

kind. (Loud applause.) He thought the York Pioneers might well be called the Canadian Pioneers—the pioneers of Canadian industry, enterprise, freedom and civilization. The object of the Society in giving an intelligent intensity to those principles that constituted the loyalty of the people of Canada, in preserving the traditions of the country, and in uniting in one centre the various element of scattered light which were connected with the earliest rays of its opening history, were works well worthy of the defenders of the liberties of this country. The very foundation of the York Pioneers was a spirit of loyalty. What was that loyalty itself? It was no other than an attachment to the institutions and the laws of the land in which we live, and to the history of the nation to which we belong. It was not merely a sentiment of respect of the country to an individual, or even to the Sovereign. If it gathered around the person of the Sovereign, it was because that Sovereign represented the institutions of the people, the overshadowing laws of the people, the real and essential freedom, and the noblest development of the spirit of the people. Loyalty in its true essence and meaning was the principle of respect to our Sovereign, the freedom of our institutions, and the excellencies of our civilization, and it was therefore a feeling worthy to be perpetuated by the people. Shakespeare—that great apostle of human nature—has said:

"Though loyalty, well held, to fools does make
Our faith mere folly; yet he that can endure
To follow with allegiance a fallen lord,
Does conquer him that did his master conquer."

Loyalty is, therefore faithful to its own principles, whether the personal object of it is in prosperity or adversity.

"Loyalty is still the same,
Whether it win or lose the game;
True as the dial to the sun,
Though it be not shone upon."

Hence, says Lord Clarendon, of a statesman of his time, "He had no veneration for the Court, but only such loyalty to the King as the law required." True loyalty is, therefore, fidelity to the constitution, laws and institutions of the land, and, of course, to the sovereign power representing them.

Thus was it with our loyalist forefathers. There was no class of inhabitants of the old British-American Colonies more decided and earnest than they in claiming the rights of British subjects when invaded; yet when, instead of maintaining the rights of British subjects, it was proposed to renounce the allegiance of British subjects and destroy the unity of the Empire, or "the life of the nation" (as our American neighbours expressed it, in their recent civil war to maintain the unity of their republic), then were our forefathers true to their loyalty, and adhered to the unity of the Empire at the sacrifice of property and home, and often of life itself. Of them might be said, what Milton says of Abdiel, amid the revolting hosts:

"Abdiel, faithful found;
Unshaken, unseduced, untiried,
His loyalty he kept."

Our United Empire Loyalist forefathers "kept their loyalty unshaken, unseduced, untiried," during seven long years of conflicts and sufferings; and that loyalty, with a courage and enterprise, and under privations and toils, unsurpassed in human history, sought a refuge and a home in the wilderness of Canada, felled the forests of our country, and laid the foundation of its institutions, freedom and prosperity. (Loud applause.)

Canadian loyalty is the perpetuation of that British national life which has constituted the strength and glory of Great Britain since the morning of the Protestant Reformation, and placed her at the head of the freedom and civilization of mankind. This loyalty maintains the characteristic traditions of the nation—the mysterious links of connection between grandfather and grandson—traditions of strength and glory for a people, and the violations of which are a source of weakness and disorganization. Canadian loyalty, therefore, is not a mere sentiment, or mere affection for the representative or person of the Sovereign; it is a reverence for, and attachment to, the laws, order, institutions and freedom of the country. As Christianity is not a mere attachment to a bishop, or ecclesiastic, or form of church polity, but a deep love of divine truth; so Canadian loyalty is a firm attachment to that British constitution and those British laws, adopted or enacted by ourselves, which best secure life, liberty and prosperity, and which prompt us to Christian and patriotic deeds by linking us with all that is grand and noble in the traditions of our national history.

