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Do we need any defence system in Canada?

THE VALOUR of IGNORANCE

A Plea for Canadian Defence

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Canadian Defence League

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OBJECTS OF THE LEAGUE.

1.—To awaken the public mind to the serious importance of national defence, and to aid in bringing about the adoption of the most effective and economical system to that end.

2.—To carry on a non-political, educational campaign looking to the adoption of the principle of patriotic, unpaid, or universal naval or military training, in the belief that such training conduces to the industrial, physical and moral elevation of the whole people, and is essential to national safety.

3.—To co-operate with the various Provincial educational authorities, the Department of Militia and Defence, and the Trustees of the Strathcona Fund, in introducing physical and military training into the schools of Canada.

4.—To aid in securing the systematic physical and military training of all youths between the ages of fourteen and eighteen.

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A Plea For Canadian Defence.

By Wm. Hamilton Merritt, Chairman Organizing
Committee, Canadian Defence League.

Extracts from an address delivered on 9th March,
1911, before the Canadian Club of Hamilton.

As a general introduction, I feel bound to say that I take for granted that you value patriotism above commercialism, and Imperialism above continentalism. That your flag and nationality are in fact and in truth the most sacred thing in life to you, and for which each and every one of you would be ready to fight if it should be necessary to do so. Unless this is the spirit of our people, then Canada is indeed in a hazardous position, for unless such a feeling as this is really in the hearts of all of us, we shall not listen with sympathy to a demand for that self-sacrifice, which alone can keep alive in the world the nationality of any people.

I was much struck by an address by Baron Kikuchi of the Imperial University of Kyoto, given last year at the University of Toronto. The address was on the "Japanese Spirit," which through all the changes in that old and wonderful people they have preserved unimpaired. Their "Spirit" is virtually personal self-sacrifice for the benefit of the State, or, as defined by Baron Kikuchi, "Reverence for the Imperial house or dynasty, and reverence for their ancestors;" the practical carrying out of which includes "inuring the body to hardships and privations, and cultivating discipline, coolness and self-control."

What this national "Spirit" is capable of, was well exhibited in the late Russo-Japanese War. Can we say that this is the "spirit" of our people? Is it not—sad to relate—the opposite, and much more as described in a sermon by

Rev. Mr. Soames, professor of religious education in the University of Chicago? He said "we teach our youth in America to be self-reliant and make their own way. They become self-sufficient and their attitude is to take orders from no man. But religion demands obedience. St. Paul has taught us that we are not our own, but bought with a price. He, himself, took pride in the title of 'Slave of God.'"

VALOUR OF IGNORANCE.

My intention is to endeavor to say a few words to you on the subject of Canadian Defence, but under the title of "The Valour of Ignorance."

Some of you may have thought that my address is to be on the remarkable book of that name, by Homer Lea, published by Harper Brothers. While that is not quite the case, yet I intend to avail myself freely of Mr. Lea's logical deductions, for most of them apply with equal force to Canada as to the United States; practically the only difference being that the United States is building up a great navy to guard her shores, while Canada has been content up to the present, to rely on the navy of Great Britain.

We are enjoying the wonderful advantage—under the protecting aegis of the Old Motherland, who is staggering under the titanic financial load she is bearing alone—of now being able to perfect our plans for self-defence, which, under any other circumstances, would fall still-born into the lap of some land-hungry power.

From Homer Lea's work and other authorities, I shall try and prove to you, (1), that no people can remain as they are where there is indifference to the matter of defence, and convergence of interests with other nations; (2), that only physical and military excellence in a people can enlist the respect of other nations and keep them from absorbing

mere commercial peoples with inadequate protection; (3), that some day there must be an inevitable clash of interests and armaments between ourselves and our great neighbor; and (4), that the future hope of the British Empire demands that her boys and men have that physical and military training which brings health, discipline, respect, good manners, and safety to flag and country in its train.

Incredible as it may seem, yet I feel that the most difficult task we have is to convince our fellow-countrymen that there is any need for a real serious defence system, one in fact, not in name only. When we have done this, the battle for national safety will be more than half won.

TO STAND STILL IMPOSSIBLE.

(1) That no people can remain as they are where there is indifference to the matter of defence and convergence of interests with other nations.

In connection with this, Homer Lea says "National existence is not a haphazard passage of a people from an unknown beginning to an unforeseen end."

... "Yet nations prefer to evade and perish rather than to master the single lesson taught by the washing-away of those that have gone before them. In their indifference and in the valour of their ignorance they depart, together with their monuments and constitutions, their vanities and gods."

Conan Doyle wrote recently in "The Last Galley" — a story on the fall of Carthage to Rome—"And they understood too late that it is the law of Heaven that the world is given to the hardy and to the self-denying, whilst he who would escape the duties of manhood will soon be stripped of the pride, the wealth and the power which are the prizes manhood brings."

