

Ambassador Bryce on the Future of Canada



OME surprise was felt by the large gathering which greeted Ambassador Bryce at the first annual dinner of the Canadian Club of Montreal, at the Windsor last night, that he did not make the slightest reference to the mission which has brought him to Canada, says the Montreal Gazette of February 26. It had been hoped that on this, his first appearance before a large and representative gathering he might make some allusion to the matters in abeyance between Canada and the United States, whose settlement he hopes to bring about. But as the British representative at Washington proceeded with his speech the audience realized as they had not done before that Mr. Bryce fully realized his responsibilities to the British Empire, and was far too worthy a representative to make any such diplomatic mistake as to give premature utterance to anything pertaining to such unsettled matters. His only reference to the relations between Canada and the Republic was the expression of hope that for all time the present friendly relations would exist between the two, despite the small differences that were bound to arise between two countries which were neighbors along a frontier extending over three thousand miles.

"What We Owe to Posterity," was the subject of Right Hon. Mr. Bryce's address, and in it he took a lofty plane of the duty of every citizen to the state, not only to achieve present prosperity, but to grow healthy traditions which would elevate the nation, and cause future generations to look back with pride and reverence to those who had laid the foundations. In fact there was a striking similarity in general tone between the address of Mr. Bryce, of Great Britain, and that recently given here by Mr. Bryan, of the United States. Both took the same lofty idea of duty to the state, and both expressed the same confidence for the future.

A noteworthy point in Mr. Bryce's speech was his reference to the prominence of Canadian affairs at Washington. In fact, he said, he devoted almost three-quarters of his work at the American capital to Canadian affairs, inasmuch that he felt himself as much the Ambassador of Canada as that of Great Britain. Further, Mr. Bryce said that this increasing importance of Canadian relations at Washington had caused him to determine to visit the Dominion as often as he could, in order to discuss Canadian affairs at first hand with the Governor-General and the ministers of the Crown, as well as to get in touch with popular feeling, as he was doing on his present visit.

This statement was greeted with loud cheers.

Mr. Bryce predicted a brilliant future for Canada, and said that he was convinced that within the lifetime of many today this country would have a population of fifty millions, while Montreal, as its metropolis, would number one and a half millions of people. It was, he said, therefore, the duty of every citizen to work to lay the foundations of the future nation so that a high standard of public and private virtue would be demanded.

The dinner was a notable event, apart from the speech of Mr. Bryce. There were three hundred guests forming a thoroughly representative gathering of every one of the best elements in Montreal's commercial and educational life, the only notable absence being that of any prominent representatives of political affairs. The banquet hall presented the unusual spectacle of ladies gracing the feast, the officers of the Women's Canadian Club sitting at the table of honor with the leading guests, while the members were given seats immediately behind them on the dais. A still greater novelty was furnished when Lady Drummond made an excellent speech.

Chairman Gerin Lajoie briefly introduced the guest of the evening, remarking that it was most fortunate that the Canadian Club at its first annual banquet should have as its guest, not merely the representative of the King, but Mr. James Bryce, who was as famous in the fields of literature as in diplomacy. He then briefly sketched the work of the Canadian clubs and the career of Rt. Hon. James Bryce, and concluded by calling upon the assembly to drink to the health of this guest, which was honored with great enthusiasm and the singing of "He's a Jolly Good Fellow," in which assurance the ladies took a melodious part.

Speech of Hon. Mr. Bryce

When the British Ambassador rose to reply, he was greeted with three vigorous cheers, and given a reception that made it impossible for him to be heard for several minutes.

In opening, Mr. Bryce thanked the gathering for their warm welcome, in which he recognized not merely personal kindness, but a sentiment of friendship and affection toward the country from which he came as a messenger of British affection for Canada. It was a particular pleasure for him in his first address in the metropolis of Canada to appear before a club devoted to work for the expression of Canada's unity. (Applause.)