In the war of 1812 to 1815—one of the last and hardest-fought battles, was that of Lundy's Lane, which we meet this day, on this historic ground, to celebrate—both the loyalty and courage of

the Canadian people were put to the severest test, and both came out of the fiery ordeal as refined gold. Nothing could be more disgraceful and unprincipled than the Madison (I will not say American) declaration of war against Great Britain; which was at that moment employing her utmost strength and resources in defence of European nations and the liberties of mankind. That scourge of modern Europe—the heartless tyrant, but great soldier, Napoleon—had laid prostrate at his feet all the governments of Western and Central Europe, England alone excepted. To destroy British power, he issued decrees first at Berlin, in 1806, and afterwards at Milan, excluding all British merchandise from French ports, and prohibiting the use of British commodities throughout France and her dependencies, under severe penalties; searching neutral vessels for British goods, confiscating them when found, with the vessels carrying them; interdicting all neutral vessels from trading with any British port; declaring all the ports of Great Britain and of her dependencies to be in a state of blockade, though at the very moment the English fleet commanded the seas. These Napoleon decrees violated the laws of nations, and affected the national rights and independence of the United States, as well as of the European nations; and had not President Madison and his war faction been in league with Napoleon, they would have resented it, instead of silently submitting, and thus becoming a party to it. In self-defence and retaliation upon the tyrant, Napoleon, Great Britain, in January, 1807, issued Decrees of Council, declaring all French ports in a state of blockade, and declaring all vessels of neutrals liable to seizure which should engage in trade with France; and as the Napoleon decrees had declared all vessels of any nation liable to seizure which had touched at any British port, the English Orders of Council, to counteract this decree, declared, on the other hand, that only such ships as had touched at a British port should be permitted to sail to a port of France. The American President, Madison, being in league with the French usurper against Great Britain, made no remonstrance against the Napoleon decrees of Berlin and Milan, but raised a great outcry against the counter English Orders in Council, and made them a pretext for declaring war against Great Britain. But President Madison not only thus leagued with Napoleon to destroy British commerce, but also to weaken the British army and navy by seducing some ten thousand British sailors and soldiers to desert on board of American vessels, where they were claimed as American citizen sailors.

England had always claimed the right to search and claim her deserting sailors on board of foreign vessels, and that right had never been disputed by the United States, until now, under the teachings of Napoleon. But though there was no occasion for the exercise of such a right in a time of general peace, the exercise of it was then a matter vital to the existence and strength of the British navy; but, under the promptings of Napoleon, President Madison made it not only a subject of loud complaint, but also an additional pretext for war. Yet, to keep up some appearance of fairness, but in secret intrigue with Napoleon, the Madison administration issued a declaration to open commercial relations with either of the belligerent powers that should first rescind the prohibitory decrees or orders. In May, 1812, Napoleon rescinded the Berlin and Milan decrees so far as concerned the United States, but had the unparalleled meanness to antedate them thirteen months, and even apply them to 1810, dating them April, 1811, in order to play into the hands of his American confederates. Within a month after Napoleon had rescinded the Berlin and Milan decrees—June 23rd, 1812, the British Government cancelled the Orders in Council so far as related to the United States; but five days before that, namely, the 18th of June, President Madison declared war against Britain, and then when, six weeks afterwards, he was duly informed of the cancelling of these Orders in Council, on which he had professed to declare war, he refused to ratify an armistice agreed upon between Sir George Prevost and General Dearborn, until the British and American governments could confer with a view to prevent any further prosecution of the war. Madison and his faction of British haters and war adventurers naturally supposed, that as Upper Canada consisted of 70,000 inhabitants, and as the British troops were all engaged in the deadly war with France, except guards of regular soldiers in the Canadian garrisons, our country would fall an easy prey to his ambition; Great Britain would be humbled at the feet of Napoleon, and France and the United States would then divide the power and commerce of Europe and America. But British and Canadian loyalty, patriotism and courage defeated their dark designs against the liberties of mankind. Even the patriotic and intellectual part of the American people denounced this unholy intrigue between their own President and the bloody usurper of Europe, and this causeless war against Great Britain. The Legislative Assemblies of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey and Maryland condemned the