

Hail to the Duke and Duchess!



THE WORLD-CIRCLING TOUR OF THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF CORNWALL AND YORK brings them now to the Canadian shores. The people of the Dominion bid them hearty welcome, and with that welcome they mingle the expressions of a firm and abiding loyalty to the Empire and to its Sovereign. It is a loyalty not only based upon sentiments of personal esteem for the Queen who reigned so long and so well, and who reigns even yet in the memory of her devoted people; a loyalty not only to the King, and to his children, who are now our guests and who in all probability will in the course of time be called to sit on the throne of their ancestors, but a loyalty whose foundations are deeply and permanently laid upon liberty and justice, secured by a just and wise administration to every British subject, whatever may be his colour, his race or his religion; to men of many climes, but over whose homes floats the common flag of the empire of progress and order.

Enjoying the full measure of British citizenship, exercising all the privileges of self-governing people, secure in the protection of a world-wide Empire, the people of Canada, from ocean to ocean and from the Great Lakes to the distant regions of the frozen North welcome to their midst the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, the representatives of the reigning family, the representatives of the Sovereign power, the representatives of Imperial unity. Since leaving the shores of England, almost six months ago, they have been tossed on many seas and their feet have trodden distant lands. They have stood beneath the frowning heights of Gibraltar and the fens of Mahan; the land of the Pharaohs greeted them, and the millions of India, speaking through their rulers, black and white, once more assured the Imperial power of their unswerving devotion. In the Greater Britain of the Southern Pacific they took part in an event that marks an epoch in the history of a great British community. Australia, long divided among jealous rival colonies, now stands before the world a united nation, independent and strong in herself and yet bound to the mother land by ties that are stronger still. South Africa, over which the dark cloud of war has cast its shadow but saved to the Empire by the courage of Britain's sons, was visited by the representative of Britain's King, and then, with faces turned homeward, the Royal party sailed away to Canada. It has been a triumphal tour; not an imperial triumph wrung by force and fear from an unwilling people, but a triumph of peace and affection, the spontaneous welcome of a free people to the representative of constitutional authority.

At the Diamond Jubilee, three years ago, the Britain beyond the seas sent to the Imperial capital their representatives to lay before the aged Queen the assurance of their devotion to her throne and Empire, and now the Crown sends its representatives to these widely scattered British peoples to thank them for their sympathies, to acknowledge the services rendered, even at the price of blood, and to strengthen the bonds of kinship and common citizenship that bind us all together—a people of many races and varied tongues but Britons all. It is in that spirit that the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York have come to Canada, and in that spirit Canadians will receive the visitors.

Forty-one years have elapsed since the father of the Duke of Cornwall and York visited this country. Those fleeting years have brought many changes. The great majority of those who welcomed the Prince of Wales have passed away, but they leave left descendants as loyal as themselves, who will give the son as hearty a welcome as was given the father. In 1843 British North America was a divided country. Canada consisted of only two provinces: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island were separate provinces, jealous of each other and of the central colony. A few settlers dotted the banks of the Red River, but the great West was unpeopled and unknown, except to the trader and the fur trader. A form of government was maintained throughout the vast region by the Hudson's Bay Company, and on the Pacific Coast a similar state of affairs existed. The population of what is now the Dominion of Canada scarcely exceeded three millions. Our railways had not two thousand miles of track; today their total mileage is nine times that of forty years ago; the ship channel of the St. Lawrence was still shallow in many places, and our canal system was very incomplete. We had no national capital, and the Prince of Wales laid the cornerstone of that stately pile that towers in imposing beauty upon the hill of old Bytown.

Montreal had a population of only ninety thousand, and the assessed value of her real estate was not quite twenty-five million dollars. Today it is five times that amount, and her population practically 250,000. Ontario was then

Western Canada, and only one line of railway extended from Montreal in that direction. It was only four years before the Prince of Wales came that the first railway train had proceeded from Montreal to Toronto, and it was in the year immediately preceding the visit that the railway was completed as far westward as the shores of Lake Huron. Such in brief were the British North American possessions visited by the Prince of Wales in 1843. The Canada to which his son now comes is a united Dominion, washed by the waters of both oceans and stretching from the international boundary to the far North, out of the unknown West has been carved the Province of Manitoba, and further west are the Territories rich in wheat lands and soon to be admitted into confederation as sister provinces. Across the continent has been carried the great railway, a band of steel which unites all parts of the Dominion and forms the long-sought way to the Orient. In the far North, regions whose existence was unknown when the Prince of Wales came to America, have been explored, and from their frozen soil have been extracted millions of dollars of precious metal. On every hand there has been great advancement in all that concerns the material side of life.

We have also developed a broader national spirit and have become a united people, whose heritage is half a continent, and whose future promises much. In that future none can see a time when the ties binding us to the mother-land will be loosened or severed, but, on the contrary, that future seems to lead Great Britain of Europe and the Greater Britain that encircles the globe up to the higher planes of a united empire, whose various parts will be animated by one spirit and guided by a common policy in the pursuit of peace and prosperity. To such a future our people look forward; never were they so thoroughly Canadian, and never were Canadians more British. Such is the Canada that welcomes the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York; a nation evolved out of the scattered colonies that welcomed King Edward VII. as a youth forty-one years ago.

