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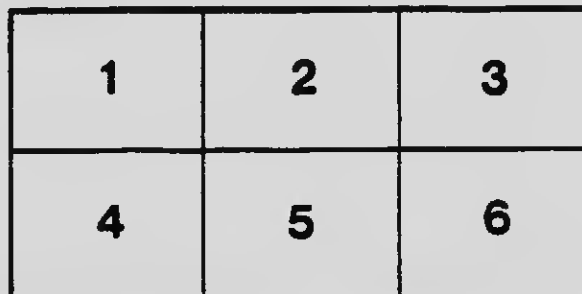
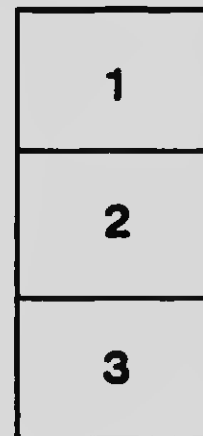
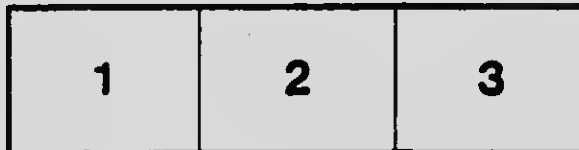
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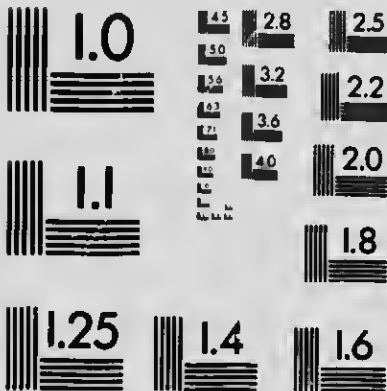
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*I was very pleased
to hear the speech
of the 6th June
at the opening*

6 June 1924

SPEECH

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GOVERNMENT DINNER, Nov. 3rd, 1910.
CAPETOWN.

GENERAL BOTHA,
MY LORD
AND GENTLEMEN,—

This is an eventful date in not only the history of South Africa, but also in the history of the British Empire.

Less than ten years ago, this beautiful country was the scene of a deadly struggle,—succeeding a turmoil of nearly a century's duration—which threatened to make of the veldt the seat of an everlasting feud. Two proud races were set up the one against the other. Two conflicting ideals were at stake. War with all its bitterness, its vindictiveness, war with all its horrors, raged. It left a land devastated and desolate, a country divided into two camps of victors and conquered.

To those who judged only by surface indications, to speak of peace might well have seemed a mockery. But there were those who saw deeper and knew that peace had come at last.

The brave men who surrendered at Vereeniging kept their self-respect, but they in return, won the respect of their adversaries. The war issues were settled without humiliation.

England did not fear for her own greatness; the terms made were generous.

British statesmanship knows by long experience that a brave foe is usually a staunch friend.

The emergence from chaos in so short a time, of the South African Union is the latest miracle of the traditional British constructive genius.

Peace with honour is now restored; the frame-work of a new Constitution is being applied to South Africa, and in order to celebrate the event, His Royal Highness representing His Majesty the King, and we, your kinsmen, from the overseas dominions, from Australia, New Zealand and Canada, are assembled here.

In the name of the Canadian Government and people, let me offer to the last born Union of British Provinces the best wishes of the OLDEST and FIRST CONFEDERATION IN THE EMPIRE.

It has been said by one of your leading statesmen that much more wonderful to him than the Constitution which you are inaugurating—were the signatures at the end of it.

Indeed, it is refreshing to know that this Union has been brought about by the united efforts of men who were long bitterly divided, and that it is based on a community of ideals as well as interests. Besides, the framers of the Constitution can, in the eyes of every political student, claim the credit of having embalmed in that remarkable instrument the guiding principles of a high civilization: EQUALITY, FREEDOM AND SELF-GOVERNMENT.

