

(November 27, 1935)\*

## On the Art of Living

BY HIS EXCELLENCY, BARON TWEEDSMUIR,  
THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF CANADA.

PRESIDENT ARTHUR L. BISHOP, opening the meeting, said: Your Excellency, my Lord, fellow members of the Empire Club—I am a member of the Empire Club myself—gentlemen. We all have sincere feelings of satisfaction that we have as our guest of honor today His Excellency, Lord Tweedsmuir, representing His Majesty in Person, Crown, and dignity. It has been said in cable reports that, at the time His Majesty was pleased to appoint Lord Tweedsmuir to this high office, he was looking forward with lively expectation, and lively anticipation to the post he was to fill. He might well do so, for Canada certainly affords many opportunities for mental gymnastics for anybody at Ottawa. The great resources of nature with which this country is so richly blessed and its resources of the mind and spirit might well foster within him a lively anticipation and a vigorous hope of carrying out his duties well and truly. And that he will do so is the fervent hope of all Canadians. It has been said that His Excellency was appointed at the express wish of the two leaders of the political parties in Canada, and in making the appointment His Majesty did not deviate from what we might call the national Canadian ideal. Kingship in these latter days has come to mean something very close and very precious to all British peoples, regardless of race, religion, creed or color, for the art of Kingship—in these days especially—resolves itself into leadership in the higher art of living. Our distinguished guest is so richly endowed with all that pertains to this art that we know our

\*The members of the Empire Club were present as guests.

cultural life will be very greatly enhanced. He comes, not as a stranger, but rather as an old familiar fireside friend. The name of John Buchan is known in every house in Canada for the windows he has opened for us on history and romance. And he has brought enjoyment, comfort, and a hearty admiration for those characters he has caused to dance—if I may be allowed to mix my metaphors—upon the stage of the fifty books he has written. Scottish hearts will glow with pride throughout the course of his journeys across Canada—from Victoria to Halifax, and from the 49th parallel of latitude to the sub-arctic, perhaps more than twice during his term of office. It is this personal contact with all our Canadian people that makes them glow with the thought that by it they have contact with the very Throne itself, as personified in his Excellency. The names in the country through which he passes will sound familiar to him. There is a town of Buchan in Manitoba, and he will find a McNab within twenty-five miles of Toronto—and it was founded, I believe, by a John McNab. There is a Tweed in Ontario and Lady Tweedsmuir will find a familiar ring in the name of Grosvenor, in Nova Scotia. We shall be glad of Their Excellencies' leadership and we can appreciate how great that leadership will be in the things of the heart and mind, with which they are so richly endowed. Today I am going to reverse our normal procedure of introducing the speaker to the audience, and introduce the audience to the speaker. Your Excellency, the members of the Canadian and Empire Clubs.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL:—Colonel Bishop, Your Grace, Gentlemen of the Canadian and Empire Clubs: I must begin by thanking you most sincerely for your wonderful welcome. I am very glad to be amongst you again, for I have the happiest recollections of my visit eleven years ago when I spoke to the Empire Club. I can't remember what I talked about on that occasion but it was probably politics. Today my style is rather cramped for I must keep away very strictly from the discussion of public affairs. But you gentlemen of the two clubs have always been very generous in permitting a speaker a wide area in the choice of what he will speak about to you. In casting

about for a subject on which to speak to you, I thought I would talk to you on the Art of Living, and the great influence that the enjoyment of the pleasures of life has on professional efficiency. I presume that I am speaking to an audience of business and professional men. For a quarter of a century I was a business man myself, so I hope that I understand something of your problems and difficulties. As the years go by, and one gets to the other side of the hill, one is tempted to generalise from one's own experience. I have led an active life and have enjoyed every moment of it, and I have always had extraordinary aptitude for taking holidays.

I want to offer you a few observations on those seasons when our harness is unloosed and we are turned out to grass. I want to stress the importance of leisure in life—of what remains when we have finished the jobs by which we earn our daily bread. I am a Scot and an elder of the Kirk, so I will take a text. And my text will be the words of Ecclesiasticus, who said: "The wisdom of the learned cometh by opportunity of leisure. He that hath little business shall become wise." Like an old Free Kirk Minister I would like to call your attention to the first clause of the verse: Wisdom cometh by opportunity of leisure, for I am not altogether sure that I agree with the second.

