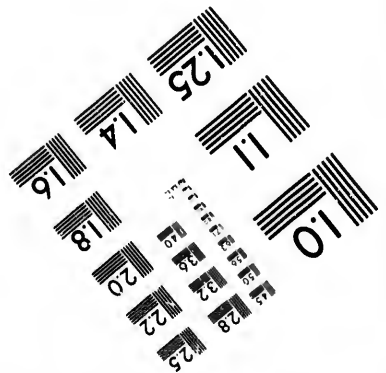
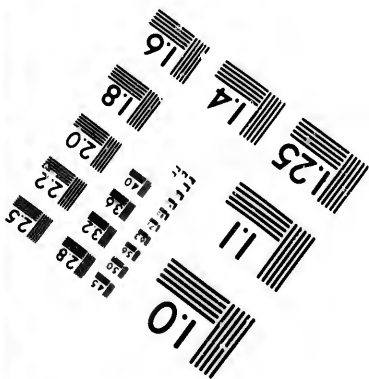
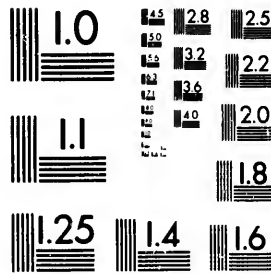


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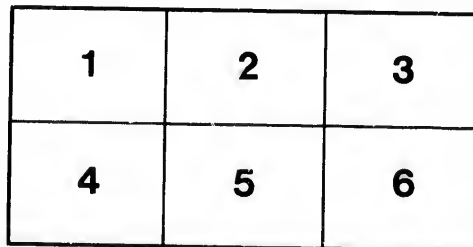
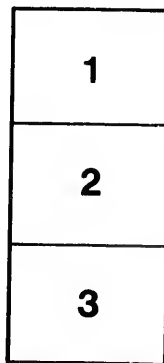
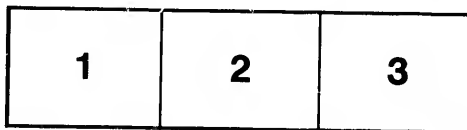
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The British Empire League in Canada.