It may be argued that it is too elastic, too flexible, that it can be too easily altered in the course of time, thus imperiling rights and privileges already secured. I, for one, do not share this pessimistic view, well remembering that the force and endurance of British institutions are not so much in the parchment or the letters of a book, AS THEY ARE IN THE HEARTS AND IN THE MINDS OF EVERY CITIZEN.

Was it not a part of the practical wisdom of your ancestors to alter and vary the form of these institutions as they went on; to suit them according to the circumstances of the time, and reform them according to the dictates of experience? Ay! from time immemorial, they never ceased to work upon our frame of Government, as a sculptor fashions the model of a favourite statue.

Your task is far from being completed.

When the traveller has reached the top of the hill, his journey is not at an end. His, is only a halt.

He may rest his weary limbs, and contemplate for a time with gratitude and admiration the space he has traversed and the prospect around him. Indeed, he may dream of making a perpetual bivouac on the summit. Yet, he may only hope that his future course may be less arduous, the rocks less steep, the torrents less difficult, the marsh less unsafe to cross, but he must still move on after his period of repose, and pursue his journey, all the more confident in his path from the success he has already achieved.

So it is with the statesmen who have made the Constitution of South Africa. They have, in the judgment of the world, produced a most admirable instrument—but their work is yet unfinished.

They must set in motion the machinery of Government in the midst of difficulties which can not be underestimated. Problems of the greatest magnitude will have to be faced AND NONE GREATER THAN THE WELDING OF BRITON AND BOER into one enduring nationality under the British flag.

Fortunately, they at least can find in modern history one notable precedent of the happy solution of difficulties surrounding the existence of a dual nationality under one flag.

Three and forty years ago, on the first day of July, 1867, we also, in Canada, constituted out of the elements of weak colonies a powerful union, a Dominion soon to be known as a great country. In spite of evil forebodings, the success of the Canadian Confederation has overstepped all the most sanguine expectations of its promoters.

It is not my purpose to point exclusively to our history as the only example to be followed; this would be an excess of pride, but I may be permitted to say: Let the same principle under which success has been attained in North America bring forth the same results in South Africa.

Before Confederation, Canada was hardly known, even in England; to-day, Canada has a world-wide fame, and as our Premier, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, prophesied, with that foresight which has already disclosed before his eyes many traits of our future: "IF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY HAS BEEN TERMED THAT OF THE UNITED STATES, THE TWENTIETH SHALL BE THAT OF CANADA."

Statistics are out of place in a function of the kind I am so happy to participate in, but let me quote a few figures to strengthen the statement just made as to the success of our Confederation. In 1867-68 the bulk of our trade, import and export, was 131 millions. For the last fiscal year, it has reached over 700 millions, with a population estimated at 8 millions, giving a PER CAPITA RATIO of trade much larger than that of the United States.

The main features of the Canadian Constitution are well known to this distinguished and well informed gathering. It is more interesting for you to know why we have adopted the federal system instead of a legislative union. Some of the fathers of our Constitution—Sir John A. Macdonald among them—favoured a legislative union, but on account of the special institutions of the province of Quebec, the federal system was finally adopted. As you are aware, the province of Quebec—my native land—has a large population of mainly French origin, governed by the old French laws, with a system of education of its own. I am sure you will realize, here, in South Africa, how strongly we cling to our language and laws, a legacy of past generations, a legacy associated with historic and family recollections which makes them as dear as life to our people. We felt that in the inner circle of a provincial government, this national treasure of ours would be better safeguarded than in a large central government, weighed down with the general interests of the country.

The federative system, logically the simplest, is in fact, the most complex. It requires from those entrusted with its direction and from the people, more intelligence, more moderation than any other form of government. It is a most delicate instrument to be handled with skill and with a far seeing mind. For nearly half a century, the Canadians have shown themselves well qualified to use it to advantage. They pride themselves—and in this, there is no exaggeration—with enjoying the utmost liberty and happiness that a nation can expect in this world.

BUT IF CONFEDERATION WAS MADE POSSIBLE IN CANADA, NAY, IF IT HAS BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL, it is because the people, THE TWO RACES were entrusted by the Crown with a full, with an overflowing measure of responsible government.

