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The Necessity for Breadth in the National Outlook.

BY DR. R. A. FALCONER, PRESIDENT UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO.

ADDRESSING the Canadian Club on "The Necessity for Breadth in the National Outlook," Dr. R. A. Falconer, President of the University of Toronto, said:

*Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Canadian Club; Fellow Members of the Canadian Club,—*It is a great pleasure to have the opportunity this afternoon of speaking to you, indeed I esteem it a great honor. After such an introduction from the Chairman, you can well understand that it is somewhat difficult for me to speak with freedom. And yet, owing to the oft-repeated kindness of friends, I am growing somewhat accustomed to it. I know it is sincere, but I'm afraid I am becoming somewhat hardened to it. (Laughter and applause.)

As I considered what would be a profitable and proper subject to discuss with a Club which goes so far to mould the public opinion of the country, the thought suggested itself that one of our most pressing requirements, perhaps our greatest necessity, was breadth in the national outlook. It is a grand thing to see these Canadian Clubs springing up all about us and becoming potent forces in the development of our young Canadian manhood. They are developing ideals and enthusiasm to carry us over the many difficult places which lie before us in the future.

The necessity for national influences in our country is apparent to everyone who looks at the map or travels the Dominion. The Provinces are grouped in geographical separation, the Maritime Provinces in the east and to the west of the Great Lakes the rugged, rough country separating Quebec from the Prairie Provinces, thence entering British Columbia, threading the pathway through a wall of mountains. Is our national life to overlap geographical boundaries and limitations? Is it to surmount such natural obstacles as the Laurentian region north of Lake Superior and the granite walls of the Rocky Mountains?

With this geographical condition there is coupled a diversity of peoples. The life of the Dominion is a variety of racial instincts, and the national life of Canada has both geographical and racial difficulties to surmount. The outsider will readily say these are too great for a young nation.

Yet Canada is being welded together already to a considerable degree. Nine years ago I travelled from Halifax to the west and was struck by the discovery of the underlying similarity in life. I was impressed that although I was in Winnipeg the conditions were much the same, the tone of life, the underlying social ideals, principles and conceptions were almost identical. True, their views of business life were somewhat different. The Winnipeg man thought that his Halifax contemporary lived in the past, while he was upon the threshold of the future. Yet in their religious beliefs and national ideals I was struck with the great similarity. Years after I travelled through to the western coast and the same feeling pervaded me everywhere. On the other hand, take a twenty-four hour journey from Halifax to Boston. Here one finds a new atmosphere, a new accent, a new look at life, new ideals. In like manner the traveller is impressed that Seattle is different from Vancouver.

It is well. Though our Provinces may be strung loosely, nevertheless their peoples have a strong underlying national similarity. There lies our hope for the future.

Let us, then, consider the causes of this great national sentiment, how it may be developed and the necessity of developing it. And in the consideration of these points I purpose only to refer to our domestic concerns and not—at least to-day—to our relation to the great Empire, of which we are proud to be a component part.

I believe that one of the potent influences in the welding together of the Canadian people is the commanding position occupied by the Ottawa Dominion Parliament. One of the outstanding features of the Canadian system of government is that our Provincial questions do not bulk as largely to the Dominion as do the State problems to Washington. That, too, is well. The larger and the greater the influence from Ottawa the more and more national will become our conceptions. From Ottawa go out to the remote districts of the country questions which enter into and form the staple of national thought.

In addition to this great political influence, our national life is being very largely developed by the welding together of our religious and educational institutions. The annual gatherings of the religious bodies, drawing together their representa-

tives from all parts of the country, have an important bearing upon the unifying and broadening of the national conception. They have their publications going from coast to coast into the homes of the people, drawing them together in thought and in higher ideals. Our religious bodies, too, are in much closer affiliation with those of the Mother Land than with those of the United States.

The English-speaking Provinces are approximating in educational ideals. Our school systems are getting more alike. It is, I believe, well for the nation that so many of our graduates are going forth to teach in the new Provinces. It means a unifying and strengthening of educational ideals. I shall not refer to the province of business and trade at all, since I am aware that you know of that better than I. Thus the political, the religious and the educational influences have entered very largely into our national life and have materially contributed in laying a strong foundation upon which to build.