These Canadian clubs he regarded as a remarkable sign of the change that had come about in Canada during the past 30 or 40 years. He had known Canada slightly 38 years ago, and no one then could have imagined that within so short a period public opinion would have so developed as to make such a movement possible. The great advantage of the Canadian clubs was, in his opinion, the opportunity they offered for the advancement of a

common settlement of Canadian patriotism apart from party or other affiliations. For years past he had been struck with the progress of these clubs, and the way in which they voiced the best sentiments of the nation, and particularly with the way in which they had acquired a sort of crown when they had added the women's Canadian clubs to their order.

"It is with peculiar pleasure," said Mr. Bryce, "that I see this gathering graced by the officers of the Women's Canadian Club. This, however, I take it, is not a sign that they, like their very ardent and excitable sisters in England, intend to enter the field of party politics, but rather that they are interested in this great movement for the bettering of the conditions of the people."

Proceeding, Mr. Bryce warmly congratulated his hearers upon the progress Montreal has made since he last saw it 38 years ago, and remarked with what joy he as a patriotic citizen of the Empire witnessed the growth of this, its eldest daughter. It was, he said, only within the past twenty years that the people of Canada had begun to realize the vastness of their resources, since the building of a great transcontinental railway had opened up the fertile West with its illimitable possibilities.

He had, however, been as much struck in Canada as in the United States with the way in which the nations were using their available capital. Part of this capital in Canada was in mineral resources, which could be exploited to the fullest extent without danger. But there was another vast capital asset which might become depleted, and then would require great care and work to restore—the national forest domains. As an admirer of the magnificent forest wealth of Canada, he earnestly hoped that serious thought would be taken for their preservation and replacement, so that posterity one or two centuries hence might receive as ample heritage as the people of today. This, he declared, was one of the things Canada owed to posterity. (Applause.)

Tribute to Montreal

As to Montreal, Mr. Bryce anticipated a great future for the city. While the prairies of the West might ultimately gain a preponderance of the national population, it was certain that such a growth must be attended by a corresponding development of the great cities of the East, and particularly Montreal, as the greatest Canadian port and distributing centre. In fact, he considered that this city was certain to hold with regard to Canada the same

position that New York, Philadelphia and Boston held for the United States, while as New York was the great financial centre of the States, so he regarded Montreal as destined to continue the financial heart of the Dominion.

In fact, Mr. Bryce predicted that within the lifetime of many of his hearers Canada would have a population of fifty millions, while Montreal was bound to increase in proportion, so that within the next sixty or seventy years it might reasonably be expected to have a population of a million and a half. A great responsibility rested upon the men of today, who were engaged in building up this great city of the future.

There was a time, said Mr. Bryce, when, to the shame of Great Britain, it was necessary for the mother country to assure the younger nations of the Empire of the interest and affection with which it watched their progress, but he was glad that that time was past, and it was not necessary for him to assure Canada of the proud pleasure with which the old and venerable, but still active mother country looked upon the growth of this stately daughter, in whose veins throbbed the same life blood that had built up the centre of the Empire. Imperial conferences were no longer necessary to tell how anxious Great Britain was that all her great sister states should take their place and part in the responsibility and dignity of the future greatness of the Empire. (Applause.)

Reference to His Mission

"If I ever had any doubt of the importance of the work of the British Foreign Office," said Mr. Bryce, "that would long ago have been dispelled since during my year at Washington as ambassador fully three-quarters of my work has been occupied with the affairs of Canada. Every day I feel that I am even more the ambassador of Canada at Washington than of Great Britain. (Applause.) Therefore I have felt it one of my first duties whenever Canadian questions became important and there was a sufficient number of them to make it desirable, and when I could be spared from Washington to go to Canada and confer personally with your Governor-General and his ministers, as well as make an acquaintance with the people themselves, as you have so kindly given me the opportunity to do tonight. (Loud applause.) I have felt that necessary to the proper performance of my duties at Washington, and I may candidly say that for this once duty and pleasure coincide."

The Anglo-Russian Agreement

Englishmen who view broadly and dispassionately the working of our national institutions, debates such as that which took place on Lord Curzon's initiative are a convincing proof of the advantages to the Empire of the House of Lords, says the London Times.