There is a date in our history which marks a new epoch in the relations of the motherland with her colonies. It is when, in 1837, the French Canadian peasantry allied itself with the English speaking minority and claimed responsible Government as a BIRTH RIGHT.

A very brilliant man, Lord Durham, was sent out by Lord Melbourne's Government to investigate Canadian affairs and to solve the problem of our destinies. He examined our grievances with the eye of a statesman, penetrated the views of the various discordant parties, and pronounced for Union.

Lord Elgin, who became our Governor General, a few years after, boldly and generously applied the theory propounded by Lord Durham in his celebrated report.

Until that moment, the two races had been suspicious of each other. There was bitterness and rancour in their mutual relations. The French were French, the English English. To-day, both French and English are proud of their Canadian citizenship under the British flag. How has this been accomplished? By the gracious act of Queen Victoria in granting LOCAL AUTONOMY and SELF-GOVERNMENT to Canada. THAT, AND THAT ABOVE ALL, became the bond of Union and proved to be the most potent and the most effective means of attaching Canada to the motherland, and also of cementing the two races together.

Let it be ever remembered that two Canadians, one English, the other French, Robert Baldwin and Sir Louis Hypolite Lafontaine, nobly agreed to sink all racial animosities, so as to lead a healthy public opinion to the much coveted goal of responsible government. Since that time, English and French

have united to govern Canada jointly, by an alliance of the two forces.

Do you realize now, why the men of my race--whose ancestors were defeated on the Plains of Abraham in 1759, after one of the most dramatic battles ever recorded in the pages of modern history—are so proud of their British connection?

But how could it be otherwise?

Under the benign influence of the Crown, our traditions have been preserved—our customs—our laws have been maintained. Religious liberty, we fully enjoy. The French language is officially recognized. It is freely used in the courts of the land and in Parliament.

Indeed, if we did not cling to the memories of the past, we should be unworthy of the great nation which gave us life. If we did not proclaim our loyalty, we should be ungrateful to the great nation which gave us liberty. FRENCH BY DESCENT AND AFFECTION—WE ARE BRITISH BY ALLEGIANCE AND CONVICTION.

In my humble judgment, there is more than one similitude between the circumstances which brought about the Union in both our Countries, and so far as mortal eyes can pierce the mists of the future, no reason can be discerned why English and Dutch in South Africa could not accomplish what French and English have accomplished in North America. Will not history repeat itself?

Blessed with free institutions, dwelling in a land favoured by nature and which might well inspire a deep love to its children, issued from a stock strong and sound, holding in the Southern hemisphere so commanding a position, both races, Dutch and English, the members of the new born Union, are bound to play

a most conspicuous, nay, a most brilliant part in the affairs of the Empire. The history of Canada will teach you that because Britain has the wisdom and the fidelity to her own principles TO TRUST THE PEOPLE AND TO PUT THEIR DESTINIES IN THEIR OWN HANDS, the harmonizing of two races is no more an impossible task.

In my country, the nationalization of two peoples under the flag of the Empire, has been achieved without the elimination of ancestral pride, custom or language. Yet, it has produced this unusual and unexpected result of Unity of national sentiments, ideals and ambitions.

No doubt you will have obstacles to contend with, obstacles imbedded in the memories and prejudices of the past, but can they not all be overcome by good will and mutual forbearance?

Where, I pray, except under the British Crown alone, can such a spectacle ever be witnessed?

There, far away, where the stars glitter under our northern frosty skies, a man of French lineage, belonging to the minority, acting as chief adviser to His Majesty, in the oldest of the overseas dominions—and here, under the tropics, where the sun shines and irradiates a luxuriant vegetation, a Boer General, entrusted with the seals of office, in the latest Union! Yet each, in their official capacity, and from both ends of the earth, maintaining with undisputed loyalty the direct relations of each their free government with the Crown—the Crown which is not only the symbol but the real bond of Unity in the greatest Empire that the world has ever seen.

