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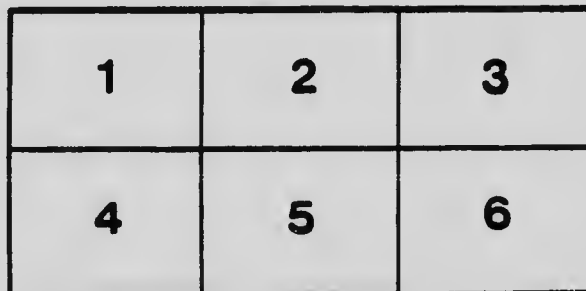
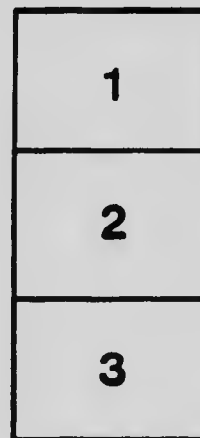
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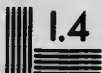
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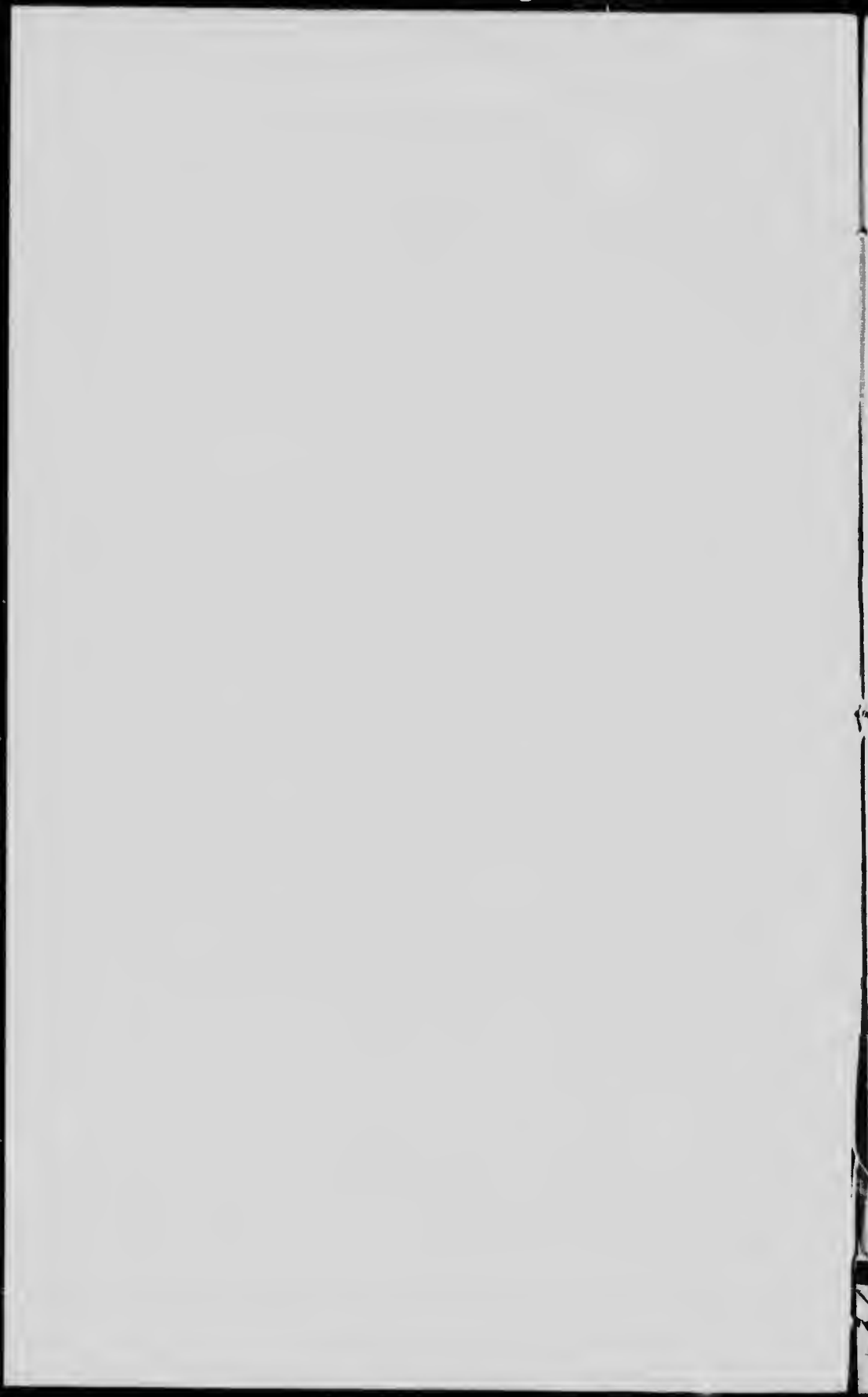
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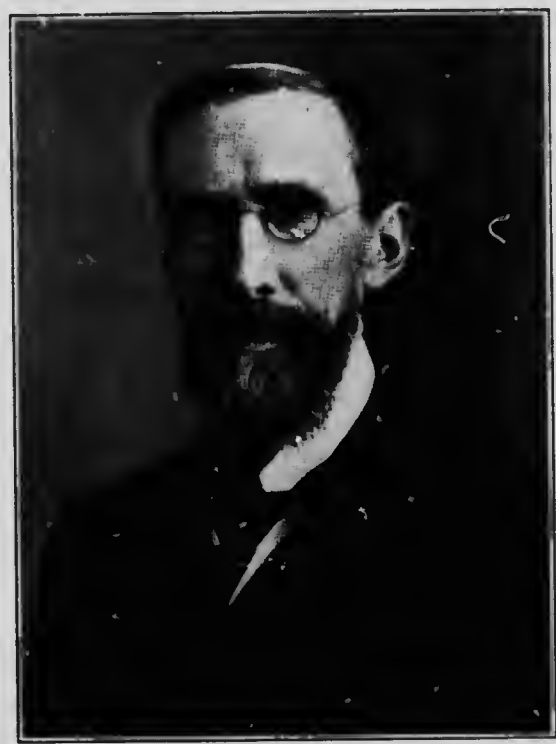
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*Address Delivered in the Drill Hall,
Victoria, B. C., by*

