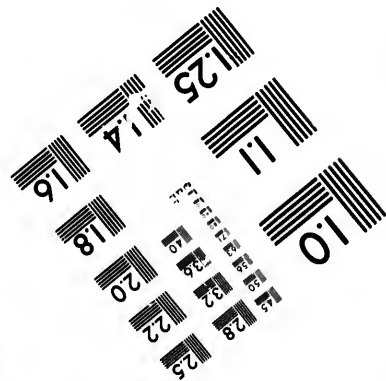
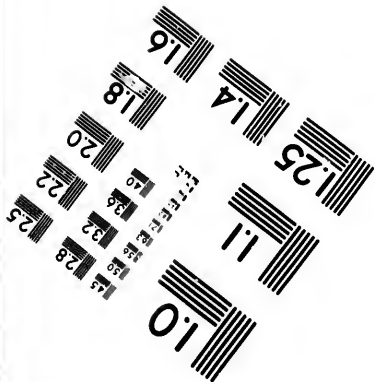
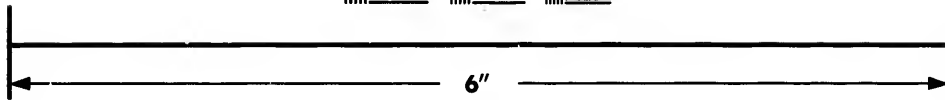
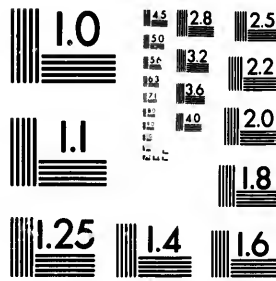


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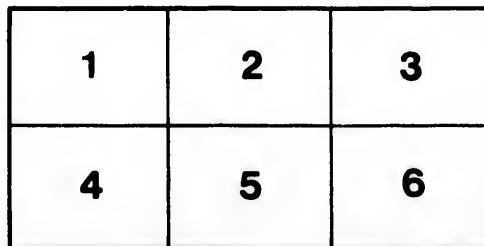
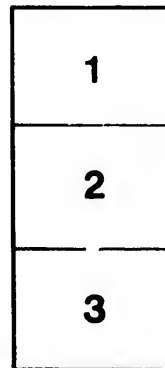
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# SPEECH

OF THE

Hon. Geo. W. Ross,  
III

AT THE

CANADIAN PRESS ASSOCIATION BANQUET,

JANUARY 31st, 1895.

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In replying to the toast of "Canada," so ably proposed by that veteran journalist, the editor of The Advertiser, I am somewhat overwhelmed by the many lines of thought which it opens before my mind. The very name "Canada" suggests a history reaching back three hundred years to the explorations of adventurers from across the Atlantic, who threaded their devious way up our lakes and rivers or through our forests primeval in search of El Dorados, always expected but never found. It suggests the settlement of the early pioneer who, fearless of danger and privation, planted the institutions of his native land in our virgin soil. It suggests bitter struggles with the forces of nature and still more terrible conflicts for the possession of the territory which is called by its name. It suggests enterprising journalists

with stick in hand setting up their fervid editorials, and then with perspiring brows working off mammoth weeklies on a Washington hand press at the rate of 500 copies per hour. It suggests a great heritage of immense extent and resources, set apart by a bountiful Providence to be the home of a free and progressive people. It suggests—but why pursue this thought?—the toast is Canada, our own land, “beautiful for situation,” as the psalmist said of Jerusalem, “the joy of the whole earth,” the birthplace of many of us—the object of the most affectionate regard of all its citizens, journalists included. Let us walk about this Canada you have so kindly received, and take its measurement that we may realize, if possible, more accurately its extent. Territorially, it is nearly equal in size to the continent of Europe, and contains over one-third of the area of the British Empire, or 430,783 square miles more than the area of the United States, leaving out Alaska. We could find room within its borders for England, Ireland and Scotland (and usually it is advisable to give Irishmen and Scotchmen plenty of room), France and Germany, Portugal and Spain, Scandinavia and Denmark, Belgium, Holland, Italy and Turkey, and still leave many thousand acres to farm out to Czar Nicholas III. and his Siberian exiles. Were its lands divided per capita among its inhabitants every man, woman and child would be the proud possessor in fee simple of about 400 acres of real estate with the right to convey the same, subject to succession duties of course, to his or her heirs, administrators, executors and assigns forever. Ontario alone is almost equal to France or Germany in geographical extent, and about one and a half times as large as