The thesis being as I have stated it, it is self-evident and of immense importance that Canadians must be broad in their outlook. In this country there is opportunity for as high a type of statesmanship as can be found in all history. Nowhere are the people more homogeneous, but their prejudices, aims and ambitions are all similar. It is necessary to get below the surface and find the great underlying common interests. Just as a great engineer looks over a new country, notes its rivers and its mountains and with shrewd eye tells where the line has to run and how to place it, so the great statesman, noting the diversity of interests and the varying characteristics of a people, determines the policy so that the largest number of the nation shall be satisfied and the great underlying common interests served. The demands of statesmanship call for an adjustment of broad national issues to local necessities, yet local necessities should not be forgotten in the larger interests. The politician should look into the details of each locality so as to gauge the conditions and to see that the underlying large issues are constantly served. Surely these are the elementary principles that go for sound, robust government.

In Canada there is great opportunity and call for a large, finely-tempered statesmanship and a delicate handling of local conditions. When policies are outlined they should be of educational value to the ordinary people. Frequent elections turn business upside down. Too often our elections are disfigured by narrow partyism. They lose their educational value. Yet, in spite of these two facts, elections are of immense value if they are dealt with in the national spirit and conducted by men

who enlist enthusiasm for generous things, who take an educative view of the political campaign. The best thought should be crystallized into policy and that policy carried into the country by able lieutenants. The ordinary man in a democracy should expect to listen to a discussion of policies high in themselves. May I express the hope that in the days before us we shall find in public life policies that are broad and free from sectionalism, in close sympathy with the requirements of the people, and that these policies should be stated in broad, intelligent form and carried out to the people by men conscious of their importance—not only representatives, but educators of the people?

As a Province we should seek to direct our thought to escape from the charge of narrowness. No Province is responsible to the rest more heavily than is Ontario. It is the leading Province of the Dominion and Ontario's thought should act directly and inspiringly on the thought of the whole. It has been charged, both in the east and in the west, that we in Ontario are too narrow, too much provincial, too little. We should exert all our influence to remove that sentiment by a policy of largeness, of bigness, of national—not provincial—outlook. Ontario is the wealthiest of the Provinces, it has wonderful resources, it is developing grandly, it has a homogeneous, highly intelligent population. Its geographical position is such that on the east it can extend the hand of comradeship to the older Provinces and on the west the hand of encouragement to the newer Provinces. Ontario is designed for leadership. No Province has benefited more by Confederation than Ontario. Its political difficulties have been largely removed, its mercantile and manufacturing industries have been developed. The point I am trying to make is this: that, seeing its present position, none should appreciate more than Ontario what it owes to the confederated Provinces. We should not, then, be self-centered; we should put ourselves at the standpoint of others, of being able to understand the position of the other man. I ask you to consider the points of view of others and seek to get away for a moment from our own selfish view, to consider the people with convictions remote from our own.

The question—the great question—of the various Canadian Clubs is to exert themselves to understand the problems of the nation as a whole and to mould the opinion of its people. There are two ways in which this can be done. First, by diffusing knowledge of the Dominion, its peoples and its needs. Through the newspapers we may be intelligently educated as

to its requirements, and, from time to time, as to the necessities of those about us. As individuals we should travel out of our narrow clique and coterie and meet others. It is one thing to sit at home and dream of what might be and what would be right. Work it out and as you live it you must certainly discover what true breadth really is.

It is a matter which must be dealt with, must be worked out, amid political complications, delicately poised problems emerging from time to time, and perhaps threatening to stam-pede social, local or party influence. Canada and Australia have the greatest world's problem before them, the blending of divergent races. We are coming nearer to it. Let us face it with no irresolution, with intelligent sympathy and quiet knowledge and determination. Let us not shut up ourselves, but become party of that larger national life, the future of which at present seems almost limitless.