And you will perhaps remember—go-

ing a step further—that such a great writer and thinker as Ruskin was so warm an advocate of the strenuous in nation-building, that he wrote, “We talk of peace and learning, and of peace and plenty, and of peace and civilization, but I found that those were not the words which the muse of History coupled together; that on her lips the words were peace and sensuality, peace and selfishness, peace and death. I found, in brief, that all great nations learned their truth of word and strength of thought in war; that they were nourished in war, and wasted by peace; trained in war, and betrayed by peace—in a word, that they were born in war, and expired in peace.”

INTERNATIONAL RESPECT.

(2). That only physical and military excellence in a people can enlist the respect of other nations and keep them from absorbing mere commercial peoples with inadequate protection.

Homer Lea points out the national suicide involved in excessive commercialism at the expense of defence precautions and a strenuous national life, he says, “Whenever a nation becomes excessively opulent and arrogant, at the same time being without military power to defend its opulence or support its arrogance, it is in a dangerous position. Whenever the wealth and luxury of a nation stands in inverse ratio to its military strength, the hour of its desolation, if not at hand, approaches. When the opulence and unmartial qualities of one nation stand in inverse ratio to the poverty and the military prowess of another, while their expansion is convergent, there results those inevitable wars wherein the commercial nation collapses and departs from the activities of mankind forever.”

A lesson might be brought home from this that it might pay Canada better to do with a little less wealth, if it should

be necessary, while we gave more attention to our martial qualities and allow our neighbor a monopoly in the opulent and arrogant development.

THE INEVITABLE CLASH.

(3) That some day there must be an inevitable clashing of interests and armaments between ourselves and our great neighbor.

I would like to remind you of the history of the expansion of our great neighbor. The original territory, under the Peace of Paris in 1883, covered the territory east of the Mississippi and north of Florida. Then the Province of Louisiana, the great central west, was purchased from France in 1803, and Florida from Spain in 1819. Texas, as a republic, was admitted in 1845, Great Britain was euchred out of Oregon and Washington in 1846, and the remainder of the west wrested from Mexico by war in 1848, save a small piece purchased from them in 1853. Then Alaska was bought from Russia in 1867, Hawaii was absolved, and the Philippines and Porto Rico were taken from Spain in 1898, and Tutuila (Samoan Is.) acquired in 1899. This does not include Cuba, and it constitutes more than a ten-fold increase to the 326,378 square miles of the original 13 States. Another thirteen-year period comes in, for it is an average of 13 years between each new acquisition.

The question as to whether our great neighbor has finished this tremendous expansion is ever an interesting one to us. One is due next year. Homer Lea has to say on this matter: "The continuation of this building, and the endless extension of the Republic, the maintenance of its ideals and the consummation, in a world-wide sense, of the aspirations of its founders, constitutes the only pure patriotism to which an American can lay claim, or in defence of, lay down his life."

"Expansion of a nation's boundaries is indicative, not only of its external growth, but of the virility of its internal constitution ; the shrinkage of its boundaries, the external exemplification of its internal decay."

"The territorial dominions of the United States are not only those possessions governed by its laws, but that vast region of Mexico, the West Indies, Central and South America, which, as far as being causative of war, are as much under the political sovereignty of the United States as are the States of the Union. The preservation of the constitution is not more vital than the inviolability of the Monroe Doctrine."

"Of the world's territory that comes under the political jurisdiction of the Republic, two-thirds is covered by Mexico, Central and South America, capable of supporting three times as many empires as now divide Europe."

"The political responsibilities that this republic has so unconcernedly assumed in establishing its suzerainty over the Western Hemisphere and a tentative dominion over the Pacific are as vast," etc.

"The peace of the future must be, as in the past, an armed peace."

Continuing to quote from Homer Lea we find that he says : "In 1906 there were in England to each million of the population, eight murders committed, in Germany, four, and in the United States 118."

"This Republic exceeds all other civilized nations in crime." . . . "Through the excessive criminality of any nation there will always exist concomitant violation of the rights and privileges of other countries as guaranteed to them by the usage of international law, and which must, in due time, culminate in war."

"The unlettered savage . . . evolved the very spirit of

human obligation that this great Republic is coming to know not of. Its disregard for such pacts is not only increasing, but its violations are, in many instances, unworthy of the nation's potential greatness."

SHOEING HORSES FOR CANADA.

I should like to give one extract from another source. It is from an article on the "Lessons of a Decade," by 2nd Lieut. and Brevet Captain Frederick Whittaker, who served in the Federal Cavalry during the Civil War. The article appeared first in the Army and Navy Journal in 1871, was reprinted in book form and again reproduced last year in the U. S. Cavalry Association Journal.

