

(November 11th, 1912.)

Standards.

BY HON. S. H. BLAKE, K.C.*

AT a regular luncheon of the Club on the 11th Nov., Hon. S. H. Blake said:

I was asked most kindly by your President and the Secretary to speak some afternoon to the Canadian Club. I received from him the statement that I might speak on any subject that I pleased, and say what was pleasing to myself. I mentioned that to a friend of mine, and he said, "The Chairman might as well have given you the permission, for you would have taken it anyway." That shows how unkind and untruthful people may be!

I said that I would like to give a little talk—if I even desired it I am not an eloquent man, and I have lived long enough to endorse the statement made by a friend of mine yesterday, who went to hear a celebrated divine, an eloquent man, and I said, "What did he talk about?" "Well," he said, "I really don't know; I was so carried away with the language." "But," I said, "can you not give me the text?" "I can't," said he. "Well," I said, "what was the sermon about?" "Really, I don't know," he replied, "all I can say is, it was an eloquent sermon." Now, I am beginning to have very much the same idea of eloquence, and I say, even if I could be eloquent, I think it would be unwise, because I desire to give a serious talk this afternoon.

You will permit me to say, Mr. Chairman, before I commence, that I began to think when outside that it was Indian summer, it was so beautiful but was just a little doubtful until I came in here and found, from the smoke, that it certainly is Indian summer! (Laughter.)

About seventy years ago, a junior partner of one of those counsel that used to delight the audience attending a jury trial, said to me, "Do you know, that when the leading counsel

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dress got up and quietly made his the other counsel would whisper going to *talk* to the jury!" He of them by just *talk*ing to them! gone, the meat or essence would but words, eloquent though they would like to have a little of the very celebrated lawyer, and have in Club this afternoon.

ment to us to have true standards. and standards for silver, and stand- s for oats, and standards for butter, people that don't regard these stand- place whence there is no means of . Now, if it be so necessary to have matters, is it not a thousand-fold standards for our life, the stand- of the nation, the standards that and the standards that will uplift, and d who lives up to them, but also ches. It should be a matter ever Club,—that your duty does not r duty is carried far beyond that, t by any person whose life you the good, honest grasp of a Cana- give him better and truer views : aims and objects, I presume, of irman, they should be made its e.) Each one might and should something to forward the great that is to take the standard of

We propose to set a standard rd of any nation, no matter how elled with old rules, with old s; here, thank God! we are start- e, here we are untrammelled by here we are a nation in the of setting such an ideal standard say, "Thank God for the Cana- time when we are beginning to ing band, undertook not merely an do that in their studies—but live them, to be walking stand- id may follow." If that be the ve do not begin it with the stain

of the opium, the slave or any other like trade. We don't begin it with the sin of adding a little to our income by such means, for although the opium trade might add five million pounds sterling a year to Britain, it brought an incalculable curse to China and continued it there with the cost of two wars which she dragged cruelly out of the heathen nation in its struggle to avert this evil. What a marvellous contrast between the standard of heathen China and that of Christian England! One of the first acts of this heathen nation when, as she is, coming into her own is her edict, "No opium! Put this curse introduced by Christian England out of our land!" May we ever keep free from such black spots in our history and in our integrity valiantly proceed with the great work which is now entrusted to us.

How varied are the opinions of people upon the subject of standards. Not long since a man known in our city died, and some months ago a friend of mine came into my office and said, "They say So-and-so's life is a failure." "His life a failure? Man!" I said, "what is your standard?" The voice was loud, but only gave due expression to the deeply moved spirit. "Man, what is your standard? Didn't he live a pure life, and a true life, and an honest life, and an uplifting life? Did he not sacrifice self, and did he not seek only to do that which was for the welfare of others? He never went into the Town of Carnal Policy and there dwelt. Compromise and expediency were cast out of his dictionary. He never accompanied with Mr. Facing-both-ways, or lived in the same street with Mr. By-ends. He never struggled for place or for Position, or ran after that which the world is running after. Do you say that life is a failure? That life is a sacred heritage to the Canadian people?" That is a life the memory of which is to be handed down. The standard was four-square to the world. That is a life that we Canadians may well be proud of, and this Canadian Club may well seek to repeat it in many of its members, and through them in tens of thousands in our Dominion. (Applause.)

