

(February 3rd, 1920.)

## Sir Harry Lauder

*Gentlemen*, you flatten me—I mean flatter me. I am delighted to be here this morning. What a sea of happy faces! I have just come from America where they are just the same; they are a happy bunch. We are all getting down into normal conditions gradually, slowly, and surely.

I remember meeting Douglas Haig on the Western Front just near to St. Leger on the way up to Boulecourt, and I said, "Give me a message to take home to the folk; I will be going back to London in two or three days." He said, "Tell them at home to have patience." Two nights afterwards I dined with him. We sat that night and scanned a big map that was in front of us, and he every now and again arose and put the point of his finger on all the different battalions. He said, "The Canadians are there, and the Australians are there"; and so he indicated the positions of other units also. In talking we came to the conclusion that it would not be good for us if we won the war too quickly. And it won't be good for us if we get over the war too quickly; we would forget too quickly the great sacrifices that have been made.

In passing through America from San Francisco I have been meeting all sorts and conditions of men and women; and everyone, in my opinion, is for the unity of the English-speaking peoples. Now, that is an expression from a personal observation of my own audiences. And, of course, as you know, I do not cater to the crowd that have come from Glasgow, or from Edinburgh, or even from Dalkeith, or Straven, or Larch Hall, or Rugland. I cater for the English-speaking peoples. Of course, if you don't understand me at times, look up the dictionary. We are the better for that little book lying beside us at whiles, because it gives us new ideas.

When coming through America I came through a State called Ohio—O-hi-o. I was in Cleveland one week, and there I came in contact with some friends who came to the entertainment one day; and after the entertainment we were all

\*Unique in the line of Entertainers, Sir Harry Lauder has risen during the War to a new place in the Empire's heart through his services to the troops and for the sacrifices which he has made.

joking and talking with one another in the hotel. There was a bonnie lass in the party. She was a bonnie lass, I will admit it. And her intended was there, too. He was with the father and mother. You see he was not supposed to be with her at all, the villain! Just as you did yourself! And after my observation of the situation between the young couple I wrote a little love song. Of course, I may tell you I put myself in the young chap's shoes, as it were. And this is the outcome of my observation:

I have been very, very busy, packing up to go,  
Away to see a certain bonnie lassie that I know.  
I was not going to go at first, I was always hesitatin'  
But then I had to go because my heart was palpitatin'.

I know a lassy out in Ohio.  
She says she wants to see me, so I guess I'll have to go.  
I haven't been very long away, but I want you to know  
That I'm never, never, coming back from O-hi-o.

That is all you're going to get. You will get the rest when I come back to Toronto; and it will cost you something, too! I am looking around me to-day, and I am forced to express myself in these words: that this is a bonnie love atmosphere that we are in. You know when I was singing that love ditty the now—if you could only have seen your faces. "Oh! would some power the giftie gie us to see ourselves as ithers see us." Man, it is a fine thing—love. I was writing another love song. My wife says I am always writing about love. In fact sometimes I am disturbed in a melody at night when I am lying in my bed. I get an elbow and a "hauld your tongue!" I'll be lying there, you know, and I'll be whistling a wee tune through my teeth; quietly, unconsciously—and then I get the elbow.

"Love, love, love is a very funny thing.  
It keeps the world busy all the while.  
When a fellow's weary, the thing to make him cheery  
Is the sunshine of a bonnie lassy's smile."

That is one of my very latest. That is only the shell of the nut; the kernel will cost you a couple of dollars. You know when I was asked to come here to-day I did not know really what I was going to talk about. Your president asked me what I was going to talk about. I said, "I am a rambler on the face of the earth; and when I talk I am going to ramble

also." It is my nature and I canna' help it.

