# MAGNIFICENT SPEECH BY SIR GEORGE FOSTER; HE DELIVERS NOTABLE MESSAGE OF EMPIRE

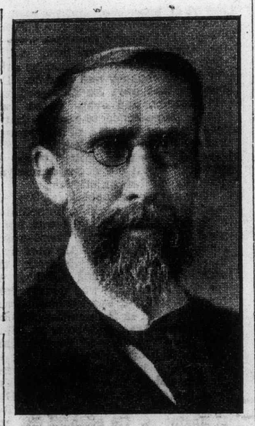
## The Old World Has Passed Away and the New Must be Faced—Eloquent References to the Empire Family, Our Allies, Neutrals and the Enemy

By Special Wire to the Courier.

The Right Hon. Sir George Foster has been called upon to speak on many occasions during his present visit to the Old Country, but perhaps the most notable address of the lot was one which he delivered at the Royal Colonial Institute luncheon, Earl Grey presiding. The London paper from which the Courier takes the report says:—

"Sir George Foster is by common consent one of the orators of the Empire. In his speech at the Royal Colonial Institute luncheon last Friday, he linked eloquence with a breadth of vision, lofty idealism and courageous statesmanship which are rare among political leaders of to-day."

I have often tried to solve the problem which now and again presents itself as to why a chairman, who is a friend of the speaker, should try to make his task as difficult as possible by raising the expectations of people higher than I think, in this case, there is ground upon which to base them. However, there are some problems which it does not much matter to the world whether they are solved or not, and I'm not going to spend very much time in trying to puzzle this one out. If Lord Grey feels at home in seeing Canadian faces and meeting Canadian personalities at this luncheon, anyone from Canada feels very much at home in talking to the members of the Royal Colonial Institute, particularly when Lord Grey, who spent some valuable years in Canada, and earned the admiration, respect and love of Canadians, supports him as chairman of the proceedings. We have been highly fortunate in our Governors-General, for they have become friends of Canada—warm friends of Canada during their periods of administration, and have remained friends of Canada on their return home, and in wider spheres have been able to do very much for the good of Canada. It is difficult in the period allotted to me, after a laboured and frazzled existence of some weeks, going through the country from south to north, visiting the lines at the front and the Grand Fleet at the north, to do more than touch upon some few points of principle, and details must for the moment be absolutely set aside.



SIR GEORGE FOSTER.

### This New World of Ours.

I do not flatter myself that I am thinking new thoughts or setting forth new ideas. It is important, however, to call attention to the fact that within two years we have as it were passed from one world into another, and in vital respects a widely different one. Are we conscious of this—we who sit around this table, the men in the street, the men behind business counters, the men on the farms and in the factories, scattered through the wide Dominions under the flag of the Empire? Or is it that we are passing through this war, which burst upon us two years ago, and which has so profoundly affected not only the nations engaged therein, but the whole world; and that while we are passing through it too many of us are thinking that some time soon the gates of war will be closed, and we shall go back to the quiet paths of peace and take up the threads of life as we left them? We cannot do it, sir. We have changed. The world has changed, it is impossible for us to take up the threads of life as we left them two years ago. We have changed. Everyone sitting round this board feels it in himself. I am not the same man I was two years ago; neither are you, if you are thoughtful men. There has been a revolution in our minds, in our hearts, in our conceptions. We have learned to value things as we never valued them before, exalt the verities of life, and to regard trivialities as dross and nothingness. We have stripped off from ourselves so much of the old clothing of habit and custom and convention, that we scarcely recognise ourselves sometimes when we think of the difference between that time and this. Every man has had personal experiences, and by himself on the altar of sacrifice—to the death in many cases, and in all cases to some appreciable degree of sacrifice and of service. Not only have we individually changed, but the nations to which we belong have changed.

