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Presentation to

Earl Haig

EX-SERVICE MEN ADDRESSED BY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

At a mass meeting of ex-service men, held in the C.L.B. Armory Tuesday night Colonel Nangle, on behalf of the G.W.V.A. presented Field-Marshal Earl Haig with a silver car-bou, mounted on a pedestal and an exact replica of some of the Newfoundland memorials to be found in France. Earl Haig was accompanied by Countess Haig, his Excellency the Governor and Lady Allardice, Colonel Talbot, D.S.O., M.C., A.D.C., and Capt. Donald Simpson, B.E.S.L. At the door of the armory, the party was met by a guard of honor under Capt. G. C. Byrne, M.C., and then conducted to the platform by Colonel Nangle, President of the G.W.V.A.

Colonel Nangle opened the meeting with a splendid address of welcome to the Commander-in-Chief. After reading several messages of greetings received from various parts of the Empire, the presentation took place. Earl Haig, on rising, was accorded a great ovation. He first sincerely thanked the veterans for their excellent presentation which he much appreciated and would dearly prize as long as he lived and then delivered the following address:

ADDRESS BY F. M. HAIG.

I am most grateful to you for your warm and friendly welcome. It is a very pleasant thing, after the successful meeting of the British Empire Service League in London last year, to be able to come here to this equally successful meeting and to find the Newfoundland branch of our League in so flourishing a condition. It is most encouraging to me. It makes me realise too, by my own personal experiences, how much the British Empire Service League can do to make British ex-service men feel at home all the world over, and to make them realise wherever they may be that they have good friends and willing helpers among their old comrades of the war.

I shall be able to take back a very heartening report to our London Headquarters, one that will spur all there to yet greater efforts to establish the League as a real and lasting success. We have, no doubt, big difficulties to contend with in the vast distances which separate our various branches from each other. But we have enormous opportunities also and what you have done here itself shows that it is worth while to make an effort to turn those opportunities to good account.

The first step, undoubtedly, is the formation of a strong and really representative association of ex-service men in each constituent part of the Empire. That has largely been done, though there is still room for improvement in numbers. Every ex-service man ought to belong to the local branch of the ex-service men's association of his country, not only for his own sake but for the sake of his old war comrades. That at any rate should be our ideal, for the stronger each association is the more powerfully it will be able to help ex-service men in its own country, and the more useful will be the British Empire Service League to the ex-service men of the Empire as a whole.

You know yourselves whether your own ex-service association is yet as strong numerically as it could be and ought to be, and I am quite sure that you will all do your utmost to increase its membership. I can honestly say that the British Legion at home since its creation by the amalgamation of the various separate ex-service organizations previously existing, has been of real value to the ex-service men of the home countries and in matters of employment, pensions and the like has been able to exert a powerful influence for the benefit not only of its members but of all ex-service men.

But the ideals of ex-service men's organizations, as I understand them, are not limited to helping ex-service men, whether members of their own respective associations or resident of their own respective countries. We try to look further afield, and to find a way of helping all ex-service men to whatever part of the Empire they belong. That is where our British Empire Service League comes in. That should be one of the first objects of its endeavour.

There are plenty of directions in which this object can be pursued. We can arrange for a helping hand to be given to ex-service men newly arrived in a country that is strange to them. We can discuss together, whether in conference or by correspondence, many matters of general concern to ex-service men wherever they may be. We can compare our different experiences and learn from each other's successes or mistakes, and when we have found a case of real hardship or a good cause we can combine to exert for a worthy end the pressure of the combined opinion of ex-service men, not of one country alone, but of the whole of our vast Empire.

And our opportunities for Empire service go still further even than that. We are ex-service men, but we are also citizens of the Empire, and by keeping alive among ourselves the remembrance of our old comradeship we are helping to strengthen the bonds of affection and understanding which keep our Empire together.