Its Officers,
Committees and Constitution,

INCLUDING

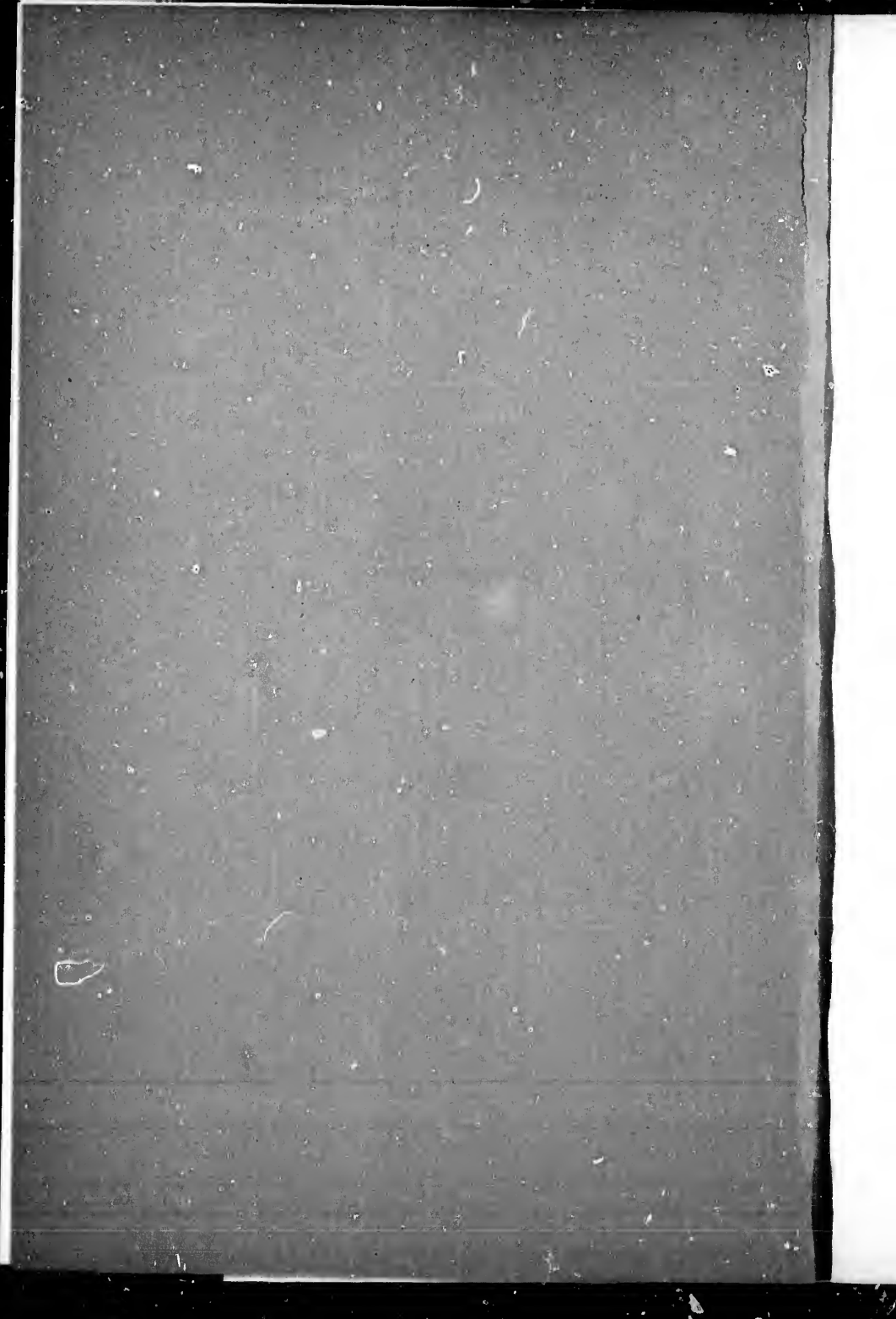
Report of Annual Meeting,

HELD AT

OTTAWA, APRIL 28th, 1897.



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The British Empire League



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CONSTITUTION.

1. The Association to be called "The British Empire League in Canada."

2. It shall be the primary object of the League to secure the permanent unity of the Empire.

3. The following to be among the other principal objects of the League :

(a) To promote trade between the United Kingdom, the Colonies and India, and to advocate the holding of periodical meetings of representatives from all parts of the Empire for the discussion of matters of general commercial interest, and the consideration of the best means of expanding the national trade.

(b) To consider how far it may be possible to modify any laws or treaties which impede freedom of action in the making of reciprocal trade arrangements between the United Kingdom and the Colonies, or between any two or more British Colonies or Possessions.

(c) To promote closer intercourse between the different portions of the Empire by the establishment of cheaper, and, where required, more direct steam and telegraphic communication, preference being given to routes not traversing foreign territory.

(d) To develop the principles on which all parts of the Empire may best share in its general defence, endeavoring to bring into harmony public opinion at Home and in the Colonies on this subject, and to devise a perfect co-operation of the military and naval forces of the Empire with a special view to the due protection of the trade routes.

(e) To assimilate, as far as local circumstances permit, the laws relating to copyright, patents, legitimacy and bankruptcy throughout the Empire.

4. The League shall use every constitutional means to bring about the objects for which it is established, and shall invite the support of men of all shades of political opinion throughout the Empire.

5. The League shall advocate the establishment of periodical conferences to deal with such questions as may appear ripe for consideration, on the lines of the London Conference of 1887 and the Ottawa Conference of 1894.

6. The membership shall be open to any British subject who accepts the principles of the League and pays a yearly subscription of at least one dollar.

7. The League shall meet annually in one of the principal cities of Canada, the time and place of meeting for each year to be selected by the Executive Committee.