Take Canada, for instance. In two years she has passed through a phase of existence which has chastened her, strengthened her, burdened her with great responsibilities, but which has elevated her, which has taught her something of the feelings of Gethsemane and something of the pride of and exalted and enfranchised individual personality. We have taken upon ourselves the burdens of heavy expenditures—the burdens of heavy responsibility outside of financial expenditures. We have made a contribution of between 300,000 and 500,000 of the manhood of our country, taking them from productive work of the farm, the field, and the factory, and sending them to the front where they are busily engaged in destroying human life and accumulated property, if thereby, haply they may in the end save freedom and justice and civilization for the coming generations. And other Dominions and this Old Country of Britain have done the same. Millions of the men of the Empire have been abstracted from productive employment and placed at the front, and millions more have been taken out from productive employment to carry on the subsidiary services which the army at the front demands. We can never go back to August, 1914, in these respects. But there has been a change as regards the units of the Empire itself. Two years have brought about transformation and consolidation, have wiped out of existence objections and prejudices and theories that were held firmly, and by the pressure of outward menace and by the development of internal forces have made this Empire in its heart, and parts, a different thing from what it was before. That cannot be taken away from us. We cannot go back in that respect to August, 1914.

But we have also changed our relations with regard to outside countries. Yonder, in Central Europe are Powers, formerly our friends, now our enemies, against whom for two years we have been fiercely fighting. We have tried to play the game and fight like men; they have tried and succeeded, in branding their brows with the eternal infamy of base action and brutal method that the world will never forget. We never can go back to the conditions of 1914 in respect to those countries, and though "never" is a long word, it will last for the men of this generation at least. And with neutral countries, also, our relative positions are different.

### "Adapt Ourselves to Changed Circumstances."

What is the object of this introduction? It is simply to impress upon my mind and upon yours, that while we have been working and fighting for two years the old world has passed away and in many respects a new world with absolutely changed conditions is fronting us, and not far in the future either. Are we thinking about it? Do we propose to think about it What do we propose to do when peace comes? "Oh, well," some good friends will say, "just wait till peace comes before beginning to talk about these things. The war is on now; do not confuse the issues." The same good people two years ago, four years ago, six years ago, ten years ago, when some minds with vision saw the troubles which were coming and began to talk about them—these same people said: "Why talk of war until it comes? Let us go on with the works of peace, and when war comes we will see what is to be done." Listening to such counsels we were landed into an unpreparedness that has cost untold treasures of money and blood, almost brought disaster, and lost two years of precious time, during which men have had to fight with the naked hand against the malled fist; against an enginry of war which for 25 years had been sedulously and carefully prepared by an enmy with long vision and most cruel purpose. And so to the man who says, "I prefer to talk of peace after the war is over," my answer is given in the short analysis I have given of the indisposition to talk of war until it came. Refuse now to make up your mind as to what you will do when war ends and when peace comes you will be in the same state of unpreparedness with regard to the arts and works of peace as you were in regard to war two years ago.

The moral of all this is that in the face of such profound changes we must be very humble, very self renunciatory, and very modest in our preconceived opinions; and the man who, during the last 50 years, has been growing up under different conditions, settling his theories and moulding his opinions, and setting himself along the straight track of doing certain things in a certain way, must open his mind and prepare himself for such action as is made necessary by the different and changed circumstances of to-day. That is my first admonition: Keep an open mind and approach the thing that has to be done and is fronting you now according to the changed conditions and circumstances. There were very definite theories of war and strategy before this war came, and they were held by men who had fought battles. But there was never a war like this, and the old theories and strategies had to be speedily revised; and in proportion as they were thrown aside and our armies met the conditions according to the necessities, we began to forge ahead and the battle fronts to look more favorable. Exactly so with regard to the development of peace. We must adapt ourselves to the changed circumstances.

### What is Our Immediate Task?

My next point is that a man never does his best work until he has a clear and definite idea of what he wants to accomplish. As with men, so with countries and nations. The first requisite is to have a definite idea of your task and then go to the task with a firm purpose, and in nine cases out of ten you will accomplish it. What is our task? Modestly, but as earnestly as modestly, I submit that we have to revise our opinion of the tasks of the Empire. Hitherto we have lacked vision, you in this country, and we measurably in the outside Dominions; our horizons were too small, our outlook too restricted. We never yet here or elsewhere have taken in the real magnitude of the task set for us. We have to undertake a work unequalled in the history of the world.

