

THE STORY OF CANADA

A Lecture at Leeds by Colonel Harding.

Arousing English Interest in the Greatest of all Colonies.

Speeches by Mr. Talbot Barnes, Mr. E. A. Hirst and Mr. J. Leach.

(Leeds Mercury, March 1.)

On Saturday evening Colonel Harding delivered a lecture on "The Story o' Canada," to a numerous audience, in the hall of the Leeds Industrial Cooperative Society, Albion street. The chair was taken by Talbot Barnes. The

The lecturer began by pointing out that year by year Great Britain was becoming more and more a world power, rather than a European power; that her foreign policy was becoming increasingly influenced by ultra-European considerations; that her foreign policy was becoming a colonial policy. In these circumstances it was necessary that Englishmen should know more than many of them did of the parts of which our great empire is composed, and he had selected for his subject "The Story of Canada," in order to arouse an interest, especially among the younger members of his audience, in that vast dominion, which stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the cluster of great lakes to the Arctic seas; a dominion in which we see the interesting spectacle of one and a half millions of French-speaking people dwelling together under the British flag by the side of three millions of energetic men of British descent, both forming part of a great colony, which, though to some extent overshadowed by the prosperity and stupendous growth of the United States, remains loyal to the British crown, and proud of its share in the historic traditions of the empire. Leading back his audience some 400 years, the lecturer pictured the Old World, cradled in the Mediterranean, on the eve of the discovery of America by Columbus, and showed how that event had displaced the centre of gravity of human affairs. Comparing it with the modern revelations of Africa, he traced the stages by which North America was explored, and specially the expeditions of Cabot, of Cartier and of Champlain to the St. Lawrence. In connection with the early difficulty of colonization, he described the races of Red Indians and the way in which the severity of the northern winter had influenced their habits and made of them hunters rather than agriculturists. Reference was made to the terrible feuds in which the early French settlers became involved with the Indians, and how in the long struggle between the English and French colonists, the Red Indians, taking part with one or other, became the "hell hounds of savage war," filling the record of those days with many a story of outrage and hideous massacre. The lecturer paid a passing tribute to the self-sacrifice and devotion of the early Jesuit missionaries to the Canadian forest, and pointed out how many of them had helped the great explorers, and especially LaSalle, whose discovery of the Mississippi he compared to Stanley's tracing of the course of the Congo. Passing on to the growth of the New England colonies, and the jealousies and contests of the rival French and English colonists, he pointed out that their struggles were but an incident in the long war between England and France for world-power, which left us in 1815 with a big debt indeed, but also with the empire of India and the dominion of Canada, the greatest colonial power which the world has seen. In some detail the lecturer sketched the campaigns initiated by William Pitt in 1758-9, leading to the capture of Fort du Quesne and Louisburg, and to the siege of Quebec, and to the memorable action fought out on the Heights of Abraham, which he described very clearly and eloquently, as the result of which the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxons race on the North American continent was for ever secured. After a passing allusion to the period of civil strife and the recognition in 1783 of the independence of the United States, he pointed out how the United Empire Loyalists, who at the close of the war forsook all to retain their connection with the British crown, were, in their devotion and self-sacrifice, the Pilgrim Fathers of British Canada. Briefly reviewing the period from the passing of the Quebec Act, with its wise and equitable charter of liberties to the French Canadians, in 1774, and the separation of Upper and Lower Canada in 1791, to their legislative union in 1840—not forgetting the gallant and victorious resistance of the United Empire Fathers and their sons to American invaders in the war of 1812—Colonel Harding showed how, step by step, with the adhesion of the maritime provinces, there had been constituted the great dominion which the wisdom and energy of Canadian statesmen had bound together by the Canadian Pacific railway, by which the prairie provinces were made accessible, and east was linked to west. Reference was made to the great possibilities of Canada, and the lecturer observed that within twenty, or at most thirty, years the huge growth of the population of the United States would absorb the whole production of United States grain, and therefore that the vast corn-growing area of Canada must in time become one of our main sources of supply, while the exhaustion of the forests of Maine must increase the value of Canada's inexhaustible store of timber. In conclusion, Colonel Harding asked what would be the political future of Canada. Would it be in the direction of independence, or absorption in the United States, or of closer connection with the British empire? He believed the latter course the most probable and also the most consistent with the present indications of Canadian feeling and with the best interests of the colony and the mother country. If the future depended on the Canadians it depended also upon us. Sentiment played an important part in human affairs. He hoped his hearers would appreciate the loyal feelings of Canada, and the sacrifices she had made

for the imperil connection. In the midst of their local politics they must remember their brothers across the seas. It was by fostering the feeling of brotherhood of the British race all over the world that would be brought about the great ideal of imperial federation, in the words of Tennyson: "One imperial whole, One with Britain, heart and soul, One life, one flag, one fleet, one throne."

