

Canada Among the Nations

A Dream of Confederation Which Came True—and the Results

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It is the first business of Canadians to think about Canada. It is the mark of a good Canadian that he takes the Canadian point of view, sees with Canadian eyes, cherishes Canadian ideals, and helps to make Canadian dreams come true. If Canadian problems are not solved by the intelligent and thoughtful judgment of the people of Canada they will remain unsolved, or their solution will not make for the welfare of Canadians or for the prestige of Canada among the nations.

It is the first duty of the people of Britain to set themselves to solve the British problems. That is their business, not ours. So, too, with Australia, and New Zealand, and South Africa, and every other self-governing part of the Empire. We have all been charged to "think Imperially." A few years ago "thinking Imperially" was the mark of a progressive mind, as thinking about the "oversoul" was in the previous generation, and thinking about the "referendum and recall" is to-day. But Imperial thinking is a very vague and vagrant exercise for those who have never thought clearly and to definite purpose on national affairs and on local problems. If the strength of the wolf is the pack, the real strength of the pack is also the wolf. Empire is a reality, strong and enduring, only in so far as the component parts of what is called Empire are free to develop each in its own way and to its own ideal of citizenship and service. It is for this reason I start out with the affirmation that the first duty of Canadians is to think about Canada.

WHAT CANADA HAS DONE.

Canada has already done something in world politics which gives her a place among the nations. We are sometimes told that Canada has nothing to her credit. We are assured that whatever Canada has she owes to Britain. Canada has no army and her militia is only sufficient for her own needs, and for a navy we have only a debate in Parliament. Because of all this we are admonished to be humble and not to think of Canada more highly than we ought to think.

My answer to all that lofty talk is this: The facts of history make it plain that were it not for Canadians there would be no Canada, and were it not for Canada there could have been no British Empire.

What is Canada? It is a confederation of all the Provinces of British North America into one national unit, governing itself in all Canadian matters, controlling its own revenues, choosing its own national policies, and yet an integral part of the British Empire and loyal to the person and throne of the British sovereign. And every one of those elements in Canada's status as a self-governing Dominion within the Empire is the result of Canadian choice, of Canadian statesmanship and of Canada's deliberate action.