Great Britain and Ireland. Or comparing ourselves with other Provinces, Ontario is ten times as large as Nova Scotia, about eight times as large as New Brunswick and one hundred times as large as Prince Edward Island. Or comparing ourselves with our neighbors to the south, Ontario is larger by 40,000 square miles than the North Atlantic States—Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York and Pennsylvania. Even our inland lakes are greater than many of the kingdoms over which European monarchs rule, and when we consider the majestic sweep of such rivers as the St. Lawrence on our southern boundaries, with its connections 2,384 miles long ; or the Saskatchewan that ploughs our prairies midway a distance of 1,712 miles ; or the Mackenzie, dropping into the Arctic Ocean after flowing a distance of 2,400 miles through Canadian territory, a slight idea may be formed of the vastness of our Dominion. We have mountains grander than Alps or Appenines—mountains that can look down from their serene heights upon the eternal snows of Mont Blanc. Were all the classic mountains of Greece—Olympus, Ossa and Pelion—piled one upon another they would be as pigmies in the presence of the smallest of the Sierras that buttress our western boundary. We have forests which the avaricious eye of the lumberman has not yet seen, and which no reporter has yet described ; and we have mineral resources, the value of which no assayist has yet been able to determine. Our agricultural wealth is only limited by the demands of humanity for the staff of life, and our “harvests of the deep,” as McGee called them, by the courage and industry of our fishermen. So generous has our great patroness,

Nature, been that there is little or nothing which the human heart could desire that she has not bestowed upon us. It remains for us to show that we are worthy of her bounty.

And here one might reasonably ask, Has this vast estate of "forest, field and flood" passed to our hands simply that a geographer, in preparing a map of North America, might have a name for every part of it, or does the possession of it call for any act on our part to make our title indefeasible? To exercise dominion over a great territory might be a very laudable ambition—an ambition by which, at one time or another, almost every nation of the world was moved. The Roman Empire, long before Julius Cæsar subdued Gaul, sought to enlarge its borders, and it is said Alexander the Great wept because his conquests were limited to the little world in which he lived. In more modern times Spain, France, Germany, Great Britain and Russia delighted in conquest; and even our American neighbors, if the Monroe doctrine still prevails, are not devoid of the desire to extend their boundary northward as far at least as the aurora borealis and westward as far as the Hawaiian Islands.

So far as territorial extent is concerned our ambition should be satisfied. Even the addition of Newfoundland need have no special attraction for us. To occupy the lands we possess would be more to the purpose. How to increase the population of the country is the greatest problem which confronts us. Let us see how we stand in this respect.

The average population of the Dominion is but  $1\frac{1}{2}$  persons to a square mile. Ontario, with all its wealth and progress, has but 10 persons to a square mile, while the United States has 21,



the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland 312, France, 187, Germany 237, and Belgium 485. The average of the British Empire and all her colonies is 33. If we attained the density of population now possessed by the United States, or even the lower average of Ontario of 10 persons to the square mile (and there is no reason why that should not be attained in the next century), the Dominion would contain over 30,000,000 of people. At the opening of this century the population of the United States was only 3,800,000; now it is 65,000,000. What the nineteenth century did for the United States we fondly hope the twentieth century may do for Canada.

But whatever may be our regret with respect to the tardy settlement of the country, when we come to consider what we have accomplished towards its commercial development we cannot charge ourselves with want of enterprise. We have expended for the improvement of inland navigation and the construction of canals the sum of \$61,151,330, thus enabling ocean-going vessels to reach the very heart of the continent—a distance of 2,384 miles from the seaboard. We have a merchant marine consisting of 7,010 vessels, with a tonnage of 1,054,214 tons. This gives us the fifth place commercially among the nations of the world—Great Britain, the United States, Sweden and Norway and the German Empire being in advance of us, while France, Italy, Russia and Spain are our inferiors.

We have invested \$872,156,476 in the construction of 15,320 miles of railway, or more, according to our population, than the United States or the wealthiest nation of Europe. Our cities are all supplied with abundant facilities for rapid transit, and by

means of our postal and telegraph system the remotest part of the Dominion has easy and quick communication with the great commercial centres.

We drill annually for the defence of the country 45,000 of the bravest of our sons. We have established several military schools for the better education of our people in the art of war, and we have erected 10,480 churches as a counterpoise in which upon every Lord's Day is proclaimed the gospel of peace.

We have built 16,154 Public Schools, 14 Universities, 41 Colleges and over 300 High Schools, and expend annually about \$12,000,000 to prepare 1,000,000 boys and girls for future citizenship. We endeavor to inform ourselves as to the world's doings by means of 75 daily newspapers, 8 tri-weeklies, 14 semi-weeklies, 587 weeklies, 17 semi-monthly magazines, 147 monthlies, and 4 quarterly, in all 852 journals of varied politics and modes of thought. We sharpen our intellects upon 3,000,000 volumes from our Public Libraries, and we import annually for literary purposes \$1,208,506 worth of books and stationery.

We may discount our promissory notes (when we can find an endorser) in 39 different banks, having a paid up capital of \$69,009,346. How much of that capital belongs to the journalist is not for me to say.

This brief summary of the efforts made for the development of the country, commercially and educationally, is unmistakable testimony of Canadian energy. What if we have not yet subdued all our waste land and peopled every acre of our illimitable prairies! What if we have not delved into every hillside for the mineral treasures which it contains, who but the veriest pessim-

ist in the face of these facts would despair as to the future? Even had we the golden touch of Midas what more could we have done? By the strong hands of the hardy pioneer great forests have been turned into wheat fields and gardens. By the enterprise of the capitalist, steamships and railways carry our produce to the ends of the earth. Where the Indian shaped his arrow-head in a rude wigwam sixty years ago cities "compactly built together" with teeming thousands are now to be found. The refining influences of religion, education and journalism pervade every home, and the sweet privilege of sitting under his own vine and fig tree, none daring to make him afraid, is within the reach of every citizen.

