

From the first moment of my arrival in Canada I have been the enthusiastic and whole-hearted friend of the Canadian Club. I have been in love with the Club because it has responded to the higher requirements of my being. It carries the badge of no party. It wears the livery of no sect. It is as free as the fresh air that comes down to us as an invigorating tonic from the slopes of the Laurentian Mountains. Its sole and only object is to promote the well being of the Canadian nation. The fact that every week during the winter the men and women of your Canadian cities and towns are addressed by the best speaker that can be obtained, who has a disinterested message to deliver, is a security, the value of which can hardly be overestimated, guarding you against the curse of any long continuance of sectional and provincial narrowness. The Canadian Club is thus a protection against the blighting influence of what my friend Mr. C. J. Rhodes used to call the influence of the "parish pump politician." It promotes the outlook of the wider view and inspires the higher patriotism. For these reasons I have never to my knowledge during the last seven years failed in making use of any opportunity to help the Canadian Clubs of Canada. (Applause).

Now, gentlemen, this being my view of the value of the institution of the Canadian Club, it may amuse you to hear that I was once asked by an American friend of mine—not unpleasantly, but in all good faith—what contribution Canada had ever made to Anglo-Saxon civilization, and I replied, equally pleasantly, "Why, that is the very question which John Morley is reported to have asked with reference to America." And I went on to explain that Canada had contributed to Anglo-Saxon civilization the institution of the Canadian Club, that this institution might be regarded as a church of civic and national righteousness. Now, gentlemen, just as the Canadian Club appears to me to be a church of civic and national righteousness, so the glorious institution of the British Empire appears to me to be the religion of righteousness itself. And that is the reason why I have never been ashamed to confess myself a fervent Imperialist. Gentlemen, I am not a lawyer. I do not look into the niceties, the exact shades and nuances of the word Empire or enquire whether it suggests the rule of the people by another, for the subordination of an inferior to a superior authority: all I know is that the words "the British Empire" stand for the aggregate of the self-governing dominions, the colonies and the dependencies of King George V, and that that great aggregation has my undivided allegiance.

I was told the other day by a friend of mine who was summing up to me my governor-generalship, "The only criticism that has been ventured upon you as Governor-General, is that now and then you show a little too clearly that you are a little too Imperial." Well, I am not aware that I have sinned in that direction. I have been strictly constitutional from the first day of my governor-generalship; I will be until the last. Gentlemen, if I love from the very bottom of my heart the Empire to which we all belong, if I find my greatest pleasure in giving myself up to it heart, body and brain, nerve, muscle and soul, it is because I regard the British Empire as the most