

STRATHCONA HORSE.

SPEECH

BY

NICHOLAS FLOOD DAVIN,

AT

LANSDOWNE PARK, MARCH 7TH, A.D. 1900.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIRST PARADE
OF THE STRATHCONA HORSE

WHEN

A FLAG FROM THE TOWN OF SUDBURY

WAS PRESENTED BY

HER EXCELLENCY THE COUNTESS OF MINTO.

OTTAWA :

JAMES HOPE & SONS.

A.D. 1900.

199442

DEDICATED
TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LORD STRATHCONA AND MOUNT ROYAL.



LORD STRATHCONA AND MOUNT ROYAL.



LT.-COLONEL STEELE.

YOUR EXCELLENCY, COL. STEELE, GENTLEMEN OF
STRATHCONA HORSE,

MY FRIENDS AND COMRADES OF THE WEST :

Most of you come from that portion of Canada which I represent in the House of Commons, and you express in action an idea which Colonel Steele has truly said is deep in the heart of the Canadian people ; an idea specially dear to the West ; an idea to which more than a quarter of a century ago when Mr. Goldwin Smith and a few well-meaning young men sought to raise the standard of independence, and when a distinguished and eloquent man from Washington came across the line to preach annexation and vainly seek to turn the eye of Canada to a foreign flag, I gave formal expression, unfurling as high as my small arm could the Imperial Ensign ; an idea which in 1876, in Hamilton, to a vast audience of Irishmen, I set forth ; an idea which in March, 1885, at Montreal, to a large assemblage of the St. Patrick's Society and their friends, I expounded as one that should be dear to men of all races and creeds within British bounds ; an idea rooted in historical facts, replete with a noble inspiration ; an idea which can draw men like yourselves from vast remotenesses ; an idea which is a

solvent of narrow hatreds and poor tribal spites ; an idea which as we see can fire and fuse men of all races and all creeds, in a noble, universal loyalty which enthrones manhood on a height at which the grating murmurs of the petty squabbles of base and and baseless enmities cannot be heard, and where the tribunes and protagonists of fratricidal feuds show like warring sandflies.

From all parts of the North-West Territories you come—from the wide plains of Assinaboia, from the ranges of Alberta and Maple Creek, from the Peace River and the Yukon ; from desk, mart, mine and farm ; from the school, from the professions ; scions of nobility, the sons of wealthy men, sons of Canadian governors and statesmen, sons of the plough, sons of the shop—all leaving comfort, some opulence, and the greatest opportunities of peace ; unasked you go, as spontaneously as those who have gone before you.

You will leave on Monday what is just now a land of snow ; bracing, beautiful, exhilarating ; you will cross the equator for a land of fierce suns, beautiful, too, but trying compared with our stimulating clime—and your desire is that valour might be able to arm itself with wings, the only fear you know is that you may not be in time.

The spectacle of spontaneous valour and all embracing loyalty in the British Empire to-day is unique ; in vain for a parallel you explore the past.

Anything that requires strong endeavour should be done with enthusiasm. War is a poor thing if it cannot be waged with enthusiasm. There is no enthusiasm like that of ideas. All enthusiasm has an element of nobleness in it. Even when mistaken, it is unselfish and strikes on spiritual keys. I have said there is no enthusiasm like the enthusiasm of ideas, and you are happy in this that no knight of old, no crusader, no patriot, no pontiff king, no insurgent people ever warred for nobler ideas than those for which you go forth to fight to the death. Slaying or slain you must be victors, for the ideas you represent will have been raised higher and carried farther by your efforts. Your deeds will have passed into the thought of the world. The Cavalier fought for his king, and that personal enthusiasm was a noble thing, but it did not raise men as high as the enthusiasm of ideas, which made steel of Cromwell's soldiers, and their blows to fall like threshing flails on men of the same blood, of as strong courage, perhaps of even higher type, but whose inspiration did not flow from the same exalted level. It was enthusiasm for ideas that

enabled the Greeks to roll back the Persian invasion and at Salamis, singing pæons, scatter and sink a thousand ships. It was the enthusiasm of ideas that gave victory to the Israelites over the Canaanites; it was a kindred enthusiasm that built the Mahomedan Empire; it was a like enthusiasm that gave edge to the Crusader's sword; and to-day, a Britisher, fighting for the British Empire, has behind him, around him, within him, in his heart, in the sacred chambers of the soul, all that ever inspired men nobly in the past. The same single, sublime idea of God, of individual dignity, of freedom, which blazed from the spears of the Round Heads at Naseby, are yours; the symbol that gleamed on the Crusader's standard is your symbol; the central idea graven on the scimitar of Saladin is your central idea; no knight errant ever wore on his sleeve the badge of a truer or gentler lady than she, for the completeness of whose imperial diadem each one of you has entered the lists. No Cavalier could feel a nobler loyalty to the person of his monarch than we; and the God of battles, who clothed the sword of Joshua with lightning, and, centuries later, dispersed and submerged the ships and overwhelmed the designs of Spain, is the God whose power and protection and guidance we