Colonel Harding's lecture was listened to throughout with keen attention and frequently applauded with great heartiness. At its close the chairman expressed in warm terms his sense of the lucid and eloquent manner in which Colonel Harding had brought before his audience a true story, having all the interest of a romance. He said that the more we knew of the heroic deeds of our forefathers who had founded the Canadian dominion, the more convinced we must be that to think lightly of the possibility of the separation of Canada from the empire would be as disgraceful as to think lightly of the separation of Lancashire or Kent from England. He referred to the paramount importance of retaining the command of the sea, and touched on the need of obtaining the co-operation of the great colonies in maintaining the unique position which the united British empire enjoys for defense purposes.

A vote of thanks to Col. Harding for his admirable lecture was moved by E. A. Hirst, who pointed out that something like a repetition of the wonderful growth of Canada from small beginnings might quite conceivably be witnessed in the future history of the Europeans in South Africa.

J. Leach, in seconding the vote of thanks, dwelt upon the great value of knowledge about the colonies such as that imparted in Col. Harding's lecture, and of a more general acquaintance with and study of the conditions of life in the colonies, and the advantage which they afford the mother country in the way of markets for her products and fields for the expansion of her people.

The vote of thanks to Col. Harding was passed with acclamation, and an acknowledgment of the services of the chairman concluded the proceedings.

Of the lecture, the Mercury editorially remarked: "Col. Harding's admirable lecture, which we report elsewhere, on 'The Story of Canada,' brings many of its historical character, which must operate powerfully to strengthen the movement for drawing the colonies into more intimate, and so more securely permanent relations with the mother country. It is impossible for any Englishman to contemplate without a thrill of grateful pride the record of the gallant achievements of those who first won Canada for the British flag, or of the devotion and self-sacrifice of the United Empire Loyalists who clung to that flag despite the blunders of statesmen and the failures of generals, and defended it triumphantly in 1812 against heavy odds, when we were too much pressed elsewhere to help them. Those memories are sacred, and ought to be carefully cherished, and so long as they live any thought of separation must ever be intolerable."

THE BRITISH COMMONS.

Mr. Gully Elected Speaker in Place of Hon. Mr. Peel.

London, April 10.—The house of commons met at noon today and proceeded at once to the election of a speaker to succeed Hon. Arthur Wellesley Peel, resigned. Samuel Whitehead proposed the name of Wm. Court Gully, liberal, whose nomination was seconded by Augustine Birrell, Sir John Mowbray nominated, and John Lloyd Wharton seconded the nomination of Sir Matthew White Ridley, conservative. Gully was elected by a vote of 238 to 274 for Ridley.

Mr. Gully expressed his thanks to the house for his election and his appreciation of the honor and great responsibility which they had conferred upon him.

Sir William Harcourt and Mr. Balfour congratulated Mr. Gully on behalf of their respective parties and the house adjourned.

Discussing the nomination for speakership A. J. Balfour, leader of the opposition, said the government's support of Mr. Gully was without precedent and, he believed, dangerous to the future efficiency of the house. Mr. Gully, he said, was unknown as regards the work of the house, having neither taken part in its debates nor served on any of its committees.

Sir Wm. Harcourt severely criticized Mr. Balfour's bad example in making question of election of a speaker a matter of party discussion.

C. P. R. WASHOUTS.

(Daily Sun, 10th.) Several washouts occurred on the C. P. R. near Hoyt station yesterday afternoon. Although none of them were serious traffic was interrupted for some time. The train from Fredericton, due here at 7 o'clock last night, was unable to pass Hoyt till an hour early this morning. It will arrive before daylight. The afternoon express for Montreal was held up some hours. All damage had been repaired at 2 o'clock this morning, and no further trouble is anticipated.

The Boston express which left here last night was held at Hoyt until early this morning.

The Sun's Woodstock correspondent telegraphed last night as follows: A landslide between Newburg and Hartland has blocked the trains. The freight from the north had not got through at 8 o'clock this evening. The express went up to Newburg and returned with the passengers from the north. It is expected that the track will be cleared tonight. Rain has fallen through the day and the river is rising.

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ARMENIA'S WOES

Evidence of Some of the Actual Butchers Themselves.

Massacres Carried out with Every Circumstance of SICKENING Horror

Which Might be Conjured Up by the Disease Fancy of a Delirious Devil.