Under the head of shoeing of horses, the author says: "In the winter, both toe and heel corks on all the shoes should be used in slippery ice countries, as Canada. In mud countries they are not necessary. But, as our next war of any magnitude will probably be in the north, our horses will have to be roughed with toe and heel-corks for winter campaigning."

AN ENGLISH VIEW.

We might now briefly consider the views of an English thinker on Imperial lines. He is Mr. L. S. Amery, who was an editor of the London Times, and one of the leading military critics in the Empire. Mr. Amery said before the National Defence Association of England: "But the Indian frontier is by no means the most serious frontier problem we have to face. In Canada we have a frontier of nearly 4000 miles separating us from our greatest potential rival. There are many, I know, who, while admitting the reality of the danger from Germany, will refuse absolutely to face the even greater danger that may eventually arise from the expansion of the United States.

I know that the average politician who hates all unpleasant facts will say: "The Americans are our cousins and friends; war with them is unthinkable! Unthinkable! There is no such word in international politics. We have been at war with the United States in the past. We have more than once since then been on the verge of war with her—the last time, less than fourteen years ago, over Venezeula. In any case, no statesman has the right, whatever the circumstances, to stake the existence of his country on the hope that the friendship of a foreign country will continue indefinitely."

The same authority has stated recently: "As long as nations are separate nations, with frontiers that touch, with economic interests that may clash, they have always got to consider the possibility of war. We can be responsible for our own policy but we cannot be responsible for the policy of any other country. We cannot say who may be controlling the destinies of the United States 10 or 20 years hence, or what their attitude may then be towards Canada or towards the British Empire. More than that, international friendship is most securely based when it is based on respect as well as on mere good-will. I don't think Canadians to-day can do otherwise than regard the problem gravely and seriously, with an earnest desire to maintain for 100 years more, as in the past 100 years, the friendship of the United States, but with the knowledge that such friendship can be maintained only by mutual respect and by our confidence in our power to defend our rights."

Let me go even a step further, and say that if we believe the history and the reasoning given by Mr. Homer Lea to be correct, it would appear to be certain that the rapidly converging lines and interests between ourselves and our

great neighbor can have but one issue, and the 'god of battles' alone can say who will come out on top. However, there is one thing, and one alone, which can postpone the evil day, and that is the development on our part of such a strength as to demand forbearance.

We now come to the important consideration as to whether we have that necessary strength to-day, or are now developing it.

DEFENCE AN OBLIGATION.

Take the world at large, we find that the same obligation that underlies the imposition of taxes and the education of children in all civilized countries is also applied in the case of defence of home and country. To qualify for playing his part in defence is held to be the duty of every man, but the manner in which this is carried out differs in each nation. The same general principles, however, are applied throughout, from the more drastic rendering of the idea by the French and German to that quite recently adopted in Australia and New Zealand. In the latter cases the defence education begins at as early an age as ten years, and extends to the 25th year of a man's life, the sacrifice of his time, however, amounting to little more than a week in the year.

This was the principle evolved by the first settlers in Canada, our French-Canadian brothers, adopted by our first British Governors, crystallized into law in our first Militia Act of 1808, and it was that more than anything else which saved our country in 1812-14.

There are, however, a few, a very few, of the peoples of the world, who have not this universal service principle. They are those whose marches are the ocean or other people whose offensive powers are a negligible quantity. In

this case large expenditures on a navy are resorted to, as in the case of Great Britain and the United States, and the power of the almighty dollar is depended on to procure a voluntary land defence force.

This being the condition of things, where does our beloved Canada stand? Sir Wilfrid Laurier said recently in Montreal that now we are a nation. Where do we stand among the nations of the world, or indeed among the nations that go to make up the British Empire? Facts and figures go to show that our position is absolutely unique, that no civilized nation occupies the position of disregard to the defence of country that is occupied to-day by Canada.

Until recently, China was the only country in the world which had a comparable defence policy to that of our country, but even China has joined the ranks with the progressive nations and expects to have 400,000 well armed and trained men in the field by the year 1913, and 1,185,000 in 1920. At present she has 160,000 effective soldiers with modern arms and training. Canada is the only country that dares to rely on a superintelligence, on editorials, on resolutions, and on peace-conferences, to compel the respect of her rivals.

AN INEXPENSIVE SYSTEM.

Now with regard to a few figures in support of the foregoing. Under our old discarded system, Nova Scotia alone trained more armed soldiers in 1866 than we did in all Canada last year at one-sixtieth the cost. To train 45,767 in 1866, Nova Scotia spent \$114,460; to train some 40,000, the Dominion of Canada paid \$6,749,275 in 1909.

For what we spend on our 40,000 volunteers, Switzerland can put 540,000 men in the field; Bulgaria, 381,000, and

Argentina, 500,000, and Sweden and Roumania, for their half a million men an average of less than half as much more expenditure.