There is no representative assembly in the world where large subjects of abiding interest to no small part of mankind are discussed with equal knowledge, statesmanship, and patriotism. The spirit in which such subjects are handled there is that of men who are conscious of their responsibilities and earnest in a desire to discharge them for the welfare of the Empire they help to govern. The Peers, like all English politicians, are party men, but when they are examining matters of lasting moment to the state in its external relations, they know how to subordinate all other considerations to the good of the commonwealth. The speech which Lord Curzon delivered yesterday was in many respects a remarkable performance. It was singularly brilliant and effective in form, it was marked by wide and intimate knowledge, and it bore the unmistakable stamp of earnestness. None of our statesmen knows more of the greater problems of our Eastern policy, and none feels their burden and their attraction more acutely. But with all his knowledge and all the breadth of his imagination, the criticisms which he made upon the Agreement with Russia are in one sense narrow criticisms. Many of them are of undeniable weight when viewed alone, and several of them, when so viewed, probably do not admit of any satisfactory reply. But Lord Curzon did not, perhaps, altogether shake himself free from the limitations of an expert, be he the greatest of experts. Though he himself described this treaty as the most important and the most far-reaching which we have signed for fifty years, and as an instrument destined profoundly to affect the future of three great Asiatic countries, to set a permanent mark on the relations between Great Britain and Russia, and to exercise an almost inexpressible influence upon our dominion in Asia, he did not treat it as from the first we have maintained that it ought to be treated. He did not endeavor to gauge its scope and purport and its probable effects as a whole. He did not point out what will be its probable bearing upon the general situation in Asia and, still less, upon the general situation in Asia and in Europe.

The prolonged efforts of our diplomacy, to which Lord Curzon referred, to bring about an arrangement with Russia in the East are the best proof that such an arrangement was eminently desirable. Both parties in the State have worked to bring it about, and both will, of course, exert themselves faithfully to carry out its provisions. Lord Curzon contends that

it is specially open to criticism because it is not an offensive or defensive alliance. That contention does not seem to us to be sound. It is, he says, a detailed arrangement of the specific rights, claims, and interests of the signatories in particular regions. That is quite true, but it is also true of the Anglo-French entente. That agreement was also, in the first place, a "business arrangement," and a business arrangement open to objections from our side, as well as from that of France, on certain points. But just because both nations did not dwell jealously upon these points, but wisely resolved to regard it as a whole and to make the best of it, it has rapidly become the basis of a close and lasting friendship between them. There are points in all the agreements which make up the arrangement with Russia which are open to objection. We have commented upon them more than once when discussing it. We do not see that Lord Curzon has added to their number or shown them to be more serious than had been supposed. The concessions which we have made to Russia in Persia have been very great. We may acknowledge that it is not easy to reconcile all of them with the words of the preamble to the Agreement. But could we have expected to come to an agreement at all without making them? Lord Curzon contrasts our former position in Persia with what it is under the treaty. The contrast is unpleasant enough. But what had our position become in that country before the treaty, and what would it have been there today, had the treaty not been signed? The "traditional position" of which Lord Curzon speaks had not disappeared when he visited Persia some fifteen years ago. But it had vanished for ever when once we refused to give her the financial assistance for which she asked, and so enabled Russia to add, to the power of the sword which she already possessed there, the power of the purse. The military preponderance of Russia, not only all along the north frontier, but practically right up to Teheran, is a factor in the situation to which Lord Curzon seems hardly to attach sufficient weight. On the other hand, as Lord Fitzmaurice was able to show, he greatly underrates in his speech the strategic advantages which we derive from the provisions that secure the Northwest frontier of India from the danger of being turned through Seistan, and Baluchistan. Surely that advantage was worth making some concession for? Can it be shown that the concessions we have made for it are too great?