I am just thinking now that it was the English-speaking people who played the supreme part in the Great War. We all know what France and Flanders did. We know the great sacrifice they made and we have an idea of the further sacrifice that would have been made had not the British taken their stand. Well, we saved them from being rushed into the sea. We played the supreme part. Now we are asked to play the supreme part in peace as well as in war. What are we doing? What have you started to do? What are you going to do? The eyes of the world to-day are in one direction, and that is, toward the English-speaking people. The world to-day is looking for an example, and they can only turn to the English-speaking people for that example.

There is only one example to be shown the world to-day, in my mind; and that is work. WORK; it is a wee word. Sometimes it is very hard, too; but, I tell you, it is a very good phrase. We are taught that we must earn our bread by the sweat of our brow, and there are millions of men to-day in the world who never oozed a drop of sweat in their lives. They are parasites, living on the work of their fellow men. I hate this kind of man. I like the man who works. I love to grip the hard, brawny hand of the man who works, because when he takes hold of your hand his grip is sincere. He earns his living by the sweat of his brow and he knows what it is to come in contact with work; and the man who knows what it is to come in contact with work knows what it is to come in contact with his fellow men, and with good fellow men too.

I have been working since I was eleven years of age. I will be fifty in August and I feel nineteen. I remember having a holiday once. It was the most miserable month I ever spent in my life. I could not sleep at night thinking of the day I was going to start my work again. Then I came to the conclusion there was no use of having a holiday when your holiday was worried through thinking about its going to stop. I have had a couple of weeks since then; and always, about the end of the week, I said, "when I start this time I am never going to stop again." But then we get tired, we get exhausted; and, man, a week's holiday does us good! It brightens your minds, eases your muscles and you go back to your work invigorated and you commence your labors with a new heart and a new idea. It is good for us to have just a little holiday, but not too much.

Of course, I know there are many men working in jobs to-day who don't care how long their holiday lasts. You know why, because they don't like the job they are in. They don't like the job they are in. They are only in that job for Saturday, and they don't give their best to the job, and they don't give the master the value of their week's wages. They are slacking and loafing half of the time. If I was ever in a job (and I have been in some when a boy) if I did not like the job I was away from there looking for a job that I liked, looking for a job that I loved. That is why I am in the job that I am in to-day—because I love to sing.

When I started to sing I was working in the mines. I was making about two pounds a week—\$10 a week—and I was asked to go out and sing at a little bit of a concert. Certainly I went out to sing. I used to pack up my little traps, go there, and sing seven, eight, nine, and ten songs a night. I was delighted to do it because I loved to sing. I had no idea I would ever get any money for singing!

After singing four or five years, a committee came into my house one night, a committee of two. Aye, they were deputised, they were deputised to come and see me and ask me to sing at the Shepherds' concert. "We will give you half a crown." So I got my half crown. And then, I remember, about two years after that some one came along and offered me five shillings for a concert. I said, "It is getting up now." And, after having sung for about seven or eight years, I got half a guinea,—ten shillings and six pence. When I got two engagements in a week on top of my week's wages, when I got two ten shillings and six pences, I tell you they were away to the bank. Oh, they were away to the bank and I'd never let on to myself that they were in the bank. After having sung for about fifteen years before the public I was getting twelve pounds ten shillings a week. It took about ten pounds a week to keep me, pay railway fares and all my other incidental expenses, so I was not making any money. But I'll tell you what I was doing, I was enjoying myself. I was in love with my work and I was as happy as a king.

I want you fellows to be the same. If you are in a job you don't like, get out of it and get something that you love. Never mind if you don't get the same amount of wages. If you are in this world for money, then let me tell you this; that it doesn't belong to you. All the money that you have doesn't belong to you. The house that you are living in doesn't belong

to you. The life that is in you doesn't belong to you. You have got to give that up one day. There is nothing that belongs to us. We are only in possession of it for the time being. We don't own anything. And yet we quarrel and argue and fight about it. It is no' worth it, men, it is no' worth it. If we will get together we will get to know one another better and we will get to love one another better, and I make bold to say that there is nothing in the world like love and affection. Well, concentrate on that. Concentrate on your work; and you will never be able to concentrate unless you love the work that you are at.