Hon. George Eulas Foster

Minister of Trade and Commerce,



ON

'Canada Within the Empire'



Tuesday, February 18th, 1913

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Hon. G. E. Foster's Address

"Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen: I must thank the chairman for the kindly manner in which he has introduced me to you, and I must thank you who are here for turning out in such large numbers and presenting such an intelligent front to the speaker. I want, after that, to ask you to be as indulgent as you can be to me. This is a hustling part of the country, and I found that Vancouver not only has a good deal of go, but demands a good deal from those who visit it. I was not able to save as much surplus energy as I would like to have done for Victoria.

"While I have been announced to address you on a certain topic—you know a preacher can take any text, but does not bind himself to follow it absolutely—I cannot promise you to stick to it.

"First, I will talk a little about ourselves, and afterwards a little more about the family to which we belong. That ought to interest us, because we have a good opinion of ourselves, and we ought to have about our family—provided we do not go back too far and hunt up our genealogies.

"After all, the development of life in one form or another is the most interesting thing in the world, and is what interests all classes and all conditions of mind and intellect. We all like to watch the child in whom we have some interest, grow up, see its ways of development, the step-by-step process by which it cures its ignorance, and gets at knowledge and learns its whereabouts and surroundings, and so on into the adult state and manhood.

The Interest of History

"If that is interesting in the individual case, it becomes much more

intensely interesting when we multiply the unit into the aggregate, and watch the steps upwards and onwards of a people, beginning in a sparsely settled condition, and evolving into national aspiration and national life.

"That is what makes history the intensely interesting thing it is. So it is a great privilege, and I shall always account it so, however long I may live, and in whatever different spheres from this I may live in future; I shall always account it a great privilege and a most interesting one, to have been in at the birth of a new nationality and to have been privileged to watch its growth from the time that it was born; and more than that, to have had some little hand in guiding its footsteps, and in possibly instilling in some way impulses and aims ~~in reference to~~ ^{its} growth and development, ~~of the same~~ ^{kind}.

Beginning of Confederation

"I was a boy just old enough to sit up and take notice, when confederation began to be talked about in my native Province of New Brunswick. My knowledge of geography at that time was a pretty large knowledge, if it were tested by ~~Morris'~~ ^{Morris'} old geography, that some of you may remember. From the first of that book to the last, I could name every town that was within the two covers, every river, every lake and every mountain peak; what I did not know about geography, tested by what was in ~~Morris'~~ ^{Morris'} was not worth knowing, and what I did not know about geography practically was pretty nearly the whole thing. (Laughter.) I knew very little about it.