What have we been doing for two years? We have been preparing to fight and actually fighting for the defence and for the conservation of an Empire—not simply for London, Glasgow, Ottawa, Auckland, Melbourne, Sydney and Capetown, but for the whole Empire. We have been preparing ourselves to fight for it. Please God we are now where we can see that defence is assured and consolidation is not only hopeful but definitely certain in the future. It has been worth while for us to organize and mobilize ourselves in order to defend the Empire, is it not far more necessary and important that after we have secured its defence and consolidation we shall mobilize, organize, get together and work together in order to develop the Empire, to preserve which we have poured out our blood and treasure? Fighting is the least normal thing a man does. It is the least normal thing that a nation does. It is the least normal thing for a nation to be engaged at. War is intermittent and occasional, but the ways of Peace are always being trodden and its works always being wrought. That is why you need Peace warriors to organize and mobilize your forces when you have secured the defence of the Empire.

Then comes the greater, the more pressing and more difficult duty of developing the Empire we have won. That is the task set us by destiny and to which we should direct our best energies. What an Empire it is. One quarter of the territory of this globe owns the flag of the Empire, one quarter or more of its man power is sheltered beneath its folds. It has every variety of climate and production, the finest tropical and temperate regions. But there is more. These far-flung parts of the Empire belting the world, are joined together—not separated by the seas, and we hold to-day the command of these seas. I have just come back from seeing in the northern part of this country the Grand Fleet and its auxiliaries which make up the great British sea power upon which the existence of this Empire has for two years depended and upon which it depends to-day. We hold the power of the seas and thus keep open the highways for intercourse between the different parts of the Empire. We have the largest commercial marine and we are the greatest shipbuilding power in the world. More, we have wealth and intelligence and skill and capacity of power not inferior to any other Empire. We combine the virility of younger nations with the wisdom and experience of the older—a union of twin powers which, massed and organized, can do for this Empire what no other power on the round face of the globe is able to do to-day.

That is the asset held in trust by us. It is not yours. It is not mine. It does not belong to the men of this generation to do what they like with it. All that we have a right to is the use of that estate. We are bound to hand it down to the generation that comes after, and so down and on to succeeding generations, unimpaired and improved so that the men of the Empire in the future may have all that we have, improved by all that we have done for it and in it and with it. Call that ideal if you like; say that it is unpractical in this workaday age. But there are millions of men and women in this Empire who cherish it, and it must sink into the hearts of the millions left before we have achieved what God meant us to achieve and to do our full duty to ourselves and to posterity.

### "Production and More Production."

Let me ask a question here. Have we not in the past made something of a fettish of trade? I am not speaking of Free Trade. You have your own opinions about that. You have a right to them, but these are times which tend to loosen the soil of our minds, and even Free Traders may find it necessary to modify their theories. We talk of trade, we struggle and fight for trade. But I think we have gone a long way in the past to exalt a subsidiary thing into a primary thing, and we ought to revise our ideas. What is trade after all? It is only an incident. If we make it the ultimate end we are on the wrong track. Trade is simply the handmaid of a Royal Mistress whose lineage goes back to the primal days and whose stock will not run out while the world lasts. That Royal Mistress is production. Trade and more trade you call for because of the profit you make.

Production and more production should be the slogan in order that the primary resources of the Empire may be developed. Developed for what purpose? Not simply that individuals shall make millions to go to their heirs, nor that some firms shall derive immense profits. Profits are good, let them go to those that deserve them in good measure, but the idea to be kept in view is that development and production and trade by which it is brought about are all subsidiary to something else, and that is the national welfare, the good of the nation; and when I say the national welfare, I speak not of an abstract idea, but of a great practical concrete thing, the uplifting of the nation. I have been surprised and delighted in talking to men lately—men at the head of mighty establishments and great businesses— who have said to me the very same thing "I hope that this war will teach us the higher things—teach us to value the intermediary things for what they are worth and no more, and to work in earnest unselfishness henceforth for the uplift of humanity."