(London Telegraph, March 26.)

In continuation of the letters already published—as distinguished from the more swiftly arriving telegraphic despatches from the same hand—we have received by post the following fourth postal communication from our special commissioner, and now give its following interesting contents.

One afternoon at the close of last December I called on the high imperial butchers who had heretofore held out hopes of my being permitted to visit Sassoon and make an independent inquiry into the truth of the alleged massacres there. He admitted me at once into his sanctum, and, after our usual salutation, asked, "Have you not received the visit of an official yet?"

I replied in the negative. "I promise you that he will not call later than tomorrow morning, if you can kindly wait so long." "But does your highness give me ground for hoping that?" "The official will tell you everything in detail. If I can be of any help to you over and above this, I shall be very pleased by your letting me know. I am deeply interested in your work; indeed, we all are, for we know that you care only about truth, and it is our interest to have the truth known as widely as possible. This is why we proposed a commission." I thanked this wise and courageous minister, and withdrew with great misgivings.

Early next morning a visitor was announced who declined to send up his card. "Say I am an official of the sublime porte come on urgent business," he told the waiter. I came at once, whereupon he smilingly introduced himself, mentioning his business but not his name. "H—Pasha has sent me to communicate the decision arrived at respecting your request to visit Sassoon. The government, you see, was highly delighted at the idea of an impartial and independent investigation into the calamities set afoot. What we want is that truth—" "Yes, I feel quite sure of that, and I am here for the purpose; am I to be allowed to go further?" "Well, you see, there is cholera down there just now, and if you—" "Don't trouble about the cholera. I am willing to run the risk for the sake of truth, you know." "Then there is another important consideration, which is this: Your presence as the representative of an influential journal would be objected to by the powers interested, and then—" "But suppose I obtain the permission of the powers interested?" "That would hardly be sufficient, even if you succeeded, which is highly problematical. In any case your presence would be afterwards held to have interfered with and possibly vitiated the inquiry of the delegates, to whose report we look forward with perfect confidence, for what we want is, as you know—" "Yes, I know all that. Then am I to understand you that permission has been refused me to visit Sassoon?" "Well, it has been found desirable that no one but members of the commission should write upon the subject before the official inquiry is terminated." "Do you really suppose, then, that that refusal will prevent me from writing?" "But you cannot write without collecting facts, and—" "Very well, then, listen to this, with or without permission. I am about to start for Kurdistan and I mean to get there. There I shall institute a commission of my own, the results of which will be published long before, and heard of long after, the report of the delegates has been issued. Stop me now if you think you can." The official of the sublime porte here besought me to reflect upon the excellent reasons—the "motivations," as he termed it—given for the refusal. "In you personally the government has perfect confidence, and we are quite sure that, truth being your object, you will necessarily render us a service, even if you did carry out your threat. But, of course, a private commission is an impossibility. That we cannot allow. I would rouse up the people to riot, rebellion and lawless acts." "Very well, I repeat what I said. I am going to Kurdistan to get at all the facts, and I shall have a commission of my own to obtain them. You understand, my commission will assist yours in the matter of obtaining evidence, so that you may rely on the facts becoming widely known." The official of the sublime porte smiled a sickly smile and retorted, saying that he would report my words to the pasha, who might see fit to make an exception in my favor.

That conversation took place at the close of last year. Since then I have fulfilled my promise to the letter. I have travelled slowly through Armenia, staying in towns, villages and hamlets, attentively mixing with all classes of the population, more especially with the poorest of the peasants, learning their wants and grievances, their hopes and their fears. I have lived with them in their underground houses, which are lighted up with such pale rays of the sun's light as can pierce the "greasy" pane with which the hole in the roof is covered up. I have courageously partaken of their food, living on madzoon or cutted sheep's milk and bunches of white cheese threads, which are carried about like skeins of ordinary thread, and are sprinkled with water before being eaten; bread of the color, consistency and occasionally the taste of brown paper—it is made of about the same size and shape as the lid of an average coffin, and pieces are torn off it and employed to wipe the knives and forks and plates by the host and his guests; and, lastly, a handful of butter made of buffalo's milk and much foreign matter, which adds nothing to the flavor. I have slept by the hearth alongside of neighboring horses, lowing kine, bleating sheep and goats, and cackling hens. To all