invoke for you. If it was sweet and beautiful to die for country in the days of Augustus, patriotic death in battle, can have in the days of Victoria, lost none of its severe loveliness and charm. It is men like you who have built up Britain's greatness and freedom and imperishable glory. And one is touched to think, that in other years, the Codringtons, the Nelsons, the Blakes, the Wellseleys, the Goughs, the Roberts, the Kitcheners, the Howes, the Wolseleys, the Gordons, men whose renown can never pass away, were going out like you, unknown, having only what you have, a wealth of valour in the breast, and the sentiment that has made the Empire, which places honour before everything, despises the last extremity, realizes a life apart from the body, a national life, the life of humanity, and which knows that in the ideas and passions of truth and of individual liberty and justice, in the triumph of our race, of men like ourselves, who must be free or die, who hate wrong, and will not see others enslaved, it will live, and we shall live in it, when the bodies in which we move, have mouldered in the coffin, or become part of the windblown veldt. Up to the present the greatest moral spectacle at which the world has assisted is that of a nation borne forward on the top wave of a great idea. But to-

day we witness something grander far. We see a whole Empire, composed of different races, of different creeds, whose rubric borders reach around the world, embracing, in addition to the heroic isles perched on the shoulder of Europe, island continents in the Southern seas, half a continent under Northern skies in the Western hemisphere, the dim dreamy millions of India, the vast interests of unmeasured potentialities in Africa—we see all this moving on the great forward seawave of a united, high, single emotion. Up to the present the world has seen nothing so sublime. As Canadians, we are proud to have a part in this. As Western men, my brethren from the West, we are proud of the men we have already sent; we are proud of you; proud to be able to say to the Empire of those who have gone, of those who are going; to that Lone Empire, liberty's friend, the friend of all, yet hated by so many, from pettiness and envy—"This is our gift, this is the man we send; steady, whether bullets hail or shrapnels rend; patient under privation, in trench labor, in rain and storm; ready to drudge, to watch in silence, to bear repressed ardour; but when the word to close is given, whether sounded by bugle or passed by touch, eager to fly to the bayonet charge."

The telegraph has annihilated space. In other years, especially when serving in distant countries, men fought removed in great part morally as well as physically from the bulk of their fellow-citizens. But to-day the telegraph places us in the battlefield ; we elbow the General and his staff ; we



STRATHCONA HORSE.

see our soldiers at work in the trenches ; in the field firing, wounded, struck down ; calm and determined on the stormy ridge of battle ; cool, stemming its flaming surge and currents of fire. The soldier to-day fights not only in the eye of his

leader—the gaze of millions of his fellow citizens, the eyes of the world are on him.

The cruel injustice and inequality of war has to a great extent been thus redressed. Heroes used to die by thousands in dim heaps, and one man received all the praise, and covered his breast with stars. This is not so any more. To-day the heroism of the private, not less than that of the commander, is seen and universally acclaimed.

My Western Comrades, I pray God to be your shield and strength, to fill your hearts with that valour which strikes home, but is full of pity and kindness for the beaten foe. I pray you may all return. If you return, you will return to a grateful country and with the consciousness of duty done, the master note of all our country's achievements, and if you fall, what nobler fate could await any man than to die in battle for such a cause, fighting as our fathers fought, dying as our fathers died, but to-day, the venerable Queen, with great and good men and nations, the seats and thrones and galleries of the Empire looking down on him and sanctifying his grave of blood, with their blessings and songs of triumph and tears?

Once more God bless you.

APPENDIX.

Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal cablegrammed to the Canadian Government an offer to raise, equip and pay a force of mounted rifles for service in South Africa. The offer, which was then submitted by Lord Strathcona to the War Office, was accepted. There are twenty-eight officers, 572 N.C. officers and men. All the men were recruited in the West. The following are the officers:—

Lieutenant-Colonel.

Lieut.-Colonel S. B. Steele, North-West Mounted Police).

Second in Command.

Major R. Belcher, (North-West Mounted Police).

Majors.

