

**ADDRESSES; DELIVERED BY
G.W. ROSS DURING HIS RECENT
VISIT TO ENGLAND AND AT THE
MEETING ON HIS RETURN**

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Addresses; delivered by G.W. Ross during his recent visit to England and at the meeting on his return by G. W. Ross

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G. W. ROSS

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ADDRESSES

DELIVERED BY

HON. G. W. ROSS

DURING HIS

*Recent Visit to England and at
the Meeting on His Return*



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Hon. G. W. Ross at the Hotel Metropole, London.

On Monday, July 15th, 1901, the Duke of Devonshire gave a luncheon to the members of the British Empire League in London in Honour of the Colonial Delegates to the Imperial Court of Appeal Conference, at which Lord Avebury, Honorary Treasurer, presided. Among those present were Lord Avebury, Mr. James Bailey, M.P., Sir James Blyth, Mr. Sydney Buxton, M.P., Sir Edward Carbutt, J. Henniker Heaton, M.P., Sir Robert Herbert, Mr. Justice Hodges, of Victoria; Sir David Tennant, Sir Charles Rivers Wilson, Lord Strathcona, Sir Howard Vincent, Sir Frederick Young and over two hundred others.

The toast of "Our Guest" was proposed by Sir Sydney Buxton, M.P., and replied to by Mr. Justice Hodges, of Victoria. The toast of the "British Empire League" was proposed by Mr. Ross and replied to by the Chairman, Lord Avebury. In proposing the toast Mr. Ross said:

Lord Avebury, my lords, ladies and gentlemen, I regret exceedingly that owing to the absence of the Postmaster-General of Canada, the Hon. W. Mulock—(cheers)—the duty of proposing this toast has fallen to me. I received notice that I was expected to discharge this duty just about an hour before coming to this very pleasant gathering, and, under the circumstances, you can appreciate the personal element of that regret, in the absence of the Hon. Mr. Mulock. I have been for many years in Canada a member of the British Empire League which we formed in the Province of Ontario, and of which Lieut.-Colonel Denison—(cheers)—is now our esteemed president. The objects of the British Empire League, as we understand them in Canada, are, shall I say first to promote in the Empire and at the seat of power a greater interest in the Colonies of the Empire. (Hear,

hear.) The League had its origin here. It originated as Mr. Justice Hodges has said, with men of comprehensive statesmanship, men who did not regard isolated England as an ideal nation to put before the world and the British Empire. "Splendid isolation" is a nice rhetorical phrase, but the British Empire League was formed to foster within the Empire the idea that the greatness of the Empire largely consisted, not in isolation, but in union, in integration, in combination. I sympathize, speaking as a Canadian, with much that Mr. Justice Hodges has said. We did at one time feel that the heart of the Mother Country was not as warm to her Canadian son as it should have been. (Hear, hear.) We loved the dear old mother all the same. (Hear, hear and laughter.) We thought as we grew a little bigger and could make ourselves a little more useful and put on something more of the airs of manhood that she might begin to think that her Canadian boy was not such a bad young fellow after all. (Laughter.) And we began to put on airs and to assume the dignity of nationhood. (Cheers.) Imitation is the highest form of flattery, they say. The Australian people have imitated our example, and have thereby done wisely. (Cheers.) With our size, our self-sufficiency, and our self-possession, we began to extend our trade with Great Britain and it has grown amazingly. In fact, in everything which goes to make the nucleus of a nation I think we may fairly say that we have made a very good start in this new country. (Hear, hear.) Although my notice was brief I have a few statistics at hand, and I am going to give you them to show how we have grown during the last thirty years, since our Confederation. Our population has increased from 3,300,000 to 5,400,000—all loyal Canadians, all prepared to bear their share in the burdens, in the battles, and in the struggle for Imperial unity. Five millions of people represent England as she was in the time of Elizabeth. Before we have seen as many years as England has seen since that time nobody here can say how large we shall be. We have in the same time increased our revenue from 13,000,000 to 51,000,000 dollars and with the characteristics of a progressive Government we have increased our expenditure from 13,000,000 to 42,000,000 dollars. (Laughter.) Of course, there has been no increase in that time in the expenditure of the United Kingdom. (Laughter.) We have increased our imports to 180,000,000 dollars, an increase of more than 250 per cent., and we have increased