In the happiest and most united of families mistakes and misunderstandings must at times arise; but the more means a family has, whether it be a family of individuals or of nations of keeping in touch and preserving old associations, the less frequent misunderstandings will be and the more easily they will be reconciled when they do occur. It is our part, as members of the League, to preserve our understanding of each other, and as old comrades to make allowances for mistakes at times are made.

We on our side of the Atlantic cannot forget the splendid way in which you came to help us when we most had need of help. No doubt, the fortunes of Newfoundland and of Canada and of all the other Dominions were at stake as well as the fortunes of the British Isles; but we like to think, and indeed we do believe, that there was something more in it than that. That material considerations were not all that swayed you; but that you felt also the pull of kinship and the influence of like ideals. We rejoice that there should be strong ex-service men's associations here on this side too. We of the British Legion send greetings to you here in Newfoundland and to our comrades also in the great neighbouring Dominion of Canada. We remember the old days when Newfoundland men fought in a British Division; when Canadian Divisions made the Vimy Ridge a part of the history of their Dominion, and in defence of Arras in the Spring of 1918 stood between the Empire and defeat.

We remember these things with gratitude, and our comrades with affection. We hope that they will always serve as a bond between us, and that our lasting comradeship will help to bridge the waters that lie between our countries. In matters of Empire, we ex-service men stand for prevention rather than cure. It is easier to avoid quarrels than to patch them up again when bad blood has once been made. That is the reason why a policeman is always a more popular person than a detective. The one keeps the peace before mischief is done. The other only comes on to the scene after the crime has been committed. We want to be the policemen of the empire, to keep peace among our family of nations and a proper brotherly feeling among their individual members.

And our ideals go further still than that. We believe that we ex-service men, who know what war really is, though we will not shrink from it in a just and worthy cause, yet can be and should be a powerful influence working for world peace. For this reason we seek to keep touch also with the ex-service men of other countries, who fought beside us in the Great War. Particularly are we anxious to preserve our old associations and friendship with the ex-service men of the United States of America, many of whom passed part of their time of service in the British area in France.

I am not likely to forget the American troops who, of our pure zeal for battle, joined the Australians in the successful attack on Hamel in July 1918 without orders, and left it to me to explain to the American Command how it was that they became involved! None of us will forget the splendid American Divisions who took part with us in the great victorious advance which started on the 8th August, 1918 and ended three months' later in the triumph of the Allied cause.

A new page has been written in the history of American and British relations. We who fought each other, have fought together, not for self-interest, but for principle and for a faith in the future development of the human race which we share in common, and which is the joint responsibility of all English-speaking peoples.

And to you, ex-service men of Newfoundland, I bring from the British Legion our earnest appeal that as you helped us manfully in battle you will help us now in the work of peace for which the British Empire Service League has been called into being. It is not so long since we were in fact comrades in arms. We realised then, under the stress of great events and in the face of a common danger, that all parts of our great Empire stood to fall together; we are comrades, still, as your reception of me to-day has clearly shown. Let us never forget that comradeship. It has become something that is part of ourselves; born of common suffering and hardship, and confirmed by common sacrifice. Let us make it part of the spirit of our several peoples so that they may always stand together, shoulder to shoulder as we did, for the defence of our common heritage and the peace of the whole world.

GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS.

His Excellency the Governor was next called upon and he made a brief address. He had not come prepared to speak, but he was much impressed with the address of Earl Haig, and he hoped that every ex-service man present would remember and profit by the address. In this country things are not exactly as they ought to be, with regard to the ex-service men's association. The membership of the G.W.V.A. has not been as large as it might be. His Excellency felt that it is now time for all ex-service men to come together and place themselves in their right position. The war veteran is an important man in

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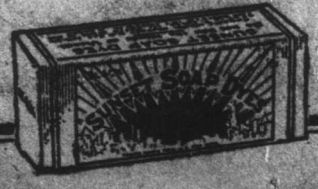
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