That life a failure! Give me for a moment of time an opportunity of presenting a vision. When the supreme day comes when we shall all have to stand before the great Judge, and when on His throne He sits, I can see Him beckoning to the man whose life was a 'failure'—to sit up on the throne beside Him. I can hear Him say, "Come up, my son, and help me to judge those men who thought your life and mine were failures." And as He stretches out that hand I can see in it the stigmas of the nails that entered into it, driven in

life also, was a failure. It was
 'ld to understand. "Come up and
 thought that your life and my life

1 this afternoon no lower standard
 ou shall not seek to live a life on
 I want you to seek, in season and
 upon people that the life of truth,
 e of uprightness, the life of integ-
 ce for others, is not a failure, but
 f life, to be followed and to be

l. (Laughter.) Mr. President, if
 ossil, thank God that I am placed

But, being a fossil, let me call
 matters that make me a fossil. A
 ould give me a few reminiscences."
 ng to give them, so the old people
 ! (Laughter and applause)—but
 before my mind is the Hon. Robert
 nearly opposite to us, and as he
 tegrity and in his uprightness past
 as studying my lessons, I said, "I
 true and as upright as the life of
 ll you, Mr. Chairman, that one of
 ng men of to-day, and one of the
 with all my force and power this
 k almost in vain for such manly
 standard deteriorate! Start here
 t it is lived! We had in our youth
 f people of that class, we touched
 r voices, we viewed their lives, we
 earned from them, that for our-
 ness, for our country, and for the
 be an undeviating standard of in-

ck me in reading Carlyle's History
 en it came to the time of his deep
 e his successor on the throne, when
 es that he had had, and of the
 ith his vision he saw coming, he
 ave a ruler with strength of char-
 of mind and ready in action. He
 education of his two nephews, one
 ould be the king after him. One

day, passing through the school room, he found there the lad,
 afterwards King Frederick William. He was very anxious
 that he should be a proficient scholar in French—you know
 the language here, I think (Laughter)—in French, simply
 because it was the diplomatic language of those days. Taking
 down Lafontaine's Fables, he said to the boy, "Translate me
 that fable." He did it excellently well; and the King putting
 his hand on the boy's shoulder, commended him for the
 progress he was making. The lad said to him, "Sire, I think
 it but right to say, I should not have been able to translate
 it so well but that I had it for my lesson yesterday." That
 is the class of boy no doubt you are bringing up in our ordi-
 nary schools! I will give you five dollars for every such boy
 to-day! Frederick William years after said, "I never will
 forget the hand put on my shoulder and around me as he com-
 mended my truthfulness, and commended my honesty, in not
 bearing away the meed of praise that I had not earned. He
 took me out in front of the Potsdam Palace, where there was
 a great obelisk, and continuing to commend me, said, speaking
 in French" (we are not all educated up to that, Mr. Chair-
 man), "speaking French, he pointed to the great monolith and
 said, 'Sa droiteur fait sa force! Its uprightness is its strength.'
 And still insisting on that attitude of absolute uprightness even
 on the throne, and amidst all circumstances, we walked up
 and down on the terrace." Frederick William said, "Many
 a time after that, filled with trouble and threatened with at-
 tacks on my Kingdom, as surrounding nations offered me
 help and assistance on degrading terms, I walked up and down
 in front of the Potsdam Palace, and thinking of my old uncle
 and his early lesson 'Sa droiteur fait sa force' I said, ma
 droiteur fait ma force—Let that be my strength! And let
 me reject any course of action and any offered friendship
 which involves a sacrifice of right."

Suffer another illustration. I was very much struck with it.
 A man, in dealing with the question of standards, took out
 his watch on the platform, and said to one of the audience,
 "What's the hour by your watch?" We will call it "Ten min-
 utes to two." To another, "By yours?" "Five minutes to
 two." "By yours?" "Two o'clock." Now if I go down the
 whole of Broadway, and set my watch by the time of every
 man that I meet,—what would be the result of it? I'll ruin
 my watch, and I won't have the right time at the end of it.
 But, that's what you in this Assembly Hall are doing in your
 daily lives; *you* are setting your conduct by that man that has
 been a little longer in business than you, and *you* are setting

s alongside of you; *you* are justified it, or because another did it, especially looked up to, then all the ded by what *he* does. If I want the sun: there I get the true time, And you, if you want to get your n intended to guide the world, go set your conduct, and by nothing from Genesis to Revelation is full right, talking right, doing right, depended upon and ever-changing let this Canadian Club write that it can be seen from one end of TEOUSNESS is the standard that it by living it ourselves.

