

(November 4, 1919.)

His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales

Joint Meeting with the Empire Club of Canada, Massey Hall.

I was very much disappointed when I was last in Toronto not to have been able to accept your kind invitation to lunch, and so it is a special pleasure to meet so many members of both the Canadian Club and the Empire Club here to-day. I am delighted to be back in Toronto again where I spent such a wonderful three days and where I was given such a good time last August, though it is a relief that this is not an official visit. For this reason, I look upon this gathering as informal and ask you not to expect an oration, but merely a simple attempt on my part to describe my feelings at the end of my two-and-a-half months' tour of the Dominion.

Since I was last in Toronto I have been right across the continent to Vancouver Island and back again, which enables me to look better on Canada as a whole, and I think I can best express myself in military terms. The western provinces are like the outposts of the nation, held by most gallant and enterprising outpost troops, who are continually pushing forward into the No Man's Land of the great North-west. Ontario and the east is still the main body of the nation and the main line of resistance, and I congratulate you on the way in which your fine position is organized.

I was much impressed by all I saw in the west, and was attracted by the young and free spirit which I found there, and realized what a great future and development lies before it. Now for the last three weeks I have been back in the east, travelling in Southern and Western Ontario, and I have seen the country round the shores of your great lake, which was the scene of the fighting a century ago which saved British North America for the Empire, and was thrilled to think of the splendid fight which your ancestors of those days put up. I have also been much impressed by the orderly and settled look of the whole country, which bears a strong resemblance

to English countrysides, and is such a great contrast to the west. Knowing that Ontario was practically entirely virgin land only a century ago, I am full of admiration for what three or four enterprising and vigorous generations can achieve.

But this last three weeks enables me to realize that the notion that the east of Canada is mainly industrial as compared with the west, which is agricultural, is wrong. I now know that the agricultural produce of Ontario is the largest in the whole Dominion, and that your agricultural activity is as important as your industrial activity. This impresses me because it makes me feel that Ontario comprises all the problems of the Dominion, and must, by the way in which it deals with its own problems, exercise, in some respects, a decisive influence upon the whole destinies of Canada.

I am particularly interested in the agricultural side of Ontario, because I have become a farmer in a small way myself and have bought a ranch in Southern Alberta where I hope to start in very soon and ultimately make good. As you know, farmers in the west think themselves a very important community; and I see that the farmers have recently been asserting themselves in Ontario too; but let me assure you that I intend to be a very simple sort of farmer who will not go in for politics or try to upset your ideas in any way. As a brother farmer, however, I should like to pay a tribute to the farmers of Ontario, who have always been a very wholesome, energetic and respected section of the community. I know they, no less than the rest of the community, will always remember to think of the wider interests of the nation as well as of their own, as it takes all kinds of interests to make a great nation, and Canada cannot afford to be one-sided. I hope, therefore, that Ontario will set a lead by showing how all may pursue their own legitimate interests without forgetting the welfare of the Dominion and of the Empire as a whole.

The welfare of the whole Empire is, after all, the big question for all of us, and it has taken a new shape since the war. Because of their whole-hearted participation in the great struggle, the Dominions have entered the partnership of nations by becoming signatories of the peace treaties and members of the Assembly in the League of Nations. The old idea of an Empire handed down from the traditions of Greece and Rome was that of a mother country surrounded by daughter states which owed allegiance to that mother country. But the British Empire has long left that obsolete

idea behind, and appears before us in a very different and far grander form. It appears before us as a single State composed of many nations of different origins and different languages, which give their allegiance, not to the mother country, but to the great common system of life and government.

The Dominions are therefore no longer colonies; they are sister nations of the British nation. They played a part in the war fully proportionate to their size, and their international importance will steadily increase. Yet they all desire to remain with the Empire, whose unity is shewn by common allegiance to the King. That is the reason why, if I may be personal for a moment, I do not regard myself as belonging primarily to Great Britain and only in a lesser way to Canada and the other Dominions. On the contrary, I regard myself as belonging to Great Britain and to Canada in exactly the same way. This also means that when I go down to the United States next week I shall regard myself as going there not only as an Englishman and as a Britisher, but also as a Canadian, and as a representative of the whole Empire.

But, of course, this change of system within the Empire puts a new and very difficult kind of responsibility upon all of us. The war has shown that our free British nations can combine without loss of freedom, as a single unit in vigorous defence of their common interests and ideals. The unity of the Empire in the war was the feature least expected by our enemies, and most effective in saving the liberties of the world. But now that the war is over, we have still got to keep up that standard of patriotism and unity of which we showed ourselves capable during that long struggle—we have got to keep it up all we know. Unity and co-operation are just as necessary now in peace time as during the war. We must not lose touch with each other or we shall lose all that we have won during the last five years by our common action and effort against the enemy.

I have only one more thing to say, gentlemen, and I ask you to again forgive me talking about myself. I need not tell you how deeply I have been touched by the wonderful welcomes which have been given me in every city, town, and hamlet, which I have visited in the great Dominion. These welcomes have been quite overwhelming, and I can never be sufficiently grateful to Canadians for the warmth with which they have received me, nor can I ever forget it. It is only repetition when I say that I hope to be often in Canada again

and in Toronto, where I have had such a wonderful time, and I will try never to forget the great kindness which you have shown me this year. As you know, my right hand has been out of action for nearly two months. When asked why I shake hands with my left hand, I always reply that my right hand was "done in" in Toronto. Though painful at the time, I shall always look back on that as a great compliment.

But, gentlemen, I am not conceited enough to accept these welcomes as personal to myself, and realize that they have been given to me as the King's son coming to Canada as the heir to his Throne. My first visit to the great Dominion has made me realize more fully than ever what a great privilege and what a great responsibility that confers upon me, and I value these welcomes all the more highly because they have come from the Canadian nation as a whole, from all sections of the community, whatever their race, whatever their party, whatever their education. I ask myself, what does that mean? It means, I think, that the Throne stands for a heritage of common aims and ideals shared equally by all sections, all parties and all nations within the British Commonwealth. No government represents or stands for all parties or all nations within the Empire. But, despite this, there is a common sentiment which is shared, not only by all nations within the Empire, but also by all political parties within each nation. We all know this, because it was this common sentiment which made Britishers stand together in the great war, and I realize that this same sentiment has been expressed in the wonderful welcomes given to me in Canada as heir to the Throne.

I am afraid, gentlemen, that I have departed from my reserve and talked about myself a good deal too much. But I wanted to tell you, as the largest audience I have been privileged to address in Canada, what I feel about my position and the responsibility which it entails. I can only assure you that I shall always endeavor to live up to that great responsibility and to be worthy of your trust