all improvement), in regard to her political semi-servitude, has taken strong hold upon Canada, and she is taking stock, and extending the figures, and considering where she now is, and what her future is to be.

In my opinion that is the meaning of these clubs; not social clubs are they, nor political, but student clubs; meetings, at short intervals, of serious men for the purpose of helping one another to resolve those problems of national life which are now pressing themselves upon us. Every true Canadian has

¹The substance of the above article was delivered as an address to the Canadian Clubs of Toronto and Ottawa in 1904.