"My knowledge of geography was pretty well confined to New Brunswick. I had heard of the sister Province of Nova Scotia—we got some

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apples from there and they were good, and that helped me to remember that there was a beneficent country nearby. I had heard of Quebec, inhabited by Frenchmen; I had also heard of Ontario, and in a somewhat distant and reminiscent manner, I had heard an echo of a Province by the name of British Columbia, which was situated somewhere afar off near the Pacific; but I never troubled myself about it then.

Then confederation came up, and I have followed the history of the development of Canada from that time till now, and have been present at all its phases, and with you, have followed it with intense interest and great delight. Our country of Canada has had its periods of development. It commenced away back in the sparsely settled patches and in the unorganized stretches of country, gradually developed into a crown colony, when it was controlled entirely from Downing Street, or whatever represented Downing Street in those days.

Growth of the Dominion

These grew into responsible provinces, and then these provinces, four of them, made up the first restricted area of the Dominion of Canada under the new confederation, and then fresh territory was added, and then fresh provinces were carved out, until today we have the wide, opulent and mighty Dominion. We take millions of sturdy, strong, sensible race, or aggregation of races, with all the modern mechanism for transport and communication and intercourse and education, religions teaching, scientific research, schools, colleges, universities, all the adjuncts and all the accessories of advanced civilization. All that time, the onlooker from abroad was justified in saying what did say: 'Why, this all means that Canada is growing away from the Empire, becoming independent, managing her own affairs and resources, developing into a stronger race, a stronger aggregation of provinces, and developing into something like a nationality. There is only one step more,

and that will mean separation.' That is what was said.

Influence of Blood

But there was another influence at work, the influence of blood and race, which is stronger and more pervasive and persistent, and has been so from the dawn of political institutions in this world, and will continue so as long as the world lasts. (Applause.) There was also the pride of language and literature instilling its lessons in the hearts of those who read.

Then there was the ever-present sureness of what we needed, protection in our infantile days and our younger years; the ever-present sureness of army and navy that was able to protect and defend. (Applause.) Then, outside of that and intermingling with it were commercial transactions, the commerce which naturally flowed from the Motherland to the colonies and back again. Then came the bonds of financial interests, and so another tie was added to those silent bonds. Later came other feelings and thoughts.

'Away in South Africa, the clouds of war arose on the horizon and the blare of trumpets bore within their sound the menace and the threat that British power and prestige would be driven into the sea. That fired the blood of the people of Canada and the other Dominions Overseas. Our kin drew their resolutions to the point, made their exits from their lands, marshalled themselves side by side, and left some of them their lives and consecrated many of them by their blood territory which was alien to them, but which ever after will be sacred because of that fact. (Applause.)

Imperial Conference

Then came the Imperial Conferences, where men from these Dominions met in consultation for the good of their several states and that of the Empire. So there was a bond of counsel, judgment, suggestive help and disension.

These were the silent influences which worked to draw us together, as

those other influences worked ~~a little~~ to draw us apart.

"In the struggle between the two, which have won? We are all glad to know that the centripetal forces have triumphed over the centrifugal; and in proportion, as we got greater freedom, we became more loyal to the idea of Empire. (Hear, hear.) The two, instead of counterneting each other, dovetailed.

Three Courses Open

"There were three courses which this young people, so welded together, found before them. There was the policy of absorption in the great country to the south, with its tremendous magnet of attraction operating in so many ways. There were advocates of that step in this country, more advocates of it in other countries, and, I am ashamed to say, some people in the Motherland, that would have seen that take place and never turn a hair. Canada was saved from that, first by the instinct of preservation.

Protest Against Absorption

"She looked on absorption as a going out of individual and corporate existence, did not like it, and made ~~this~~ ^{her} protest against it. Besides all the other circumstances which led to confederation was this, arising out of the refusal to renew the old reciprocity treaty or make another, that an attempt was being made by the United States to incline Canada by way of partial compulsion, to such absorption. It was in protest against that pressure that the farseeing men of confederation days were driven into building the units into one strong body. (Cheers.)

"That was Canada's first recorded protest against absorption. The next came in 1873 and 1874, and by the year 1878 it had developed national proportions. It was a Dominion question. It became known as the national policy, and it was in reality the protest of the people against industrial absorption into the country to the south of us. And it has never been effected.

