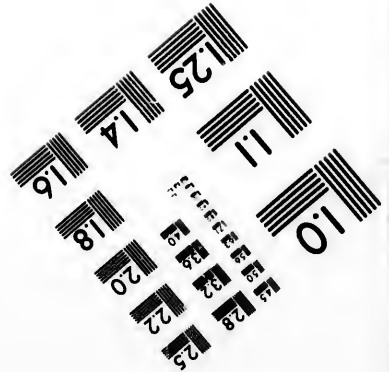
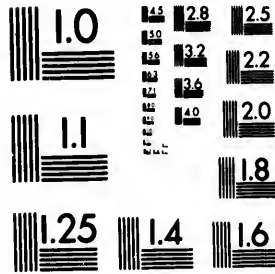


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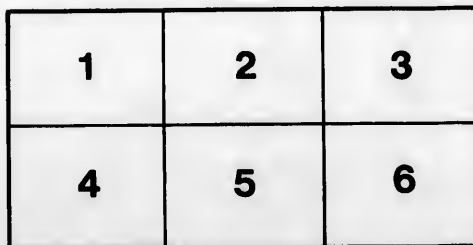
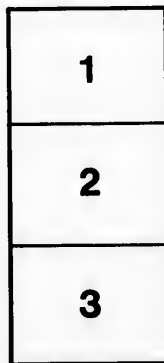
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Patriotic Address

Delivered at Dungannon, March 15, 1900

BY M. G. CAMERON, OF GODERICH.

At a Concert in Aid of the Fund for the Benefit of the Widows and Orphans of the Canadian Soldiers Killed in the South African War.

I feel that there has been conferred upon me a distinguished honour in the invitation to address you for a few moments this evening upon a subject so dear, I am sure, to the hearts of all of those within sound of my voice, and of thrilling interest and importance to every citizen of Canada who can from the heart say, "This is my own, my native land," and who delights to hear not once, but oft repeated, the story of the heroic deeds of those of his own soil, who have crossed the sea to fight the common battle for the common heritage.

My theme is not a contentious one. There is no room for argument respecting it. There are not (to use a familiar expression), two sides to it. It affords no basis for heated discussion such as sometimes has been heard within these walls. There is absolute unanimity here, no dissent or disputation, not a word, not a sound of disapproval: but on the contrary heartfelt, affectionate, intense accord when I give utterance to this sentiment—Love fervent, unending love, this day pours forth for our illustrious fellow countrymen who are fighting and dying to maintain unsullied and untarnished the honour and glory of the British Empire on the

hills and dales of Southern Africa.

Our hearts were stirred with deepest pride, pride of our country, pride of its sons, (and how natural the feeling), when the news flashed under the sea and over the wires that these young men, fresh from peaceful vocations, untutored in the arts of war, mere tyros in military accomplishments, lacking wholly that knowledge which only comes from practical experience, had taken a foremost place, the place of danger and of death with the most thoroughly trained "soldiers of the Queen," and with heroic valour had precipitated themselves upon the foe.

I do not think I am making a rash statement, or one for which I could properly or fairly be rebuked, when I say that the history of civilized nations will be searched in vain for the discovery of an instance of greater enthusiasm in a case where, as here, sentimental considerations, (as distinct from material advantages), largely prevailed, than that exhibited when by our own voluntary act, at the hint of danger to Victoria's Crown and Imperial Sway, the flower of Canadian youth and chivalry eagerly, joyously, went forth to meet the onslaught of a

1900

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determined and intrepid adversary in defence of Liberty and Justice.

The occasion was ripe for the course taken. The spirit of the times called for this spontaneous demonstration of lealty and loyalty. History will record on the brightest page that tells the story of British achievements, its appropriateness, and declare its effectiveness.

The time had arrived when it became expedient to let the world know, and particularly those European Nations that are constantly barking at the heels of Britain, (they would bite if they dared), that she has at her back, and ready, aye always ready at her gentlest call, a united Colonial Empire, vast in extent, boundless in resource, and peopled by a race determined of resolution, swift in performance, and if you will permit the expression, stubborn of will, at all events when right is involved, and that the inhabitants of these mighty and powerful countries must also be dealt with, and in the event of attempted oppression of the mother land, or unwarrantable interference in her affairs, the cubs beyond the sea would, with stentorian voice, proclaim in the hearing of all mankind, this patriotic defiance:

When'er the Fates on our Empire frown,
While an envious world looks on ;
At the blast of clang: to Land or Crown,
Or of fields to be fought and won ;
Then from the corners of the earth,
And borne upon every breeze,
Comes a growl, proclaiming the ties of birth,
From the cubs beyond the seas.