How are we going to go about this Empire task? I would shortly indicate three things to be done. I have been over at the base around Calais, Boulogne, Etaples, and have been through the great munition factories in Britain, and I have been absolutely astounded at the power of intelligent and effective organization which is at this particular time telling in the unexampled amount of munitions of war that have been poured into the trenches for our fighting men. Two years ago little or none of this was in existence. To-day millions of men and some six hundred and sixty thousand women are engaged in the work of munition making. I saw one factory where 6,000 women and girls were making shells. These girls made them and handled them with a deftness and accuracy which gave perfect satisfaction. All this comes from organization. If we wish we can organize for peace just as effectively as for war. And the duty is all the greater. The first thing we should do is to set to work as an Empire and explore, chart and record all our resources—every one of them. Not that New Zealand or Canada or any other unit shall simply chart her own resources and keep them to herself, but that we shall explore and chart the resources of the whole Empire so that we may know what we have. We should chart our needs and requirements so that we may know how far we have the supplies necessary to meet them. We must note also what needs to be conserved, and here you come upon another aspect of business which we have too little considered. I hold that the skill and business ability of this country owes a duty to the State as well as to itself. Development, production and trade has a national side as well as an individual side. It cannot ignore the national side if we are going to do the thing that needs to be done in this country and Empire.

Suppose I happen to own all the coal in Great Britain, that it is mine by indefeasible right. It lies within this Empire. Have I the right to sell it all if I could pick it out at once and hand it over, say to the Hun? That settles the argument. There comes a time when the State must say: "The children of its future have real claims on the generation of to-day." The country of to-day has also its claim. We must seek a modus operandi by which the men of to-day shall get their uses, but by which the resources necessary for the defence and permanence of the Empire shall be kept in sufficient quantity. Every right-minded man in his heart will recognize that. Then let him bow to that which he recognizes, and let us put our efforts together to conserve the vital things of the Empire for use in this Empire and for all its people rather than for some individuals. But there is no quick and royal road to success in the keen competition of production and development which will confront us when this war ends. You cannot put up tariff walls so high as to protect you against ignorance and lack of skill. The foundation must be deeply and truly laid amongst the people, and they must be educated along practical lines. We must in all ways fit ourselves in this Empire to meet rivals from whatever quarter they come—be as intelligent, skilful, resourceful, ready in organization and as fully mobilized as they can be, and, if possible, more so.

### The Family, Our Allies and Neutrals.

The next thing we have to do is to conserve and develop these resources for Empire growth, Empire advancement, and Empire permanence, for it is the development, uplift and permanence of the civilization which is embodied in the flag of Empire that is the one great thing in the future for us to work for. Lastly, I would say this. It is high time we were defining our attitude in certain respects, and they are briefly these: First, the attitude of the parts of the Empire to the Empire as a whole. Are we thinking about it? Do we propose to do anything about it? How shall we stand with regard to each other? My own principles are well known. I am not a Free Trader under present circumstances. Speaking personally, I do not hold out the least hope that the Empire can today come together on the basis of Free Trade. In the Overseas, we are differently constituted from you, perhaps. Maybe, you are getting gradually into a position which does not greatly differentiate yourselves from us across the seas. It is time the Empire should consolidate itself, and, with reference to trade and commerce and production, should get about it quickly and hammer out its policy for the future. I attended the Economic Conference. What did I find? I found that Great Britain, with all her power, did not and could not speak for an Empire. How much stronger her representatives would have been if the Empire had its defined policy and they could have spoken for the whole Empire. My plea is, the homely family plea, let the Empire treat itself and its units more favourably than it treats any country which does not belong to its flag. Preference within the Empire is natural and wise, and I believe necessary. It is also possible and practical.

We must also define our commercial attitude towards neutral countries. That is a delicate subject it is true. But how long is this Empire to attune its ears to every whisper as to possible disadvantage from a neutral country if the Empire dares to arrange its home affairs as it likes? We have to choose between the Em-

(Continued on Page Fifteen.)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By Special Wire to the Courie

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According to these a Sweden informed Great Brit in the negotiations on the that she was quite willing government backed guarant gard to anything shipped United Kingdom in recogniti right of Great Britain to reg destination of her own prod at the same time positively to give officially or permit zens to give any undertaki ing imports from other nati

The Swedish law against giving such guarantees ind was so strictly enforced tha exporters appealed to their ment which instituted the tions which have been conc recognition of the Swedish co through recognition of the trade commission guarantee

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