"In the years 1891 and 1911 when

the question of commercial absorption was raised, the protest was repeated with added emphasis. These protests had underlying them the tenacity of these northern people to be themselves, and to live their own lives. (Applause.) They did not intend to submit to political, industrial or commercial absorption. They may have been wrong, but I think that it was a loveable trait in any man to be wrong under such circumstances. So that today among the deadest of dead issues there is the corpse, or the nightmare, or the will-o'-the-wisp of absorption into the country to the south of us.

No Sentiment for Independence

"There was another course open. It was the course of independence. Would they cut loose from Great Britain and proclaim themselves a republic? We had kindly advisors who said we were too old to hang onto our mother's apron strings; that we should paddle our own canoe and run our own ship, and so on; but none of them were entirely disinterested. Anyway the advice was not taken, and I think we may all conclude that independence was never much of an issue in this country. And why? Well, for two reasons: First, because of the wide freedom that was conferred upon us by the Mother Country in the management of our own affairs; and second, the part of protector that she has always played on our behalf. These two things, together with the strong common sense which I think Canada has always possessed in a large measure, made it impossible for any propaganda in favor of independence to be worth the name.

"The common sense of the country said we are independent now; we are as free as we need be. We have the substance now. Suppose we cut loose from the Mother Country and set up an independent Canada, would we have the substance or the shadow? And the common sense of Canada answered that question at the very moment it was put. It would have meant no independence for Canada.

Over us would have been the shadow of impending menace, and in our consciousness would have been the feeling that we would not be powerful enough to do anything off. I myself had something to do with two fisheries questions, one on the Atlantic seaboard and the other on the Pacific, between Canada and the United States, and I know that our contention was accorded the courteous hearing that it received not because it was Canada that was concerned, but because the prestige of Great Britain with all its diplomatic power was behind us. Today, I say, independence is laid away in the limbo of forgotten and dead issues in this country. (Loud cheers.)

The Third Alternative "Within the Empire"

"What remains? There is another alternative. It is the idea that is in my text, 'Canada Within the Empire.' That remains. I do not like to hear any man—and I do not care how big or how small he is—say: 'Yes, we will be allies of Great Britain.' They must be powerful nations in themselves who ally themselves with Great Britain. I like allies. They are useful and beneficial commercially and politically. Japan is an ally of Great Britain, and so is France, and there are useful virtues in these alliances; but I never like to think that Canada and Australia and South Africa and New Zealand will ever get into the position of being allies of Great Britain.

"So I force on your attention with all strength that Canada's destiny lies in developing herself within and as part of the great Empire in whose family she was born. (Cheers.) That idea early began to be attractive to the people of this country, more and more so as their national life grew and developed.

Growth of National Spirit

"The lack of the spirit of nationhood was a great lack in earlier days, but as we got acquainted one with the other that spirit became developed. It was the great organization and persistent work of those earlier

days that gave a chance for this spirit to grow, and for us to learn the excellencies of the peoples of the several parts of the federation.

"As this national spirit grew, so grew the attractiveness of what we may call the Imperial idea. (Hear, hear.)

"To speak of the geographical position of Canada, I would point out that she stands with two great front doors to the world, one opening on all the enterprise, development, strength, skill and capital of Europe; the other upon the mighty East, now awakening from a long sleep, and with possibilities that will place it side by side with the older countries in the sense of development.

"We all have an idea, but few of us an adequate one, of what changes are coming when a continent is cut in half, what commercial and economic readjustments must be made. Here stands Canada, with her doors open on either side, right on the great central highway of the world's commerce—on the shortest and safest route of travel; on a highway to be trodden by infinitely greater numbers of people in the future, to be coursed with an infinitely greater volume of traffic; she stands there in that commanding position, secure in the knowledge of her resources and her strength. (Cheers.)

"How beautifully Canada's destiny, nationality and imperially, fits in at this specific time in the world's history, when she finds herself in the full flush of national life securing a place in the world's work, stepping out into it, drawing ambition and impulse from it and from the call of imagination which makes great men and makes great countries as well.