This is an enormous subject with many extensions into sociology and economics. Today we are witnessing the triumph of the machine, and this triumph has meant that a great deal of the monotonous, exacting toil of the past has been superseded. It has given us more leisure and we must find new interests for that leisure. The mechanization of the world must mean a drastic reconstruction of industry. The worker will be rationed with fewer hours of labor, and this enforced leisure time will have to be filled up with new employments and new interests. There are some who dream of the time when a man will have comparatively few regular hours of work, and that in what remains of his time he may be able to produce, as craftsman or farmer the necessities and some of the luxuries of his life. The machine, if we make it our slave instead of making ourselves slaves to it, may end by performing the part that slave labor did in the

old Greek world, and give everyone of us a richer and fuller life.

Then there is the cultural side of leisure. No man, if he is to live a full and worthy life can live only for his business or profession. We are all human beings as well as doctors, accountants, lawyers and engineers, and we have to get satisfaction out of life as well as a living. The wise man will cultivate many interests outside his actual profession, things which keep the mind alive. There is a satisfaction that comes from books, and another that we can reach through contact with wild nature. You in Canada have a wonderful opportunity here. Then there is the field of sport. You remember Sir Andrew Aguecheek in *Twelfth Night*, who declared that to learn foreign languages was a waste of time when there were so many bears to bait. There are still many bears to bait, and to have many interests keeps a man young. James Bryce was a most extraordinary example of how perpetual activity can keep a man young. I had a long talk with him once when he was well over eighty, and he told me of how much amusement he was getting from planning to write a life of the Emperor Justinian.

Today I am going to be most severely practical. My thesis is the value of leisure, for the efficiency of leisure, for our own professional work. That applies to every profession, every vocation and every branch of commerce and industry. My argument is that leisure—rightly-used leisure—is essential to our professional success. The secret of success is to do one's job with a minimum of labor. I do not mean by this the use of labor-saving appliances, that often complicate the job to be done. What I do mean is that we should apply intelligence, for intelligence saves waste, and most jobs are done with an absurd waste of labor. As an example I would like to speak of a subject, of which General Mitchell probably knows a good deal more than I do—I mean military intelligence. When the war began we found it necessary to provide an element of surprise and to provide this absolute secrecy was necessary. We carried our methods to absurd extremes with an enormous host of

officials and a tremendous expenditure of money. The German Government carried it still further, and it all failed. In the end we learnt that in order to keep a thing secret, it was wise to allow 99% of the subject to be as public as possible, in order that the one per cent. that remained might be concealed, because it was not recognized. In this way we allowed the enemy to have an immense amount of information that was quite accurate, but which was of no particular value, and thereby concealed the small part that did matter. Many imagine that the more work they put into a job the better it will be done. The notion comes from the old Puritan theology, which took a very grave view of life and spent its day between work and devotional exercises. "Give every flying minute something to keep in store." Good advice provided that you bring intelligence to bear on it.

It is easy to put too much work into a job, and the emphasis on toil is apt to make us forget the prior necessity of intelligence, so that we waste a lot of time. A few years ago a certain angler set out to fish a loch on the Scottish border. On the way he met a man cutting hay, who gave him good morning and wished him luck. He got to the loch and fished all day, catching nothing. He tried every ruse he knew and every fly he had without result. In the evening he put up his rod and was going away, tired and disappointed, when he met the man who had been cutting hay going home to his supper. The man said, "Any luck, sir?" and he replied that he had had none, with the customary adjectives of an angry angler. "I am not surprised," said the man; "There never has been a fish in that loch since the creation of the world." Now what angler lacked the preliminary information and reflection that means success. Lack of intelligent reflection means waste because without it we cannot see round our task sufficiently. Again I repeat that properly used leisure is as essential to success as a proper spying out of the ground, before we begin a stalk.