8. The business of the League shall be conducted by a Council and Executive Committee, to be appointed at the annual meeting, and with power to add to their number. The Council and Executive Committee shall have charge of the work of the League in Canada; they shall adopt such means as they may find expedient to promote the objects of the League, and they shall furnish a report at the annual meeting.

9. The co-operation of men of all political parties in every part of Canada is sought for the establishment of branches, which shall have power to elect representatives on the Council.

10. The officers of the League to be a President, two Vice-Presidents for each Province, an Honorary Secretary and an Honorary Treasurer.

At the special general meeting held at Ottawa on May 29, 1894, when the Imperial Federation League in Canada adopted the name of the British Empire League

in Canada and its constitution, it was moved by Thomas Macfarlane, Esq., seconded by Alex. McNeill, Esq., M.P., and carried unanimously, That the principles advocated by the Imperial Federation League, as set out below, should be endorsed by the new League and adopted by it :

(a) To advocate a trade policy between Great Britain and her Colonies, by means of which a discrimination in the exchange of natural and manufactured products will be made in favor of one another and against foreign nations.

(b) To bring about the discontinuance in commercial treaties with foreign countries of clauses preventing the different portions of the Empire from making such internal fiscal arrangements between themselves as they may think proper.

(c) To make every effort to establish a British Commercial Union, based as nearly as practicable upon freer trade within the Empire, and upon the imposition of a small extra duty on foreign imports to provide funds for Imperial defence.

THE ANNUAL MEETING

— 1897. —

The annual meeting was held in the Railway Committee room of the House of Commons, Ottawa, on Wednesday, the 28th of April, 1897, at 10 a.m.

The President, Lieut.-Col. George T. Denison, of Toronto, occupied the chair.

There were present: Sir Charles Tupper, Bart., M.P.; Sir Donald Smith, K.C.M.G., Vice-President; Arch. McGoun, Esq., Vice-President; Alex. McNeill, Esq., M.P., Vice-President; Hon. R. R. Dobell, M.P.; Sir Hibbert Tupper, M.P., Hon. Senator Allan, Senator Almon, Senator Boulton, Senator Sanford, Senator Wood, Senator Aikens, Wm. Lount, M.P., Dr. Sproule, M.P., Major Hughes, M.P., E. F. Clarke, M.P., James McMullen, M.P., Andrew Broder, M.P., J. A. Gillies, M.P., E. Cochrane, M.P., F. H. Hale, M.P., George Casey, M.P., Lieut.-Col. the Hon. E. G. Prior, M.P., Henry Cargill, M.P., Thomas Earle, M.P., Hector Macdougall, M.P., E. B. Osler, M.P., A. Macdonald, M.P., T. D. Craig, M.P., Wm. McCleary, M.P., J. McAllister, M.P., A. C. Bell, M.P., A. Martin, M.P., W. T. Hodgins, M.P., Lieut.-Col. Tyrwhitt, M.P., Dr. Lankerkin, M.P., W. C. Edwards, M.P., A. Semple, M.P., J. P. Morin, M.P., L. E. Dugas, M.P., R. L. Richardson, M.P., A. T. Wood, M.P., A. McLennan, M.P., Major Sutherland, M.P., J. M. Hurley, M.P., George V. McInerny, M.P., G. W. Ganong, M.P., T. B. Flint, M.P., John B. Mills, M.P., R. L. Borden, M.P., C. E. Kaulbach, M.P., Joseph A. Gillies, M.P., A. Martin, M.P., J. W. St. John, M.P.P., Dr. G. Sterling Ryerson, M.P.P., J. P. Whitney, M.P.P., Leader of Ontario Opposition; J. M. Clark, Esq., W. B. McMurrieh, Esq., and H. J. Wickham, Esq., of Toronto; Thomas MacFarlane, Esq., F.R.S.C.; R. J. Wicksteed, Esq., and J. E. Geramel, Esq., of Ottawa; Nicol Kingsmill, Esq., and others.

