

CANADA'S DUTY

By Rev. Charles W. Gordon, D.D.
(Ralph Connor)

Past President Canadian Club
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CANADA'S WORD

O Canada! A voice calls through the mist and spume
Across the wide, wet, salty leagues of foam
For aid. Whose voice thus penetrates thy peace?
Whose? Thy Mother's, Canada, Thy Mother's voice.

O Canada! A drum beats through the night and day,
Unresting, eager, strident, summoning
To arms. Whose drum thus throbs persistent?
Whose? Old England's, Canada, Old England's drum.

O Canada! A sword gleams leaping swift to strike
At foes that press and leap to kill brave men
On guard. Whose sword thus gleams fierce death?
Whose? 'Tis Britain's, Canada, Great Britain's sword.

O Canada! A prayer beats hard at Heaven's gate,
Tearing the heart wide open to God's eye,
For righteousness. Whose prayer thus pierces Heaven?
Whose? 'Tis God's prayer, Canada, Thy Kingdom come!

O Canada! What answer make to calling voice and beating drum,
To sword-gleam and to pleading prayer of God
For right? What answer makes my soul?
"Mother, to thee! God, to Thy help! Quick! My sword!"

By Rev. Charles W. Gordon

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I desire to express to my people of the Overseas Dominions with what appreciation and pride I have received the messages from their respective governments. . . . I shall be strengthened in the discharge of the great responsibility which rests upon me by the confident belief that in this time of trial the Empire will stand united, calm, resolute, trusting in God.—King George's Message to Canada.

The Motherland is confronting a necessity of national existence. We come to her aid in determination to ensure the safety of this Empire and defend our flag, our honor and our heritage.—Sir Robert L. Borden, Premier Dominion of Canada.

I have often declared that if the Mother Country were ever in danger, or if danger even threatened, Canada would render assistance to the full extent of her power.—Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Leader of the Opposition.

There is no place for pessimism on the part of any Britisher in this war. The outcome is assured—we shall win, and win completely. The gage of the German Kaiser and of his Prussian Junkertum, hurled in the teeth of Christian civilization, has been taken up, and the fight will go on until Democracy, Liberty and Law among the nations will triumph. But those cheery optimists who foresee a speedy end to this strife, and who picture a joyous jaunt unter den Linden for the Allies, can hardly be regarded as harmless lunatics, for harmless they are not. The sooner Canada realizes that this war is a stern serious business and that it will grow in desperation as the long weary months drag their terrible length through winter and perhaps through summer and through winter again the better it will be.

Let us make no mistake. No sudden rage, no fluke of diplomacy, not Austria's greedy ambition leaping at the chance of war afforded by the wicked act of a mad Servian student—not these things nor things like these have caused Germany to plunge into this war. Never did a nation more deliberately take a purposed and long planned step. For forty years Germany has cherished ambitions, has fed upon philosophies, has extended her commerce, has built up her industries, has established her fortresses, has perfected her siege guns, has built her navy, has constructed her aerial fleet, has hoarded her gold, has drilled her eight million soldiers, has fired her young men with lust for the Satanic glory of war with one purpose, and one purpose only—that she might war in a supreme effort after world power, incidental to which is the crushing of France to the position of Portugal among the European nations, the absorption of small countries like Belgium, Holland and Denmark, and the extermination of hated Britain.

Upon this issue Germany stakes her existence, that Europe may be Germanized and a World Empire established greater than the world has ever seen, with colonies on every sea, built

upon highly scienced brute force that knows no law but that of might and derides the Christian virtues as contemptible and utterly unworthy of the superman.

For this enterprise the Kaiser believes himself God anointed and God appointed. With him today stand the haughty aristocracy of Prussia and all the war caste of Germany, and behind them, united in a mad and deluded enthusiasm, stand as yet the German people to a man.

Victory for the Allies, therefore, means the dethronement of the Kaiser and his military brood, the annihilation of the war caste and the smashing of the war machine. Nothing short of this will be accepted as victory by any of the allied nations. Nothing less than this would be worth fighting for.