"I suppose you think I have come to the conclusion that Canada has settled down to her destiny within the Empire. Well, it is a great thing. A man must know where he is going to before he can expect to follow a straight course; and when Canada stopped wobbling on the line of absorption into the United States and likewise stopped wobbling in regard

to independence, she started out upon a straighter course. And now we have settled down, so to speak, it is our first business to take stock of the estate of which we are a party in the capacity of owners and shareholders. I want to impress this upon you. We do not try enough to visualise or photograph before ourselves this immense Empire of which we form a part. We ought to do it more and more. For instance, when I meet an Australian I sidle up to him. He is nearer to me now because we belong to sister Dominions. That is the way it works. I would not have thought of doing so before.

Responsibilities of Empire

Let us consider what is the Empire. We all have an idea that it is a big thing. Try and grasp that its area today is 11,900,000 square miles, or pretty well a quarter of this old globe of ours; and its people, all over the many widely scattered portions, is 400,000,000, or about a fourth of the peoples of the earth. It is a big thing, but it is a bigger thing when you come to think of it. Think of Canada, with its 8,000,000 people and so many millions of acres under cultivation and its illimitable stretches undeveloped, even though it lies within organized districts.

Of all that population, 45,000,000 are British in the United Kingdom and 15,000,000 British in the Overseas dominions, 60,000,000 in all of British or nearly-allied British stock to maintain British standards and ideals over an area nearly one-fourth of the world. We must not let a Briton die. (Hear, hear.) We must deal with the dispersion and loss of British blood and British power through emigration directed into long channels and allowed to flow into alien lands.

Look at it in another sense—that of the variety of productivity, of soil, of the needs of the peoples within the Empire. Should we not be organizing, be up and doing, to develop within this wide-flung estate of ours the production of what we need, and, while doing that, to add to the

population, development and wealth of the British Empire itself?

Look at the Empire!

There is a field for the greatest statesmanship and widest and strongest endeavor. In addition to production, there is the question of distribution, another wide field for enterprise.

Look at the Empire, with its navy, its many centuries of experience, its command of all the seas, and you see that no nation, no combination of nations, has the unique position of profiting from this trade as we have through the different parts of the Empire. It is a wonderful Empire that we have, our own estate, and it is for us, the men and women of this century, to see that the estate is brought under cultivation.

It is a noble thing for Englishmen, Irishmen and Scotchmen and Canadians, New Zealanders, South Africans and Australians and all the other peoples of the Empire to join forces and unite efforts to stand straight, shoulder to shoulder, in the organization and development of this great Empire around the world.

Suppose you agree with me in that you may ask along which line it is proposed we shall proceed. That is where a great many people balk. They say you will cause a revolution that will end in confusion worse than the beginning. My answer is to proceed along the lines upon which we have been proceeding for the last ten or twenty years. That is no revolution and no wrench. It is simply doing systematically what we have been doing. *more or less at haphazard.*

Co-operation

The next step is to co-operate on all the true and well-defined Imperial lines, which are far above the peculiarities of provinces. For instance let me mention two great things that should be considered in this way, both of which affect the interests of Canada most vitally. These are the lines of trade and of defence. On these two lines we can have Imperial co-operation and I think work out

much of what I have been pleading for this night. The question of tariffs need not be interfered with. Let Great Britain remain free if its people desire it so and let Australia and South Africa and the other parts of the Empire preserve their individual systems if they care to; that will not necessarily affect the idea of imperial co-operation.

"In the matter of trade communication between the different parts of the Empire have we all one ought to have? There can be no trouble between protection and free trade along that line. Let us co-operate to make the routes of commerce easier and better than they are. In the matter of cable communication the same thing is true. Is there not an opportunity for co-operation in the matter of Atlantic cable systems?

"Then there is what you may call sympathetic legislation. I was surprised in the course of the sittings I attended in London to see the number of useless hindrances there are to the doing of business between the different parts of the Empire. There is an opportunity to get together and wipe these hindrances out.

Preferential Tariffs

"There is the matter of preference. If the British do not like to offer it, well and good. I told them that we offer it; and though they may refuse it, still we offer it. They may get so used to the medicine, even when it goes down a different gullet than their own, that the time may come when they will take it willingly. (Laughter.)

"At this present time, there is not a British country on the face of the globe, with the exception of two or three unimportant rocks in the vicinity of some foreign countries (laughter) which are not now taken into the Canadian brotherhood, and made participators in our British preference. That is a remarkable fact, and I am proud of it. (Applause.) All of them have been invited to send their goods to our markets, and when they come here they get the benefit of the British preference. That has been

accomplished within a comparatively few years. That is progress, and progress in the direction I am endeavoring to indicate as the right direction.