of these I took kindly. We got to know and like each other. It was only to the creatures of a smaller size and baser habits that I took objection. I have been the guest of priests, bishops, monks and merchants and "murderers"—if the conspirators be indeed worthy of that name. I have taken part over and over again in the festivities of the people have heard their popular songs sung, have seen them dance, have attended their weddings. I have accompanied fugitive persons from the ruined villages and hamlets of Sasseco who sought for an asylum in Russia, and I have been instrumental in inducing them to go back to give evidence before the delegates, so as to aid the Turkish government to acquire a complete knowledge of the facts. I have been believed for days to be lying ill in a house in one village which was closely watched, whereas I was far away, in another, taking down the evidence of eye-witnesses of the scenes enacted at Sennik and Dalvork. I have spent long pleasant evenings with blood-thirsty Kurds of the most cruel tribes. I have bribed the servants and watched the movements of certain pashas and officers for reasons which it is not yet judicious to put forward. I established a commission of over fifteen men to inquire into the Sassoon story, and many other stories which are closely akin to it. I established a private courier service between Moosh and the Russian frontier. I encouraged and induced timid fugitives to go before the delegates and tell all that they knew. I gained the friendship and took the evidence, the photo and the blood-stained dagger of one of the Kurds who slaughtered the women and children of Gellyegoozan and Dalvork.

This is the accomplishment of the first part of my promise. I now proceed to fulfil the second, and I propose to lay before the British public the evidence of some of the best witnesses, who were themselves present at the massacre, and who were in many cases wounded, and in all cases deprived of wife, children, parents or other relatives. A volume and a very large evolute at that, would be needed were I to give even a digest of the statements of all the witnesses. I shall give the evidence, as far as possible, of witnesses who played a prominent part in the occurrences which they describe, and whose names, ages, native places and photographs I am liberty to publish. Whenever feasible I took the portraits of the people whom I examined, and never without first having obtained permission to publish them. Even the Kurds have willingly granted this request of mine. This mass of evidence, which may throw perhaps as much light upon the question of the Sassoon massacres as the report of the delegates can, will, I doubt not, carry absolute conviction to the minds of the most judicial, nay, of the most prejudiced. It is not one-sided; it is composed of statements by Armenians, Turks and Kurds—the three parties interested—and made at various times, in places hundreds of miles apart, and confirmed by well-established facts, which cannot be reasoned away, and by documents which are in my possession. But the stories told, and told on the most acceptable evidence, are, to put it mildly, blood-curdling. If they had been told by Tertullian, in one of his vivid descriptions of the torments devised by the devil in hell, we might shudder and make some allowance for the unbridled habits of imp and demons. But the things seem incredible when narrated of human beings, even though the people in question be Turk and Kurd. And yet they are true, too true.

A massacre was, indeed, perpetrated, the like of which has never been heard of or imagined. Planned with all the ingenuity with which Mohammedans thirsting for slaughter are, exceptionally gifted, it was carried out with every circumstance of sickening horror which might be conjured up by the diseased fancy of a delirious devil. It is not merely that many innocent men, women and children were butchered, one after the other, one in presence of the other, the boy on his father's back, the wife in the arms of her husband, who felt the impact of the bayonet, the resistance of the body, the severing of sinews and tissues, and then the convulsive shudder which told him the burden he held in his arms was inanimate. It is not that this massacre went on hour after hour, from the rising of the evening star until the dawn, in the villages of Dalvork, Shenik and Gellyegoozan. These things are bad—but not the worst. Even the circumstances that the soldiers were ultimately driven to the work of butchering, and tried to vary its monotony by devising new and amusing methods of slaying; that the hardened Kurds themselves occasionally protested against the needless torture, and protested in vain that for days after the streams that water the villages could not be used to allay the thirst of the soldiers' horses; that these circumstances, horrible though they sound in English ears, are ten times worse than other details, the worst of which can never be put into words. The warriors of Islam took a special delight in playing with tender young children, who, looking up at the blood-stained butchers, closed their great, wondering eyes and hid their innocent little faces in their mothers' bosoms. The soldiers would snatch one of these little ones roughly, strike the little hand that clasped the mother's, catch it by its soft, silky, raven-black hair, raise it aloft, and, dancing it a moment before the mother's eyes, cut off its head with one swift stroke. That stroke, no doubt, was not always effective, but the defender of Islam usually tried again, and seldom flung a half-killed infant to the ground to be trampled to death. They are all excellent swordsmen, these intrepid Turkish regulars, and take a pride in proving their skill. In Sassoon and out of Sassoon. Just fancy such a picture as this! "I bet you ten tshbrecks I'll cut clean through the necks of four Christian puppies at one stroke of my scimitar!" exclaimed one valiant wearer of the livery of the Commander of the Faithful. "Done!" cry half-a-dozen of his comrades. And the trial is made at once. Four Christian children—or puppies—are pulled out of their mother's arms, to the accompaniment of her shrill cries, heartrending screams and piteous prayers, and the infants are then tied one on top of the other,

head upon head, neck upon neck. Then the faithful sons of Islam, heartily enjoying their well-earned relaxation, make a circle round the weeping children, and the daredevil with his sharp scimitar approaches, touches the neck of the topmost just to measure his stroke, then raises his trusty steel, and, with a swift sweep and a deft backward movement, produces a rivulet of blood, which runs along between the quivering little trunks and the bloody heads which have rolled on to the thirsty earth.