From the plains of the "Queen of the snows"
they come ;
From the Isles of the Torrid Zone ;
From the furthest land where the "morning
dru")
Tells of their Queen and Home ;
When the lion roars as he meets the foe,
And gathers to leap and seize,
With an answering roar to the battle go
The cubs from beyond the seas.

Oh ! ne'er shall the land that can breed such
sons,
That can boast such a litter of cubs,
E'er sink to a nation that fights and ruins,
That shrinks from the hardest rubs !
The flag that for Home and Freedom stands
Shall ever face the breeze,
Cherished and kept by the strong right
hands
Of the cubs beyond the seas.

The action of the Government of Britain in making reply to the ultimatum of the Republic of the Transvaal, which was couched in impudent and defiant language, indicating overweening conceit, and lamentable ignorance of palpable facts, by pointing

the cannon's mouth towards Pretoria, its metropolis, requires no defence from us.

Did it call for apology or justification, we could truthfully make response that this frightful carnival of slaughter was entered upon, not for purposes of aggression, not with views of conquest, not to extend the boundaries of the Empire, not to subjugate or humiliate a proud and courageous, but ignorant and overbearing people, but to protect the soil of Britain from the tread of foreign foe, and to establish upon a basis that would likely be enduring in its character the sacred principles that are associated with the unrestrained and untrammelled enjoyment of human freedom and Christian civilization.

While we rejoice with exceeding joy in the exhibition of loyalty that has been shown in so unmistakeable a manner, to exist throughout this land from centre to circumference, pervading to our sister colonies, and in the splendid examples of gallantry and heroism displayed by the Sons of Canada, there is mingled with our happiness a feeling of deepest sorrow and regret when we reflect upon the fact that so many of our compatriots have found an eternal place of rest far, far away from the land they loved so well, and from all the hallowed associations that cluster around that consecrated spot called Home—Home, sweet, sweet, Home.

We have been taught by the very highest authority, an authority no mortal dare question, because it is divine, that "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Our fellow-countrymen exemplified in their death the highest, truest, noblest form of love. They died for their country. Their country was their friend.

They did their duty well, and compelled the admiration of their superiors in arms. They never flinched. They were ordered to advance. They advanced. They did not reason why. They marched with head erect, with undaunted courage and ir petuous zeal to victory and to death, and through that portal to everlasting fame. They emulated the example of a hero of the days of long ago, Sir Richard Grenville, who as he lay dying upon the bloody deck of his ship after an immortal fight, manifested the invincibility of his nature even then :

I have fought for Queen and faith like a valiant man and true;
 I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do.
 With a joyful spirit I, Sir Richard Grenville, die;
 And he fell upon the deck and he died.

Yes, our boys did their duty "as a man is bound to do," and their names will be remembered with tender and loving regard as long as the national life of Canada shall endure. The flight of ages will not obscure their glory, nor dim the pure lustre that is the concomitant of heroic actions nobly performed. Passing years will but add to the splendour of their achievements. Future generations will be told by the historian's pen of their remarkable valor and signal bravery in the midst of frightful peril, at a time when the destiny of the Empire trembled in the balance, and a monument more lasting than brass, and more abiding than the Pyramids of Egypt, will be erected to their memory in the hearts and affections of those for whom, and for whose descendants, they offered up, at the altar of liberty, the sacrifice of their lives.

What does all of this portend for Canada and the Empire? What significance springs from the fact that this Dominion has been an auxiliary to the glory, and a contributor to the celebrity of the old land? What means it that Englishmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen, Australasians, Cape Colonists and Canadians, met the onset of a formidable foe together, that their blood flowed in the same stream, upon the same field, and that in the same deep pit their bodies were deposited, there to await the universal call that sooner or later will issue from the Omnipotent Ruler of the human race? What means this concord in the grave?

Plastic fancy may assert her constructive power, and present to the eye of the mind an edifice for the future to be erected upon the foundation that devotion and self sacrifice have raised, but it is difficult, if not impossible, for the finite understanding to grasp the import of the occurrences of these eventful days, or form any conclusion of value as to the ultimate effect.