In France there are 18 soldiers to guard each square mile.

In Canada a soldier has to guard 74 square miles.

In France there is one soldier to 3 of male population of military age

Germany	"	"	3	"	"
Austria	"	"	6	"	"
Russia	"	"	12	"	"
England	"	"	15	"	"
Canada	"	"	40	"	"

The cost per soldier to the country is:

Switzerland	13.52
Bulgaria	15.82
Italy	18.47
Sweden	23.26
Japan	31.48
France	35.70
Germany	40.78
Canada	112.50

Just think of the comparison between our militiaman and the trained Japanese soldier, to say nothing of the German, and yet our militiaman costs practically three times as much as the German, and four times as much as the Jap. In an inverse ratio, I would much dislike to wager on the issue if one-fourth the number of Japanese with their "spirit," armament, and training, were to be opposed to our Canadian forces with our present armament, organization, and training.

FACTS RE OVER-SEA INVASION.

Homer Lea says: "Germany, France or Japan can each mobilize in one month more troops, scientifically trained by educated officers, than this Republic could gather together in three years." . . . "Oceans no longer prevent the

successful invasion of distant lands, but on the other hand make such attack possible." . . . "Within a given time a single vessel of the Mauretania or Deutschland class could transport more troops from Europe to the American shores than could all the fleets of England have done at the time of the Revolution or War of 1812."

. . . "Germany can transport to the United States a quarter of a million soldiers in a fortnight."

. . . "While Japan has over 50,000 scientifically trained military officers, the United States has less than 4,000."

And Mr. Homer Lea shows that Japan also has fleets of available transports in which she can send at any time 200,000 from her armies of more than a million trained men.

The deductions from these quotations are obvious, that the matter of the defence of Canada, as a very important part of the British Empire, is a real, serious, live problem.

TRAINING IMPERATIVE.*

(4) That the future hope of the British Empire demands that her boys and men have that physical and military training which brings health, discipline, respect, good manners, and safety to flag and country in its train.

While a great many people in Canada do not, or pretend that they do not, see the necessity for a defence system similar to that of other countries, yet practically all seem to be in accord with the advisability of our youth being trained in systems of physical training and discipline. Many even think every boy and young man the better for military training. Here then, are generally recognized benefits which come in the train of preparation for national safety.

In Australia and New Zealand Junior Cadets are trained from 10—14, senior cadets from 14—18, and all young men from 18—25 are obliged to put in an annual training with the defence forces.

Anyone who has been in a country where universal military training pertains, will have been much struck with the general smart, cleanly appearance of the people. An old German, with whom I once travelled, and who had lived for 30 years in England, said that if there were universal peace, he would advocate the adherence to the German system of military training, for the sake of health and humanity.

Homer Lea points out that "The German Empire possesses the greatest armament of any nation proportionate to its population; yet the entire army—considered as non-producers—consists of only 1.17 per cent. of the population, the other 98.53 per cent. carrying on their customary vocations."

The same author evidently does not hold that Boy Scouts, Rifle Clubs, Strathcona funds and the like, excellent and desirable as they are all are, are going to fill the place of a national defence system, for we find he says in his book :

"Rifle, pistol and all other similar civilian associations are not only negatively but positively harmful to the nation, inasmuch as they produce an erroneous conception of the knowledge and duties necessary to a modern soldier." And again : . . . "With war near at hand, public evasion is found in the formation of shooting or rifle clubs, under the delusion that to shoot constitutes the sole duty of a soldier and is the source of all military success. . . . To shoot is less important than to march; to shoot accurately less important than to obey implicitly; to kill less important than to survive."

If you have been able to follow my disjointed discourse, you will have discovered that I have good grounds for advocating the urgent necessity of an adequate defence system, and that in it there are distinct benefits to the individual and to the national morale.

Training in the use of arms does not mean war, but rather makes for peace. The Chinese says: "You may not need soldiers for a hundred years, but you cannot do without them for a single day." You remember that Lord Milner asked at Vancouver how we were going to protect our population and trade, or were we going to take a back seat? After pointing out that wars will be rarer, he said: "but every year and every day, not only on the rare occasions that nations actually fight the power of fighting exercises a silent, decisive influence on the history of the world. It is like the cash reserve of some great solvent bank. How often is it necessary to produce millions and actually use them? It is credit which determines the power and influence of nations, just as it does the fate of any business."

And when the time comes again when the invader is at the door, can we then be saved by the "Valour of Ignorance," can we repel the invader by bringing into force the obsolete *leve en masse* clause of our Militia Act? The answer to this is once more given by Homer Lea, when he says: "From the beginning of the formation of national entities until the present time, the idea of popular uprisings to repulse foreign invaders has ever been a universal conceit, an indelible vanity, that neither the erosion of ages has erased, nor the deluges of blood issuing from them have washed away."