If you are only in it for money, you will find one day that your money has slipped away. Somebody will have taken it from you, and you will be bankrupt. What are you going to do then? You will be too old to look for a job that you like. Get into a job while you are young; and if you love that job and concentrate on that job, you will probably be where there are a lot of fellows who were like you in the last job. They didn't like the job. They didn't like the work. The consequence is that you will soar in a little while, you will soar away above them all. You will awaken one morning and find yourself manager or president or on the Board of Directors. That is how it is done, by concentration.

I have done nothing else but concentrate on what is best for my public, not for me. I am nothing. I am simply a mouth-piece: I am talking from the theatrical point of view. I have got to stay in the audience, I have to go to the gallery; and in my imagination I sit in the gallery and then the character comes on the stage, under my observation, and if I am not pleased with it then he has got to alter it to suit me. It is a long stretch of imagination, but that is how it is done—by concentration.

There are a lot of people to-day concentrated on a paring-down policy, paring down the hours of labor. Where the paring down policy is going to lead us men, I cannot say; because I am going to tell you this, that if a man only works half a day I am only going to pay him half a day's wages. Of course, I do not say what that amount should be for the half day, but if he is only going to work half a day I am only going to pay him half a day's wages. The ranks of the labor men to-day are very much agitated by soap-box agitators, men who refuse to do a day's work themselves and live from the labor of their fellow men. That is what they do. I have travelled

extensively in pursuit of my profession and I have never lost an opportunity just to have a walk around their domains now and again, and I have seen and heard these men standing spouting. I would not waste my time with them. I would not stand two minutes in front of them listening to them. I would want to get behind them and push, and I would not stop pushing until I had them pushed off altogether. I am pleased they are pushing them off in America. They are pushing them off in boatloads, and they have their minds thoroughly made up on the subject, I believe.

I fail to see why the slacker and the shirker should demand the same amount of wages for his labor as the man who puts all his energy and brains into his work. The man who puts all his energy and brains into his labor is deserving of a bigger reward for his wife and family and himself than the man who slacks and shirks. We want to learn that work is man's best friend, and not his enemy. "See ye a man diligent in his labors, he shall not stand before men, he shall stand before kings," and it is just as true to-day as it was the day that those words were written.

I'd like to ask any of you men who are very successful to-day if you ever limited your hours of labor? No, you did not. I was reading a paragraph from one of the American papers last week and I saw that one of the professors in one of the universities over there was talking about working sixteen and eighteen hours a day sometimes. Well, if a man has got to work that long with his brains, surely a man in good physical condition is able to work for ten hours, anyway. I think ten hours is a very good day's work, if you will work ten hours. But I am not going to pay you for ten hours if you are only going to work eight, and I am not going to pay you for eight if you are only going to work six. Half a day's wage for half a day's labor! That is fair enough, fair and square.

Now, we come to the part where, as I said before, we can all be of service to our country in peace times as well as in war. We have learned the art of efficiency during the war. We have learned the art of independence during the war. We have learned the art of sacrifice during the war. And if we are asked to practice these in peace times, let us do so. You know there have been many men during the war who have made lots of money. Now their idea, of course, is to have a good time for the future. I think if they would spend half

of that money trying to get things into normal conditions they would be more patriotic. Many men have got money to-day through the war, and they were very sorry when the armistice was signed. They were very sorry. They were sorry that the war was over. That is a bad feeling to have, is it not? It was money that bred that feeling—money! Of course, it is easy for a man who has got a lot of money to stand up at a meeting amongst poor working men and say, "Men, it is not a disgrace to be poor." But no man ought to be poor if he is diligent in his labor; and I think the time is coming around when the employer of labor is going to say to the worker, "Well, I will share so much of the profits." There is no mistake that in the past the employers have been making too big profits. Of course, many of them have spent it philanthropically. They have been of service to their communities, many of them. But then there are others, and it is the others I mean.