The real danger in the East was that, with all these questions unsettled, this country might have continued to pursue a course of mere aimless drift, varied by irritating and futile protests, while other governments were carrying out in those regions their well-considered schemes. None knows better than Lord Curzon how great that danger has long been, and none, we fancy, knows better how greatly it has been increased by that new development of political unrest amongst the Oriental peoples of which Lord Cromer spoke in an interesting maiden speech. Is it not desirable, at a time when, as Lord Cromer said, the spirit of nationality seems to be taking root in the East, for the European nations who bear the burden of Empire there to avoid, so far as possible, jealousies and rivalries amongst themselves? Those jealousies and rivalries added enormously for long years to the difficulties of Lord Cromer's task in Egypt. It is something to have got rid of them, as we trust this treaty has got rid of them, over a great part of Asia. So far as concerns what is, perhaps, the least satisfactory feature in the treaty, the omission, namely, of formal stipulations as to the Persian Gulf, we have the clear and precise assurance of the Government that the declaration made by Lord Lansdowne holds good. The policy which he laid down is a national policy, equally accepted by both parties in the State. That is now known to all whom it may concern, and the knowledge is the best guarantee that our rights there will be respected.

"And, without any party feeling, which, of course, I have not," continued Mr. Bryce, "I wish to say that it has been a great pleasure to me to be brought into personal contact with a mind so active, so powerful, so flexible, with an intelligence which is capable of so quickly taking a point and covering the whole horizon it is necessary for you to survey, as that of your prime minister, Sir Wilfrid Laurier. (Applause.)"

"I feel it an honor to take part in endeavoring to adjust any questions that from time to time may arise between you and the United States, as such differences must arise—but differences which I hope will always be adjusted with the aid of good feeling and good sense on both sides. And I am happy to say from my experience of the past twelve months that the good feeling in the States towards Canada is greater today than it has ever been before. And I am sure the same feeling prevails here towards the United States. It would be a great misfortune if it were otherwise between two nations speaking the same language, and called upon by Providence to be helpers and friends in the common work of civilization."

Proceeding, Mr. Bryce discussed the question of what the Canada of today could do for Canada as it was going to be in the future. He first dwelt with its future in the field of literature and science. With such a common stock as the two great nations of Britain and France, and their literary and scientific achievements and traditions he regarded as inevitable that in the fullness of time Canada must produce great things, while as a Scotchman, he modestly suggested that the strong infusion of Scottish blood in Canada would be no disadvantage. He, however, never attempted to argue with Scotchmen that Scotland was a great nation—they always admitted it. (Laughter.)

Mr. Bryce warmly congratulated the Canadian people on the evident interest they took in literature and science, as exhibited in the foundation of such universities as McGill and other provincial universities, even in the new western provinces. It was not the nations which had acquired wealth most rapidly that had achieved lasting fame, but rather those which had given the greatest contributions to the intellectual wealth and enjoyment of the world. The greatness of a nation was ultimately measured by what it had done for posterity, the arts, poetry, literature, learning and science.

"Ladies and gentlemen, every Canadian can help Canada. He can help the Canada of the future by setting and maintaining a high standard of citizenship for this country now. And no good work that is ever done in this world can be lost." (Prolonged applause.)

As to Canada's political future, Mr. Bryce said that entirely depended upon what was done in the present, while the country was young—and this applied to all new countries. Success in maintaining a high standard of public life depended upon the traditions of a people, which were to the nation what habits were to the individual, and just as habits were formed in the young person so traditions were formed in a young nation.

"The moral I have learned after 27 years of public life in England," said Mr. Bryce, "and particularly in Parliament, is that if England is and has been successful in her public life—as I hope you think she has been—(loud applause) it is due to the maintenance of those noble traditions she has inherited from the preceding centuries. That is what makes the efficiency and dignity of our Parliament, because everyone feels that he is bound to live up to what Parliaments have been before, and the people expect that they shall live up to the standard that has been set them, and would visit with condemnation anyone who fell below that standard."

"It is our tradition that the best men should wish and strive to enter public life, should give the best of themselves to their country's service, and feel that in that service they must attain as high, exact and scrupulous a sense of honor as they would exercise in any part of their private life." (Loud applause.)