This sounds, perhaps, untrue—the faith of a licensed Armenian, gifted to an unusual degree with the mythopoeic faculty! Would to Heaven it were! True, I have heard it from many Armenians, some of whom were eye-witnesses. But I disbelieved them. It was only when I heard it from the actual butchers themselves that I ventured to give it credence. And I shall give not only the name, age, address of one of my chief witnesses, but his photograph and his entire statement. "But why worry about such things?" said one of the witnesses to me. "These are not by any means the most horrible. If there was to be a massacre, why not perpetrate it thoroughly, swiftly, surely if you will, but as a mere measure, why mix it up with hellish amusements? Why not kill your men and women before burying them? Why take an unnatural delight in the low tones of despair, the last gasping cry, the soul-chilling sight of the gashed and mutilated creatures who still breathed, and tried to move a human heart to pity. A horrid-headed old man kisses the hand uplifted to cleave his skull; a woman hiding her terrified child flings herself on the ground, and embraces the cold, dead-stained leg of the warrior; a boy, prompted by his parents, beseeches the Moslem to save his life and he will embrace Islam; a girl begs them to do what they will with her, only to spare her the horrors imposed by her mother or father! Suddenly a woman drops on her knees and implores the wearers of the sultan's livery to give her her life—for 't is not one but two lives that you are taking—and Allah Himself will reward you richly for this mercy shown a woman in my state." This was new to the servant of Allah, and I: "Done, done." The wager being accepted, and the stakes pulled out, then follows the terrible incident which I have already telegraphed to you and which is too monstrous to need or to bear repetition.

This, too, is a fact. I will give all the circumstances that accompanied my witness, etc., in one of my next letters. But it is not at all the worst of the facts I have. Unfortunately, it is the worst that can be put into English and announced to English readers. But I cannot help repeating "even that is not by any means the worst!"

In order, therefore, to help the reader realize the significance of the Sassoon massacre, I propose to treat it merely as an episode in a much larger and more terrible story which I shall endeavor to narrate on the basis of convincing evidence. The Sassoon atrocities are not identical with the Armenian question; they form but one of the countless incidents of it, any one of which ought to have its scene laid in hell. To make amends for the cruelties perpetrated in Dalvork, Gellyegoozan, Shenik, Mount Anok, etc., and to pass on contented to be as wise as to paint the spots that announce the presence of typhoid fever, and then regard the disease as radically cured. The Armenian question has been wisely or unwisely raised by diplomatics and governments, and now it will have to be threshed out and satisfactorily settled before public opinion will allow it to be finally dismissed. That is why I propose to put the English public in a position to group all the leading facts of the question, and to form an opinion of their own as to the merits of the case.

The three conflicting factors in the Armenian question are the Kurds, the Turks and the Armenians, and it is meet that something should be said as to the characteristics, traits, the ideals and the potentialities of each of these peoples. Then it will be time enough to allow them to portray themselves in their acts and undertakings.

BROOKLYN STRIKERS.

Those Who Participated in the Late Riots Sent to Penitentiary.

Brooklyn, N. Y., April 10.—Judge Moore, in the court of sessions today sentenced a number of prisoners who had been found guilty of rioting during the recent street strike on the trolley lines. The sentences were: Geo. Washburn, cutting trolley wires one year and three months; Matthew Reynolds, throwing stones through car windows, one year; Chas. Olders, throwing a stone at a car on January 20th, one year; Henry Kelly, throwing a stone at a car, one year; Jas. Green, throwing a stone at a car, one year; Chas. Battles, throwing a stone at a car, one year; John King, putting down a guide wire of a trolley pole, nine months; Harry Howard, attempting to pull down a wire on January 25th, six months; John Brown, obstructing a car by spilling ashes on the track, six months; Louis Deitsch, placing a stone on a track, sixty days; John Everson, attempting to break wires, sixty days. They were all sent to the penitentiary.