Well now, folks, I want to say that I don't know when I will be back in Canada again. I am on my way from Australia, where I found an atmosphere very British. I came across and came along by the great North West, Edmonton, Calgary, and right along over to Winnipeg; and there I found the atmosphere the same—Canadian, of course, but British; as I am Scotch, but also British. I was very glad when I arrived in Toronto last Sunday night. There is a feeling under the old flag, you know—it is fine! And here I will tell you a story about the British flag.

In crossing to Australia, an old sea captain was a passenger. He had the biggest sailing ship on the Pacific Sea, sailing on ahead of us, with his son captain on it. The *G. H. Sterling* is the name of the ship. And this old Captain Sterling was a fine old fellow, a fellow who had never had a drink of whiskey in his life. Aye, and he was seventy-two years of age, and his complexion was as clear as water. He was a nice old man. He and I got talking in the captain's cabin every night going across and he used to tell me a lot of old sea stories. And he told me this one:

"One night about fifty years ago, we came out of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and we were not long out until one of my men came up to me and said that the so-and-so officer had forgotten to lock some certain cocks of something. We were carrying great logs and the water got in. A storm arose and they could not get down to close those doors. The water kept

pushing those big logs and knocked the ship all to pieces. There were nine of us on that ship, including my wife. We found ourselves, the nine of us, on the hatchway, and the ship had gone from under us. We ran all night in that sea. We dragged the hatchway windows out so that we could get clinging to them with our hands. It was in the month of November and it was cold. But in the early dawn of the morning the mate scanned across the waves and said to me, 'Captain, I can see a ship.' We prayed to God that day, but the ship did not come near us.

"Night came, and we were still clinging to the broken hatchway; and in the grey dawn of the next morning we had drifted almost beside the ship. Our support was small and the great waves just boomed us up and down, and the mate said to me, 'Captain, I don't think they see us.' I said, 'Yes, they see us and they are flying the British flag, and they will never go away until they get us.' And, by God, the ship stood by and did not move a yard until she rescued us. Two of the men had dropped off the raft mad in the extreme cold; but the ship carried a British flag and she stood there."

Men, when that old captain was telling me that story about the British flag—I was crossing to France, I was crossing to America, I was going back and forth on the Western Front, and I was squeezing through among the submarines; and I said, "I am safe as long as I see the British flag."

We ought to be proud of ourselves. Aye, and we are proud! When I will be back again, as I was going to say, I dinna ken. Some of you may in fact be coming over to Scotland before I get back here. If that should be the case come over to the west yonder near Loch Fyne and see me. You will just see my place out of the hill. Of course, don't all come at once! But if you do come it won't make any difference, because I have plenty of room yonder. Man, it is bonny! We will away o'er the hills; and there is heather on them, too. We will wander all day on the hills, and we will wander until the sun goes down. When the sun goes down we will all come back to the hoose in the gloaming. And then we'll have something to eat. And then, when we get something to eat, we'll all sit around the big fire and we will watch the flames licking up the lum and we will tell stories and we will crack jokes.

Then we will awa' to bed, but in the morning we will be up with the early morning sun and we will wander away up the glen yonder. Aye, we will gang far awa' up the burn, and I

ken a pool up the burn. It is a bonny pool, as clear as crystal, and we will have a drink there. Aye, will we, and it will no' do us any harm; it is bonny clear water. And, mon, when ye are down on your knees to have a drink, just before you touch the pool with your nose you can see your face in it. It is clear, it is bonny. Then when you have rippled the water with your nose it will get calm in a minute. It will get as clear, as calm, as glass. And then you can see the sky. You can see Heaven in it. It is a bonny place, the world! Aye, it is a bonny place. And it is up to you and me to keep it bonny. Thank you.