It is the same in business. The larger part of it is a matter of detail and regular routine. No particular qualities are necessary for this part of it except industry and experience. And herein lies a danger, for if we allow rou-

tine to bulk too largely in our minds, we lose sight of the wood and even of the trees, because of our absorption in the undergrowth. In Britain after the war, business men did not realize that conditions had changed completely, and were content to go on in the same old rut. When the time did come that they looked round their jobs, they found that the time for reconstruction had passed and they were left high and dry. America before 1929 was an interesting case. The young American, who was ready to start in business, had the best education that you could find. He had been to university and had learnt something of the humanities. He had probably been to law school, travelled abroad and had been thoroughly trained in the technique of his own business. Success in business they regarded as something sacred. They worked inordinately long hours and had practically no private life. But in spite of their enthusiasm, I was worried about them, for they seemed not to be looking round their jobs, or to be cognisant of the very black thunder-clouds that were gathering. I talked about it to a very good friend of mine—a successful man. I told him of my experience and he said "You are perfectly right, these boys have got hold of the wrong end of the stick. I should consider myself a failure if I went to the office more than five days a week or stayed there more than a few hours a day." I said to him, "And when you go home, what do you do?" and he said, "I sit in the garden or go fishing, and I get a whale of a lot of thinking done." That, I am sure, was the reason for his success.

It is the same in all jobs. In soldiering, for instance, intelligence is essential to success. A general needs to keep a detached view to see around his job properly and win battles. He must keep outside the *melée* to maintain the proper perspective. Let us, too, consider the law from this point of view. The law allows a certain amount of leisure, to the barrister at any rate, for the Courts have a lovable habit of not always sitting. The barrister has ample time to see around his subject, and the greatest lawyers have always been men of wide general interests. A proper sense of proportion is a vital necessity of their job, and the cultivation of plentiful leisure helps them enormously. The

same is true of statesmanship. There never was a profession that more clearly required the wide cultivation of outside interests. And of the high value of this cultivation Lord Balfour is an outstanding example. He was a remarkable scientist, and by any standard a notable philosopher. He was, above all, a wonderful listener. I remember that he used to make my own halting utterances sound respectable. He never allowed himself to become immersed in detail, but used his leisure—and he insisted on having a great deal of leisure—to further his power as leader of the nation. I once spoke to a wise Trade Union leader and he said, "The secret of success is always to keep on the top of your job." But you cannot keep on the top of your job if you are mixed up in it. You must be able to see all round it, and for that you require the right use of leisure.

There were days when people thought a great deal about the saving of their souls. Then, you retired from soldiering, or statesmanship, or whatever was your job, and in the close of life went into retreat to settle accounts with life and make your peace with heaven. We don't talk quite in that language today, but the need is still insistent. But that task is not to be performed only in seclusion, in the twilight of life; it must go on all our days. Someone has written that every man should be lonely at heart. That is not so easy in this bustling world. We all must spend too much time on the treadmill without vision or perspective in our work, and often with a most intolerable clatter in our ears. But sometimes we must get out of the din and discover ourselves. We all need the virtues of solitude, for we must all be solitary in the great crises of life, and we must all be alone at death. That is the greatest of the fruits of leisure, for it gives us a chance to discover ourselves, the opportunity to assess true values and to give our souls that rest and returning which should be our strength.

COLONEL BISHOP said:—We have today as our guests the members of the Empire Club, of which I understand His Excellency has just accepted the office of Honorary President. That, I understand from His Excellency, is one of the penalties of his office, but it gives us no small pleasure to have the members of the Empire Club with us today.

Mr. Brace is here and I am going to ask him to propose a vote of thanks to His Excellency.

MR. J. H. BRACE, president of the Empire Club:—Mr. President, Your Excellency, Honored guests, and gentlemen: First I would like to present to the president of the Canadian Club the thanks of the members of the Empire Club for inviting us to be here with you today. And at this time, on behalf of the members of the Empire Club, I would like to extend our sincere thanks for the honor conferred upon us by His Excellency in accepting the honorary presidency of our organization. His Excellency is no stranger to Canadians. We have known him for years as student, scholar, and illustrious writer. By his works ye shall know him, and during the next five years His Excellency will have many opportunities of drawing closer the ties that bind us to the Motherland. During the past five years many of us have had too much leisure, and many of us have been kept too close to the grindstone. It is to be hoped that as prosperity again comes there will be a more equal distribution of work and leisure. By his office His Excellency forms a link with the Empire, and we would not have it otherwise. To His Excellency is happening an event of serious import, for he is bringing to us thoughts and ideas from the mother land and interpreting these for our better understanding, and we must have a common understanding so that those things which are for the benefit of the Empire as a whole may be carried out. I am sure I am expressing the thoughts of all here when I extend to His Excellency our thanks for his most thoughtful and delightful address.