But what does this mean? It means that the Kaiser will hurl into the last deadly fight every German soldier, every German ship and gun and every German dollar; for, while it is true that Germany will survive this war, the Kaiser and his caste of war worshippers will not. They will be wiped out of existence, and they know it. Hence the desperate character of this conflict. There is no truce, nor can be. No peace is possible. Two sets of principles are locked in death grips—Force as an empire builder against the Will of a free people, Justice as an international arbiter as against the Sword of the mighty, international Honor as an eternal obligation rather than as a mere temporary convenience. These things make peace impossible, and these things make the war worth while.

What, then, is Canada's immediate duty? It stands clear as the morning sun above the prairie rim. The Empire stands today for Liberty, Justice, Honor among nations as among men; and Canada stands with the Empire for these. It is no longer a question of a colony giving support to the motherland. We have gone far past that. It is a question of whether Canada shall stand with the free nations who believe in government by free choice, justice among nations, honor as an eternal obligation, and with her last man and her last dollar fight for these things that determine a nation's character and its place in history. I repeat that it is no longer a question of aiding the motherland in a fight for national or Empire existence. Canada is herself a nation with a proud sense of nationhood. Canada's future is involved in this conflict, and with every instinct of her national soul and with every throb of her national life she hates and opposes the spirit, the ideals, the methods for which the German Kaiser with his Prussian Junkertum is now so desperately contending.

And how is Canada to fulfil her obligation as a nation in this world crisis? Our Government has done well, has given a splendid exhibition of efficient dispatch in mobilizing, equipping and transporting to England's shores between 30,000 and 40,000 men in the short space of two months. But it is not, I repeat, a matter of contingents, one, two, or three. Rather must Canada, with calm, deliberate, clear-eyed purpose, make resolve that she is committed to this conflict to her last man and

her last dollar, not for the Empire's sake alone, but for her own sake and the sake of her national ideals. And when once Canada has clearly conceived it as her obligation to throw her entire national life and resources into this conflict, the problem then becomes a very simple one, namely, one of administration.

If it is clearly understood that every fit Canadian man is pledged to this war, then first let the Government take immediate steps for the enrolment, not of 20,000, but of 100,000 or 200,000 Canadians available for active service. Then from these enrolled men let contingents be selected for immediate training and sent on to the front as soon as they can be equipped and fitted and as they may be needed.

I am no pessimist, but I confess that that long, swaying line of men, locked in deadly embrace on the French frontier, is ominous of possible disaster; these daring raids of German submarines are suggestive of dangers in a direction where we thought we were invincible. So far the war has gone well, but after all what signifies the loss of a few hundred thousand men to Germany out of her eight million soldiers, not to speak of the uncalled multitudes available out of her sixty-five millions of people? And we have yet to hear from Turkey—The possibilities of Islam as an anti-British force are faint it is true, but they are as yet unexplored. Then there is Italy. A sudden great disaster on the line of battle, which is by no means outside the fortune of war, a chance and fatal raid upon our fleet, an unforeseen combination of crushing calamities, all of which lie within the possibilities in war, might change in one week the hue of our horizon. What then? It is the commonplace of war that battles are lost before they are fought. Let Canada wake before it is too late. Regrets are cheap and, however bitter, are unavailing. Let Canada prepare, eagerly, swiftly, surely prepare today, that in the last deadly crisis of the desperate fight she may be able to throw the weight of her young might upon the wavering line of battle and help to hurl the enemy backward in defeat. The final touch may be Canada's. There is no place for hysteria, but there is place for haste. Not a contingent but the whole nation will fulfil Canada's obligation; and not when the cry comes for help but now should the preparation be made.

With a clear conscience and a steadfast heart we can invoke the God, not of battles, but the God of Righteousness and Truth to our aid, but only after we have made our full preparation; and if by God's good hand our men should not be needed the loss is small, but if the day should come when there was desperate need for our men and we were found unready, not even God could help us then. The which may God forbid.

CHARLES W. GORDON.

Winnipeg, Oct. 17th, 1914.



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