After the Hon. Secretary, Mr. George E. Evans, had read the minutes of the last meeting,

The President moved the adoption of the Annual Report of the Executive Committee. In doing so he called attention to the three principal features, viz., the endorsement of the efforts of the League in England towards getting a uniform bankruptcy law in the Dominion, which, he said, was a necessity for the encouragement of trade between the Mother Country and Canada, and a simple matter of justice to the English creditor; to the deputation that waited upon the Tariff Commission to call their attention to the views expressed by the Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain at the congress of Chambers of Congress in June last, and the passing of a resolution favoring the fast line of steamers. Continuing, he said the people of Canada had almost universally adopted the idea of preferential trade throughout the Empire, but they should endeavor to get the British Government to give the colonies an advantage in the home markets. Various inducements might be offered in return, such, for instance, as the new tariff policy of the Government giving the Empire a preference over the foreigner, a principle that might be carried to a much greater extent. Some assistance might also be given towards the defence of sea routes, which is so important a matter to the Empire. But there were other and much stronger grounds upon which he urged that the colonies should be granted a preference in the home markets.

As a matter of safety to the whole Empire, he held that it was essential that the food to feed the British people should be grown upon British soil. At present, if Russia and the United States were to combine to place an embargo on food products, he was very much afraid they could bring England to her knees before very long. He held that this was more important to Great Britain than to Canada, and in the interest of Great Britain alone she should see that her food supply was grown where, in case

of war, she could get it. A preference to her colonies and her own farmers would soon produce the supply from lands under her own flag. Few people knew the present unsafe condition of affairs. The United Kingdom imported in the year 1896 of wheat and flour 91,322,000 cwt. Of this enormous import about 8,000,000 cwt. came from within the Empire, while foreigners supplied 83,000,000, of which Russia, the United States and Turkey controlled over 71,000,000 cwt., or nearly four-fifths. The home crop in 1895 was only 4,650,000 quarters, or about 20,000,000 cwt., from which the seed has to be deducted, so that four people out of every five in the British Isles are fed with bread from abroad.

When the supply of grain of all kinds that might be used for food was considered, the figures were equally startling.

The total quantity of wheat, wheaten flour, barley, maize, rye and oats exported in the year ending 31st July, 1895, by all the exporting countries of the world amounted to 98,327,000 quarters. Of this Russia, Turkey and the United States controlled 82,600,000, leaving only 16,100,000 quarters for all the importing countries of the world. It would be easily seen that a combination of Russia, Turkey and the United States putting an embargo, as a war measure, on the export of food products, would leave three-fourths or four-fifths of the inhabitants of the British Islands without farinaceous food.

It was not to be forgotten that a command of the sea as absolute as that which existed after Trafalgar, a command which would have swept every foreign vessel from the ocean, would not enable England to carry food which, grown by her enemies, she could not get. He held that it was of the utmost importance therefore, in the interests of Great Britain herself, that there should be preferential trade within the Empire, so that corn and food products, cattle, cheese, butter, etc., coming from within the Empire should have an advantage in the markets of the Empire

over the products of foreign countries. The result of such a system would be to give a tremendous impetus to the production of food supplies both at home and in the colonies, and would turn the tide of immigration from the United States and other hostile countries into Canada, New Zealand, Australia and other British colonies. A fair tariff on wheat and all grain would, he thought, very soon cause enough to be grown in Canada to make the Empire safe. Mr. Long, who had gone very closely into the subject in an article in the "Nineteenth Century," estimated that 55,000 more farmers, each growing 100 acres of wheat a year in the north-west of Canada, would place Great Britain out of danger. This was most important to the English people. The sea route from Canada to England was the safest and the most easily defended by which Great Britain could get her food supply. It would therefore be to the direct advantage of Great Britain to give Canada a preference which would increase the wheat-growing area of the Dominion and the number of stalwart settlers who would defend it. The Venezuelan difficulty with the United States had convinced many leading men in England of the necessity of providing a safe food supply, and had converted many of them to the idea of preferential trade.