Briefly, Mr. Bryce said the maintenance of such a high standard of public life depended upon the example of the few and the vigilance of the many; that those at the top should set a high example for the present and the time to come, while the people, with mind fixed upon what had been attained in the past, should expect of their public men that their virtue should be at least equal to that of those who had gone before them. Canada's public men today should consider that they were working for a long future, when the Dominion would be one of the great nations of the world, and so work that those to come would look back to this day of comparatively small things with reverence and pride for those who had laid the foundations of the mighty structure that would yet arise. (Applause.)

"That is what should make us feel we owe a debt to posterity," concluded Mr. Bryce. "We are now making traditions. You are today forming habits for Canada which in some day generations will become traditions, which, if they are, as I trust they will be, high and noble traditions, will make the life of Canada of the future a worthy successor of the life of England has led till now."

"Ladies and gentlemen, every Canadian can help Canada. He can help the Canada of the future by setting and maintaining a high standard of citizenship for this country now. And no good work that is ever done in this world can be lost." (Prolonged applause.)

Lady Drummond's Remarks

J. S. Brierley, one of the vice-presidents, gave the toast of "Sister Clubs," to which Lady Drummond responded on behalf of the Women's Canadian Club of Montreal, in a speech in which both wit and humor had their part. She expressed appreciation of the most kind and brotherly way in which the Canadian Club of Montreal had taken the little sister into the family, and said it was largely owing to the help and encouragement of the former that the latter had sprung, as it were, into existence full grown. When the tender age of the little sister was considered—not three months old until March 12—(laughter)—her self-possession and popularity, it might be said, without fear of being considered partial, that she was an infant phenomenon. (Renewed laughter.) This showed that the women of Montreal were awakening to the fact that it was not only men—and aldermen—who had larger duties of citizenship to perform. She gave credit to the change in public sentiment in this regard which had been brought about by the local councils of women. She thought that they should congratulate one another—men and women—because of certain marked tendencies in contemporary thought, one of which was that the merely conventional and artificial barriers which had so long kept men and women from companionship were rapidly breaking down. Each needed the other, and the world needed them, and they should stand hand in hand for all time in patriotic things. (Long and loud applause.)

Col. Wood, of Quebec, also responded to the toast, saying that the Canadian clubs were to the Dominion very much what an intelligence department was to an army—the nerve through which, to the extremities of the country, was carried the highest development of its public spirit and intellectual life. He then went on to speak of the tercentenary celebration of the founding of Quebec, and referred to some of the stimulating historical facts which inspired such a celebration, saying that every cent of each subscription would go direct into the battlefields' park scheme, no expenses being deducted, and nothing would go in fireworks.

Mr. Lee responded on behalf of the Canadian Club of Toronto, and brought greetings and congratulations from over 1,700 members of that body. The Canadian Club movement, he said, was having, and in the future was bound to have, a very important influence on the welfare of the nation.

Dr. Walker, of St. John, N. R., and Mr. Chisholm, of Halifax, likewise replied to the toasts, on behalf of their respective clubs, after which "Auld Lang Syne" was sung, followed by "God Save the King," and the first annual banquet of the Canadian Club of Montreal became a matter of history.

BALLOON ACROSS ATLANTIC

Jacques Faure, the celebrated French aeronaut, told the correspondent of The New York Times the other day that he had developed a plan for crossing the North Atlantic in an ordinary spherical balloon, and that the only thing that prevented him from immediately carrying the plan into execution was the lack of funds.

"The day is not distant," said M. Faure, "when some aeronaut will make such a voyage from New York to Paris. I am anxious to be the first, but, unfortunately, I do not feel that I could afford the cost, which would be possibly \$20,000, including the price of the balloon, which would naturally have to be unusually large. Aside from the tremendous sporting interest of such a trip, it would undoubtedly be rich in scientific discoveries. It would also create such a popular interest in ballooning as was never before manifested."

"I am convinced that the trip across the Atlantic could be accomplished in an ordinary spherical balloon in a much easier manner than in any other air-ship thus far constructed. I believe that on leaving New York the aeronaut would find a steady air current at a moderate height which would give an average speed of a mile a minute. In fact, I do not believe that in any circumstances the voyage would require more than six days. With a good balloon an aeronaut can remain in the air for three-times this period."



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