I feel the chairman pulling the in Ireland he dare not do that!— thoughts in connection with this, mem away with you. A lad was early June day, and he had over which were suspended his belongings. I teamster on the canal—mark, an —“Well, William, where are you You know, sir, the family is getting is not increasing, and I have got and I have to do for myself.” what business are you going into?” r had the little soap factory down soap making is the only thing that I I suppose I must go up to Phila- ny way there.” “Well,” says this ister, “William, take two thoughts one is, make the very best article pretences, no “This-is-as-good-as- best article that you can; and my that you deal with sixteen ounces liam said, “I plodded along, and ng in my mind, and I resolved they William Colgate.” And at a time me to a cheque for millions of dol- tform saying: “William Colgate’s doing the very best that he could, I dealt with sixteen ounces to the

The question is not whether you will probably be found out in your wrong; it is not a question of making a little more or less money; but it is the injury that you do to yourselves, the self-weakening that is inflicted by dropping down to the low level of doing a mean or dishonourable action. You are weakening yourselves, your self-respect. Markino, the Japanese artist, who came to study in London, Paris, Vienna, and San Francisco, and who went many days without a meal, working and toiling as an artist, wrote back to his friends words I think it worth while for any young man to read. He stated, that of all the people he had met he liked the English best, but he made one qualification in his likings: while commending their kindness shown in many actions, “There was one thing,” he said, “that I did not find in the English people (and to a Japanese ancestor-worshipper it was a great omission,) I did not find the quality of *bushito*,”—doing right because it is right, doing right because of the respect that you owe to yourself, doing right because of your ancestors, doing right because of your name, immaterial whether any man sees or finds it out, immaterial who may be there. *Bushito!* Do the right because it is the right! Do the right! Sa droiteur fait sa force! It is an amazing thing to me, now in my seventy-eighth year, to look back over so many people that have made dead failures, because to them there was no bushito standard. The men who succeeded and whose children are succeeding, were those who lived the high motto “noblesse oblige.”

Just one little instance of that. A friend of mine many years ago said to me, going into his large wholesale warehouse: Last week a man came in here to deal with me. One of my salesmen came up and said, “Blank is buying a large parcel, sir.” “Indeed,” said I, “Blank! I think I know that name. Go down to the bookkeeper and bring me up the full name and address of that man,” and he did. “Why,” I said to the salesman, “that is the man that cheated us; that’s the man that made the bad failure; that’s the man that dishonestly left his creditors with a few cents on the dollar! Go down and tell the buyer not to serve him!” The buyer came up, and he said: “Why, sir, the parcel is very large, and he is going to pay cash for it.” “Never put one dollar of his money into my establishment! Put all those goods back into their places, and tell him we don’t deal with such men.” My friend hadn’t what they call “the yellow itch.” (Laughter.) He gave a lesson to that man when he taught him “There is something better than money, it is character, and it goes farther. I will not soil myself by allowing such men to come in and deal in my establishment.”

This merchant died a man of wealth. He was true to the true standard. He died honored. He died a Senator of the Dominion—don't mistake me! I am not saying that this is a never failing certificate of character. (Laughter.) But he died respected by all and loved by many; and he died living his standard. "Sa droiteur fait sa force."

I thank you. I have given about one-quarter of what I intended, but I have been led away here and there, and I must now close. I desire, however, to say this, that if you do me the honor of electing me a member of this Club I shall be very glad to join. (Applause.) I am not depreciating at all, of course—I put it first, the place it should occupy—the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society. (Laughter.) Some man will say St. Andrew's Society stands first—let him have it. Some St. George's Society—very well. But I would like to see a strong, national, Canadian Club, that knows no nationality except as we Canadians are a nation, with our own standard of patriotism, of right, of kindness, of consideration for others, endeavoring to have that standard raised throughout the whole of this land, giving way to no standard of any other nation or people, but setting above all their standards the Canadian standard. No body of people should have more to do with forming, preserving, and living this standard than the Canadian Club of Canada. (Long applause.)