Naval Defence

"One word more, and that is on the line of defence. I am thankful, exceedingly thankful, and I do not believe that I do other than echo the feeling of every true British and Canadian subject—when I say that at last the reproof is lifted from Canada that we are doing nothing serviceable towards the defence of the Empire on the sea. You may differ with me as to methods, and each man may have his own views and have them respected by the other in the belief that they are honestly held, but this wide Empire through, no matter what my views are or yours, within this last three months, there has gone a message which relieves Canada from the obloquy of doing nothing for the defence of the Empire. (Loud applause.)

"Too long she lay under that, too long to satisfy her own self-respect, too long to satisfy the wishes and the aspirations of the sister colonies, and to long to satisfy the patient, uncomplaining taxpayer in the United Kingdom. You men here in Canada, with one of the finest countries in the world, with no bars before you that you cannot leap over if you have a purpose to do so, not shut up behind bars and customs and circumstances which take all the hope out of you and leave you a nerveless member of the community; you in Canada who dress well and get good wages, go over to the United Kingdom and watch the British laborer in the mines, in the factory, on the street, wherever you may find him, and see him paying out from his hardly-earned wages for your defence—and not high at that—see him in his true conditions which are liveable, but which I do not think can be compared to the conditions in Canada; watch him for a single month, I say, and then come and look me in the face and tell me honestly if you can ^{care} you

in the way of being

That

willing that he should continue to bear the whole brunt of the protection of the Empire, Canada included, while you go scot free. You know you are not. (Loud applause.)

"Your manhood rebels against that. Your selfishness may silence that rebellion for a while, but in the night watches, when you think on the injunction to love your neighbor as yourself, you have to make up your mind that you cannot throw the whole burden on him. You do not want to do it. (Cries of "No!")"

"I mistake the people of Canada if they have not passed that milestone—and passed it forever. (Cheers.)"

Defence is Insurance

"There is no politics in this meeting, and I cannot go as far as perhaps I would like to. But I would call your attention to the fact that when you have a home you do not sleep easily unless you know it is insured, and insured in a company that is sound.

"You do not want a sham insurance. Apply that to the defence of Canada. Some say Canada should do the whole thing. Brave words, but a very unsound conclusion. She does not want a fleet that is nothing but a sham.

"There is ~~the~~ great naval power of the world, Great Britain. She has been a naval power for a thousand years; brought up on the salt brine, with the atmosphere of the sea always on her lips and the spirit of adventure always in her veins. For a thousand years she has built and sailed ships, and has the advantage of centuries of experience. She has a mighty fleet and protects the whole Empire with it. What need is there for Canada or any other Dominion to build a fleet to protect themselves absolutely? It is a waste of money, a waste of fleets—and a waste of ideas to dwell on that for any time at all.

Canada's Contribution

"What Canada should ask herself is how she can best utilize that skill

and experience so as to make the fleet secure against all possible comers, and so as to give protection, not only to ourselves, but to all the Empire at large. That is the question. Of course, some people will say that we are going to pay tribute for ever and ever, and that we are not going to have Canadian ships, manned by Canadians, and so forth. But that does not follow at all. What I ask for is a common-sense solution of the problem. Let us sit down and confer with the British Admiralty, as has been done, and find out what is necessary, then tote up your own contribution to that; and, whether there is need and an emergency for quick action, and if so put your effort where it will most speedily eventuate in strengthening the forces of the protecting fleet.

"When you have done that, confer with the British Government again and find out what co-operative plan there is that will enable Australia and Canada and the other Overseas Dominions to contribute their quota to the strengthening of the Imperial fleet—that quota to include, not only money, but ships and men, yes, Canadian courage and bravery as well. (Applause.) I have no fear that in this system to be evolved the aspirations of Canadians to be personally and bodily interested as a country and as men in the great Empire fleet will ever be crushed out or will fail to be satisfied.

"No man has a warrant for saying that that policy of contribution is the only policy of the Government and that we propose to carry out that principle alone.

That is as far as I can go without being political; that far it is necessary to go, because I think the expression of the idea that it is the Government's entire policy to adopt that principle should be contradicted. Only one part of the policy of the Canadian Government is before the people. It is to be followed by another, and that other subject to the approval of the people themselves." (Loud cheers.)

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