THE HON. R. R. DOBELL, in seconding the adoption of the report, referred to the fact that a meeting had been held in that very room twenty years ago, at which meeting a deputation had been appointed to endeavor to move the different Chambers of Commerce in England to a support of our principles of Inter-Imperial Preferential Trade.

He referred to the fact that it was owing to the pressure brought to bear by the Canadian League through the efforts of the Executive Committee in Toronto, who sent word across to them in England, urging them to hold fast, and that being followed up by a deputation from the League in Canada, which had helped very materially to keep the City of London Branch in existence after the dissolu-

tion of the old Imperial Federation League, and exerted a great influence upon the formation of the present British Empire League.

Personally, he did not see any insuperable difficulties in the way of a great Imperial Parliament, in which the whole Empire should be represented, being formed in the future.

SIR CHARLES TUPPER said that while he did not wish to throw cold water on the Imperial Federation idea, he should be very sorry to think that the great objects they had in view in promoting the unity of the Empire were to be deferred until that idea had been achieved. The difficulties in the way of a great Federal Parliament appeared to be insuperable. The fact that in a comparatively short period the population of the British colonies, who would be represented in such a Parliament, would exceed that of the United Kingdom, would make it very difficult to induce the British Parliament to place the control of Great Britain and the Empire in the hands of those who were now colonists, but who in such a Parliament would soon be in a majority. In the next place, he was inclined to believe that the people of Canada, and what he trusted at an early date would be the great confederation of Australasia, would be equally indisposed to surrender those rights of self-government they now possessed, and be controlled by a Parliament sitting in London. Those who had given the closest attention to this subject had arrived at the conclusion that there was no means by which that great bond of sentiment between the Mother Country and the colonies could be better strengthened than by a combination of commercial interests that should make it of equal importance to England and the colonies that trade between them should be upon a preferential basis—(hear, hear)—that, while a preference was given to Great Britain in the markets of Canada, Great Britain ought to return to the policy formerly in operation of placing the produce of the colonies in the markets of the Mother Country on more favorable

terms than that of foreign countries. Sir Charles bore testimony to the advance that public sentiment in favor of preferential trade had made in England, as evidenced by the speech of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain to the Congress of Chambers of Commerce, in 1896, when the latter declared he was prepared, under certain circumstances, to review the present policy of free trade in England and to reimpose the duty which formerly existed upon the products of foreign countries coming into competition with the products of the colonies in Great Britain. This speech had brought preferential trade within measurable distance of adoption, and it was now only a question of time. He did not intend to enter upon the debatable ground as to the best means of obtaining that object; he hoped the League would always represent the gentlemen composing both the great political parties. (Hear, hear.) The leaders in each case had given their adhesion to this question, and its importance was fully appreciated by the great body of intelligent people in this country. The chairman had referred to the vast importance to Great Britain of a food supply. Before the Venezuelan difficulty had been a week old the attention of every intelligent man in England had been directed to this question, and an impetus was thereby given to the subject of preferential trade which moved it considerably in advance of the position it had heretofore occupied. Mr. Long, in an article in the Nineteenth Century, had pointed out that the development of the North-West would entirely remove the difficulty of the food supply. In that view Sir Charles concurred. The North-West possessed enormous possibilities which would be developed by preferential trade. They were sometimes reminded of the disappointment they felt that the North-West did not develop with the rapidity at one time anticipated, but the change in the price of wheat since the time their sanguine calculations were made would, to a very large extent, explain that delay. From a price that gave the farmer a handsome return, wheat had dropped to a figure which gave little or no return. Bearing in mind

the remoteness of the North-West from the market, preferential trade would do what the Indian famine fund had unfortunately done, to some extent, give an enhanced value to wheat, and the result would be to make the North-West blossom as a rose. The result of having the products of the North-West admitted to the British market on better terms than were the products of foreign countries would be to transfer millions of capital and thousands of agriculturists to the North-West. Those people would be anxious to cultivate that country, and furnish Britain with all the food she required. He concluded by moving, "That this League, feeling the great advantage to Canada and the Empire of establishing a system of preferential trade within the Empire, would respectfully urge upon the Canadian Government to take action upon the suggestion made by the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain at the Congress of Chambers of Commerce in London last June, and arrange for a conference with him to consider the best method of carrying out what is evidently the desire of, and would tend to promote the advantage of, the whole British Empire."