Major A. E. Snyder, (North-West Mounted Police).

“ A. M. Jarvis, “ “ “
“ R. C. Laurie, (Lieut. Reserve of Officers).

Captains.

Captain D. M. Howard, (North-West Mounted Police).

“ G. W. Cameron, (Major 5th Battalion).
“ F. L. Cartwright, (North-West Mounted Police).

Lieutenants.

Lieutenant R. H. B. Magee, (Lieut. Reserve of Officers).

“ F. Harper, (North-West Mounted Police).
“ J. A. Benyon, Captain, Royal Canadian Artillery).
“ E. F. Mackie, (Captain, 90th Battalion).
“ P. Fall, (2nd Lieut., Manitoba Dragoons).
“ M. H. White-Fraser, (Ex-Inspector, North-West M. P.).
“ H. D. B. Ketchen, (North-West Mounted Police).
“ J. F. Macdonald, (Captain, 37th Battalion).
“ J. E. Leckie.
“ R. M. Courtney (Captain, 1st Battalion).
“ T. E. Pooley, (Captain, 5th Regiment, C.A.).
“ A. E. Christie.
“ A. W. Strange.
“ G. E. Laidlaw, (Lieut., Reserve of Officers).
“ G. H. Kirkpatrick, “ “
“ H. Tobin, “ “

Quartermaster.

Lieutenant W. Parker.

Transport Officer.

Lieutenant I. R. Snider, (2nd Lieut., Manitoba Dragoons).

Medical Officer.

Lieutenant C. B. Keenan.

Veterinary Officer.

Lieutenant G. T. Stevenson.

By Order,

HUBERT FOSTER, Colonel,
Chief Staff Officer.

[Special to *The Mail and Empire*.]

Ottawa, March 7th, 1900.—The first mounted parade of Strathcona's Horse took place on the Exhibition Grounds this afternoon, when the regiment was reviewed by His Excellency the Governor-General. The men made a splendid appearance, and the proceedings passed off with great eclat, as they were made the occasion of an interesting ceremony. The citizens of Sudbury having entrusted their esteemed representative, Mr. Klock, M.P., with a beautiful flag for presentation to Strathcona's Horse. Mr. Klock performed his task this afternoon in the presence of a large concourse of spectators.

Among those present besides their Excellencies and Mrs. Drummond were the Marquis and Marchioness of Hertford, Sir Charles Tupper, Dr. Borden, Mr. Clarke, M.P., Mr. Davin, M.P., Mr. Cargill, M.P., Mr. Corby, M.P., Mr. Ratz, M.P., Mr. Carscallen, M.P., Mr. Dugas, M.P., Mr. Osler, M.P., Colonel Tyrwhitt, M.P., Mr. McCormick, Mr. Marcotte, M.P., and many other prominent personages.

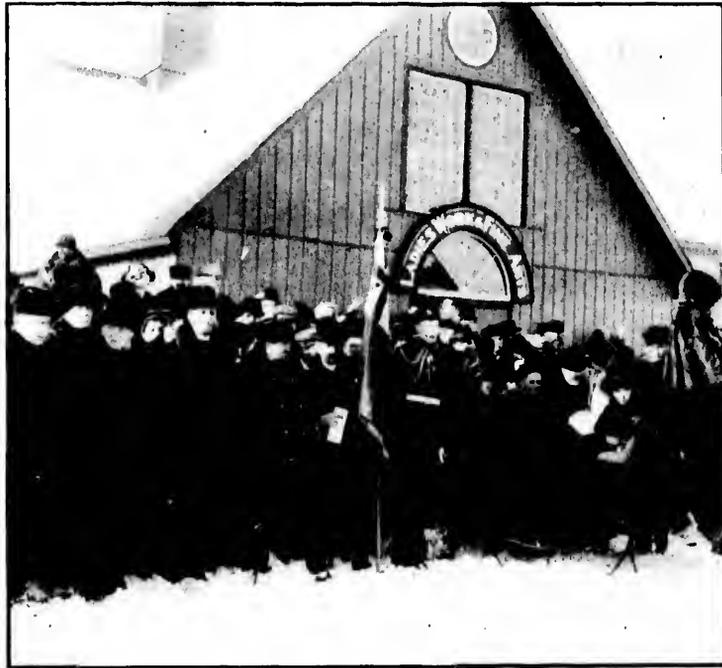
Mr. Klock, addressing Col. Steele, said he had been entrusted by his constituents of the town of Sudbury with the pleasant duty of presenting to him, his officers and men of Strathcona's Horse, a token of appreciation of the manner in which the regiment had come forward at this time to fight for Queen and country. The townspeople of Sudbury represented all parts of the Empire, and they held in great respect the distinguished nobleman who had, by his princely generosity, offered this corps for the Queen's service. The sentiments of the people of Sudbury were embodied in the address which he had the honour to present.