our exports, and that shows an increase in the produce of the country, from 50,000,000 to 170,000,000 dollars, or over 300 per cent. We sell more because we produce more and because you buy more. We have increased our miles of railway from 2,000 in 1867 until we now have 17,000 miles. I think you have only 21,000 in the United Kingdom. We have increased our savings bank deposits from 5,000,000 to 60,000,000. We are steadily getting richer; we spend more money when we come to London. (Laughter.) We have increased our business deposits in the banks from 33,000,000 to 277,000,000—a very substantial advance. And as an indication of the growth of our industries, for we have to import nearly all our coal, I may say that from 1,000,000 dollars worth imported in 1867, the amount rose in 1900 to 10,000,000 dollars worth. That shows the increase of our industries. In gold we have increased our output from 3,000,000 to 21,000,000, and I believe we have the best goldfields in the world, not excepting Australia, if I may be permitted to make the observation. (Laughter.) The tonnage of our shipping has increased from 2,000,000 to 7,262,000 tons. These are slight indications of how Canada has grown in the last thirty years. But material prosperity is not, after all, perhaps, the best indication of the real elements of national power. A nation may be wealthy and yet feeble, in some respects. What we prize most is that with the growth of our wealth and with the increase of our population we believe education, intelligence and all those habits which go to make a thrifty and prosperous people, have grown likewise. (Cheers.) The business of the League, as I understand it, is to let the Empire know how great its Colonies are and how helpful the Colonies may be. We have taken a small hand in the South African war. We sent from 2,000 to 3,000 men. One of our Canadians, Lord Strathcona—(cheers)—sent 500 mounted infantry on his own account. He would have sent twice as many had you needed them. Some of our men have returned. I think you sent them home too soon. But for that the war might have been over ere now. Nevertheless, we showed our sympathy with the Empire in sending these men to you. (Cheers.) And we believe that as a rule they gave a good account of themselves. (Hear, hear.) One at least came home with the Victoria Cross, an honour we highly appreciate. The object of the League, as I say, is to inform the Empire of the greatness of the Colonies. Its object also is to bring representative men from the

Colonies together on suitable occasions to confer as to Imperial matters. We feel we are partners in the British Empire. Of course we did not make it. Our fathers, your fathers, made it for us and what a noble fabric it is! And you are kind enough to invite our advice now and again as to some forms of administration which concern the Empire. (Hear, hear.) I am pleased that you have had this conference as to the constitution of the Judicial Committee of the House of Lords. Speaking for my Province, I do not know that we are specially anxious to have a representative on that Judicial Committee. We like the Committee as it is. I do not think we could make it much better if we sent our best men, and we are not ashamed of our men, but that Committee has always, I believe, weighed Colonial matters in the light of Constitutional law and in reference to Colonial interests, and in its decisions we have unbounded confidence. We have not much to ask. We do not want representation in the House of Commons just now. We are well satisfied with it. Canada has confidence in the House of Commons in the sense that some of you may not have. We have confidence in the House whether it is Conservative or Liberal. It has always done well by Canada. Your Government has sent of its ablest men to be our Governors-General. From Dufferin to Minto you have been well represented and we have been proud of the representation of the Crown in Canada. You have amended our Constitution. You consulted us in the first instance and amended it as we required, and therefore we have but little to complain of; still we are glad these conferences are being held inasmuch as they bring us into relations with those men who sit at the power house on the line and send forth those electrical currents which thrill to the remotest Colonies of the Empire and make us feel one. (Cheers.) We rejoice in this opportunity of meeting and consulting with you, and, as far as the British Empire League in Canada is concerned, it has but one word to the parent society here and that is that the unity of the Empire is above every consideration. (Cheers.) The first business of the League should be to bind together this noble fabric of the Empire with such a bond of loyal patriotism that no Colony, no matter how remote, will consider any sacrifice too dear to perpetuate its glory or maintain its honour. That is the spirit which lives in the League—unostentatiously, for we never beat the big drum or flaunt the Jingo flag, nor call attention to our movements in the public highways, but

steadily and persistently we seek to cultivate that better and purer British patriotism which makes every British subject feel a personal and an individual interest in the strength of the Empire. (Cheers.) We are scions of that noble, that Saxon stock which has spread itself over the world and whose flag has never yet been lowered in the face of the enemy. As one of your poets says :

For the sires live in their sons,
And they pay their father's debt,
And the lion has left a whelp
Wherever his claw is set.

And the business of the League in Canada is to rear a large brood of such whelps for the honour and defence of the Empire. (Cheers.) I give you "The British Empire League." (Cheers.)

The toast was drunk with great heartiness.

The Chairman : On behalf of the British Empire League I beg to express to our friend, Mr. Ross, our sincere thanks for the kind terms in which he has proposed this toast. He has accurately described the objects with which the League was formed. I am sorry to say that I am old enough to remember the time which has been referred to by Mr. Justice Hodges, when the idea of retaining the Colonies was not so firmly fixed as it is at present. There were many who thought the time must come when the Colonies would be severed from the Mother Country, but we are now agreed that, on the contrary, the time must never come for doing so. (Cheers.) We have not been formed in order to attempt to advocate any cut-and-dried scheme of union or any new constitution. The constitution of the United Kingdom has grown up slowly through the ages, and we are now evolving a new constitution for the British Empire which, I hope, will gradually knit together more closely the different parts of which it is composed. (Hear, hear.) Recent events in South Africa have shown that if any one of our Colonies is attacked, it is not only the Mother Country but the Sister Colonies all over the world who will rally to her defence and repulse any attack, no matter from what quarter it may be pressed. Mr. Justice Hodges referred, as is, perhaps, natural in existing circumstances, specially to the advantages which the Empire would receive from any organization which would enable us in any case of necessity—a necessity which, I trust, will never arise, but in case it should