#### NO DOUBT ABOUT THE FUTURE.

But it may be said, although Canada possesses half a continent of her own, though she has the most ample facilities for the transportation of her commerce by land and by water, though she has banking capital fully adequate for all business purposes, though she has latent resources which the necessities of centuries to come are not likely to exhaust, yet her future is a matter of the greatest doubt and uncertainty. I repudiate this timorous suggestion. (Cheers.) I, for one, have no fear as to the future of Canada, and I shall tell you why. Canadians represent a generous admixture of the most progressive and energetic races on the globe. For instance, about 30 per cent., or 1,400,000 of our population, are of French origin, whose frugality, industry and morality have been accredited by the experience of over three centuries; 60 per cent., or about 2,800,000, are of good old British stock, of whom about 1,100,000 are of Irish descent

950,000 of English descent, 740,000 of Scotch descent, and 10,000 Welsh. We have, in addition, 300,000, or about 7 per cent., of a German population. The remaining 3 per cent., for my argument, need not be considered.

But you will say, this variety of race is our weakness. If we are to succeed we must be homogeneous. I answer not so as I read history. (Applause.) Where among all the nations of Europe will you find a greater variety of racial types than you will find in Great Britain?—so great that very few of us can tell whether the Saxon, the Norman, the Danish or the Celtic strain predominates in his own case. And yet who will dare question the virility of the British race or their title to the sovereignty of the world? On this continent, too, the most powerful nation is also the most varied racially, but, in spite of it all, the dominant force of the American Republic is the good old British stock, begotten of Puritanism and Anglo-Saxon independence—the same stock that fought the battles of the revolution and laid the foundations of the republic a little more than a century ago.

I like the Saxon word “brede,” which means to grow—to develop. Given a good stock, trained through generations in the habit of self-government, hardened, it may be, by centuries of struggle for existence, conscious of its ability to grapple with and overcome difficulties, self-reliant enough to assert its rights, and courageous enough to defend them if assailed, and you need no other guarantee as to the future of a nation. That is our position in Canada, and no nation has been and no nation can be a failure where its ruling forces are composed of such stalwart elements. The racial forces

which govern Canada govern the whole world. They control its commerce, compose its armies and its navies, legislate for its millions in popular assemblies of varied kinds, and there is none to question their behests or challenge their supremacy. And are we to suppose that, having demonstrated their power by centuries of achievement, having tounded and colonized empires, they would drop from their nerveless grasp the sceptre of conquest when they touch our shores, and content themselves with a future of idleness and obscurity? Nay, verily. (Cheers.) Then what have we to fear!

I have confidence in the future of Canada because our constitution is so elastic as to permit the fullest expression of the popular will. It is a happy combination of the diffusion of power and central control. As an instance of diffusion, we have in Ontario alone about 6,000 limited monarchies in the form of school boards; we have 900 limited monarchies in the form of municipal corporations; we have 45 limited monarchies in the form of County Councils; we have 7 limited monarchies in the form of Provincial Governments; we have 1 limited monarchy, which we fondly call the Dominion of Canada; and over all presides Her Majesty—the embodiment of the best limited monarchy which the world ever possessed. This constitution, with its multiplex adaptations, is our own creation. On the one hand, it represents the idea of local control to the very verge of socialism; on the other hand, that concentration of power essential to the solidarity of national interests. For 27 years we have tested its adaptability to our various political necessities, and no one can say that it has failed to serve the purpose for which it was

designed. In some instances it may have been misunderstood and misinterpreted ; in other instances it may have been strained to serve a purpose which it was not intended to serve ; but in no case can it be used as the instrument of oppression, except with the consent of those for whom it is administered. And if to-day every Canadian, whether on the platform or through the press or at the ballot-box, has perfect freedom of opinion, if no one can touch his pocket by taxation or his person by indictment, except with his consent, if the will of the majority for the time being is the obligation of all, it is because the constitution which we have framed by our own hands secures for us these priceless privileges.

As a Canadian I want that constitution, modified as the growing wants of the country may require, to be for us an abiding hope—a sure and steadfast anchor. I know of no privilege compatible with public morality which it does not permit me to enjoy. I know of no aspirations for the future of the country which it compels me to restrain, and I want my children and my children's children to cherish it as they would cherish the precious memories of their childhood and the hallowed associations of their home. (Cheers.) Using the words of "Fidelis," the gifted writer of Canadian verse, let us hope that

"In the long hereafter this Canada shall be  
 The worthy heir of British power and British liberty ;  
 Spreading the blessings of her sway to her remotest bounds,  
 While with the honor of her name a continent resounds.  
 True to her high traditions, to Britain's ancient glory  
 Of hero and of martyr, alive in deathless story ;  
 Strong in their liberty and truth, to shed from shore to shore  
 A light among the nations till nations are no more."

Mr. Ross resumed his seat amid tumultuous applause.

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