MR. WM. LOUNT, M. P., expressed his delight at the remarks of Sir Charles Tupper. It was quite evident that the purposes of the League were being developed with marked rapidity. (Hear, hear.) No one could help but notice how the idea of preferred trade within the Empire was growing. He could not but express himself in hearty accord with the resolution. The unity of the colonies was now most pronounced. This confederation would be able hereafter to preserve Great Britain from all attacks, but so far as Canada is concerned she should be brought to contribute as largely as possible towards that result, promoting as she would at the same time her own interests.

The resolution was adopted.

THE FAST LINE.

SIR DONALD SMITH arose amid applause, and expressed the privilege he felt at being present. They were to have in Canada this summer the British Association and the British Medical Association, including men from every part of the United Kingdom. He trusted that the visitors would prove to be the very best sort of agents to advertise the advantages of this country in Great Britain. Referring to the growth of the grain trade in the Western States, he said the settlers in Manitoba and the North-West Territories possessed even greater advantages. He did not see why, if the proper means were employed, there should not be, within a comparatively short time, a population in the North-West which would ensure the prosperity of the whole Dominion. (Hear, hear.) Speaking of the projected fast line steamship service, he thought if properly managed it could not fail to be a commercial success. This was not a party question. (Hear, hear.) On this subject he moved the following resolution: "That this League views with satisfaction the prospect of the early establishment of a line of fast steamers between this country and Europe, and expresses the hope that before long Canada may have facilities of transport across the Atlantic equal to those employed by any other country." Continuing, and speaking on the subject of preferential trade, he hoped that with the help of the Colonial Secretary and other Ministers of the Crown further steps in that direction would soon be taken. He moved the resolution in no party spirit, but solely with an eye to the best interests of the country. (Hear, hear.) Other countries had been moving in this direction for years. Why should Canada be behind? They were determined not to be behind. (Hear, hear.)

MR. ALEX. McNEILL, who seconded the resolution, briefly expressed his pleasure at the notable advance made by the movement, which was especially significant in the jubilee year.

The resolution was carried after Captain Wickham had said a few words in support of the extension of the Royal Naval Reserve system to Canadian seamen.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS.

This led Sir Charles Tupper to point out that this was a feature of the projected fast Atlantic service, which, he believed, would be of great help in promoting immigration, as intending settlers were afraid of the long ocean voyage, and therefore went to New York. With reference to the visit of the British Association to Canada, he mentioned the fact that when they were invited to Montreal some years ago, he had great difficulty in prevailing upon them to come, but there had been so much change of sentiment in the meantime that the invitation to Toronto for this year was accepted without hesitation, and with the great enthusiasm. He agreed with Sir Donald Smith that the visit of the British Medical Association to Montreal was of the very greatest importance to Canada.

MR. McFARLANE, Dominion Analyst, wished to alter the wording of the constitution of the League, but was satisfied by the meeting reaffirming a certain resolution passed last year.

SENATOR BOULTON had a resolution expressing pleasure at the introduction of the preferential tariff by the Government, but on the entreaty of Mr. McNeill not to introduce political or controversial questions, he agreed not to press it.

MAJOR SAM. HUGHES, M.P., moved, and DR. RYERSON, M.P.P., seconded, the appointment of the officers.

The lists, as appointed, will be found at length on previous pages.

THE HON. GEORGE W. ALLAN, moved a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was seconded by SIR CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER and carried.

In acknowledging the vote of thanks, the Chairman stated that he had received a cablegram from London, England, conveying the good wishes of the League at home. He also read Mr. Rudyard Kipling's poem "Our Lady of the Snows," which was handed up to him by J. Ross Robertson, Esq., M.P., Toronto, who had had it cabled to him. It was received with great applause

The meeting then adjourned.