But we are not in total darkness. There are some matters respecting which we may speak with confidence as to the probable consequences. For instance, is it possible for the mind to conceive of a clearer representation of

the solidarity of the Empire than this struggle furnishes? Not long ago the statement was made that Britain stood alone—that she occupied a position of splendid isolation. What is her present situation? The resort to the arbitrament of force has disclosed to the view a marked and striking illustration, not of splendid isolation, but on the contrary, such an example of magnificent cohesion and consolidation, as staggered Europe, and revealed the unparalleled majesty and power of the greatest Empire the world has ever seen.

Further, I think we may safely make a definite pronouncement as to this, that the resolution is more powerful now than perhaps it ever was before to strengthen those ties which "light as air though strong as iron" bind the colonies to the mother land, and it may be that the lapse of time will but intensify this determination and ultimately result in the formation of such a connection as will defy the power of mortal to dissolve. Even now Canada is regarded as being as much a part of the Empire as England, Ireland or Scotland, and she has become an important factor in the management and direction of concerns co-extensive with Imperial Rule.

This is of vast moment, and a most desirable consummation. The colonial "soldiers of the Queen", stained the soil of Africa with their blood for Britain's sake, but the sacrifice of life and treasure will not have been in vain, if with the cement of a brotherhood in death, it knits together irrevocably, the noble fabric of the British Empire.

Our participation in this combat brings us closer to each other, increases our love for this fair Canadian land, and imparts a clearer and broader knowledge of the true meaning of patriotism, the noblest passion that stimulates a man in the character of a citizen. It suggests to the mind that we must love our country as the place of our birth or adoption, and where our more important duties are to be performed, as the play ground of our children, the land where our father's rest, and the tomb of the courageous and learned of our own blood and race departed. That we must love it for the unremitting toil of those who reclaimed and adorned its natural scenery; who converted it from a wilderness into a beautiful garden, from a trackless forest into fertile fields. That we must love it

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for the momentous achievements and excellence of which it has been the arena, for its moral and intellectual improvement, and for the share it has taken in the relief and delivery of the nations from difficulty, want or distress.

If these feelings animate us, a sympathy indestructible will attract us to our own beloved land. Our imaginations will be aroused, and all the passions which inspire and give vigor in the hour of danger will awaken at her command, and be devoted to her service to the end, and until time for us shall have been annihilated.

Let us see to it that we "do our duty as a man is bound to do," bury in the grave of oblivion the animosities of the past, respect the feelings and the honorable yearnings of others, deal kindly with the prejudices of all, sink beyond all hope of resurrection the differences between race and creed that sometimes tax to its utmost the statesman's skill to adjust, and from this course of action incalculable benefit will be the inevitable result.

It may be, it doubtless is the fact, that difficulties will arise that must be met, and obstacles present themselves that must be surmounted, but what of that to a determined and courageous people? All obstructions to perfect peace and complete contentment will fade away before the enthusiastic pursuit of justice and of truth as darkness disappears in the effulgence of the rising sun.

Banish distrust and suspicion, and the way is open to a realization of our not unreasonably hope that Canada

may shortly attain to that position among the nations of the earth for which her infinite resources, and the thrift and enterprise of her people amply qualify her, and continue to be the bright particular star of that mighty Empire, upon whose dominions the sun never sets.

Then there will be justification for almost limitless rejoicing. Flowing like a gentle and pellucid stream from that determination to bear and forbear, permanent union and undoubted harmony will, of a certainty, ensue, and when such a condition has been reached, it passes the wit of man to form even an approximate idea of what may be the possibilities for this "Canada of Ours," but this we may, without being regarded as wildly extravagant in our views or unduly optimistic, safely predict, that ere many years have passed away we shall have succeeded in constructing upon this portion of the American continent a nation that will command the respect and provoke the admiration of the world.

If we of this assemblage have taken a part, no matter how humble, in this glorious work, it will bring to us a sensation of satisfaction and pride, and we shall have gratified a noble and natural ambition, and perchance be excited to still more exalted aspirations by the consciousness that we have performed our duty, "as a man is bound to do," to the land in which our dearest interests are centered, and around whose name and fame we long so much to see encircled the garland of imperishable renown.

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