The address, which was signed by Mayor Ryan, Clerk Fournier, and Major Smith, chairman of the Citizen's Committee, was as follows :—

“Colonel Steele, officers and men of Strathcona's Horse :—

“Gentlemen,—You are now on your way to help to fight the battles of the Empire. You have responded to the call from the

Motherland, and have enrolled yourselves among the number of brave men who have rallied around the old flag and have gone forth to face the enemies of our Queen and country. When, through the generosity of that most worthy and noble Canadian, Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, another regiment of Canada's gallant sons have been enabled to set out for the front, you have eagerly embraced the opportunity, have left your homes behind, and have commenced a long, tedious journey



THE SADBURY FLAG.

in order that you may take part in the deliverance of your fellow subjects from the oppression of the Boer and in the upholding of the dignity of the British Empire—that Empire on which the sun never sets—the Empire whose might is never exercised on the side of the oppressor, but always on behalf of the oppressed—the Empire to which the humblest of its subjects may app'y for redress and never in vain—the Empire whose sword is always ready to be drawn in the cause of

freedom, and when once drawn, is never sheathed until liberty has triumphed or the Empire falls, battling for the right.

"We are proud of the Empire ; we are proud of our Queen ; we are proud of Lord Strathcona ; we are proud of you.

"We, the citizens of Sudbury, will join the rest of the people of Canada in watching your movements, rejoicing in your successes and sympathizing with you in any ill fortune that may befall. We now present you with this flag, feeling confident that it is being placed in good hands, and that you will never let it be disgraced, but will play the part of men, maintaining the honor of Canada, and proving her worthy of her place in the Empire.

"We wish you Godspeed, a safe journey, success in your mission and a glorious return to the Land of the Maple."

Her Excellency, at Mr. Klock's request, then handed the flag to Colonel Steele, with her best wishes for himself and his men.

COL. STEELE'S REPLY.

Col. Steele, in reply, expressed his warm thanks for this noble mark of esteem sent by the people of Sudbury. "We will endeavour," he said, "to deserve it, and do honour to that great citizen of Canada who has raised this corps." He could hardly find words sufficient to express his appreciation. He could assure the people of Canada that his men would endeavor to do honour to their country, and to the British Empire. (Cheers.) It was a sad thing, perhaps, that this war had occurred, but after all it was a good thing, because it had shown to the centre of the Empire what Canadians are. (Cheers.) Canadians had in the past evidenced their loyalty, and would show it again. Strathcona's Horse were no more loyal than the rest of Canadian citizens. They were simply a sample of what the country could produce, and what the country would do, and it would be their endeavour to worthily maintain the honour of their country and the integrity of the Empire. (Loud cheers).

HON. DR. BORDEN.

Dr. Borden, Minister of Militia, congratulated the regiment on their splendid appearance, he congratulated Canada on being able to produce such men, and he congratulated the Empire on having such a splendid lot of men to go to the front. It was through the magnificent patriotism and splendid generosity of Lord Strathcona that this splendid troop of men was assembled in Ottawa to-day. The force was an unique one. He did not know whether in the whole history of the Empire there was a similar case of such generosity as Lord Strathcona had shown. He was satisfied Strathcona's Horse would carefully guard the flag which had been entrusted to them, that they would never

allow it to pass out of their hands. (Loud cheers.) It was emblematical of everything that was good, the symbol of freedom throughout the world. They were carrying it into a war which was being waged for freedom and equal rights to all. (Cheers.) He wished the regiment Godspeed, and a safe return, and he was sure that they would do honour to themselves, and, in so doing would confer honour upon Canada. (Loud cheers.)



MINING TOWN A FEW MILES OUTSIDE SUDBURY.

HON. SIR CHARLES TUPPER.

Sir Charles Tupper said he was proud of the opportunity of being invited to take part in this interesting ceremonial. The cause in which the regiment was about to engage was regarded by every British subject, and by nearly the whole civilized world, as of a just and righteous character. Lord Strathcona, by his princely generosity, had conferred great obligations on the people of Canada. (Cheers.) He had set an example that would redound to the honour of Canada and the glory of the Empire. (Cheers.) The men of the regiment had come forward

and tendered their lives in the service of their country, and in so doing they had shown they had the honour and interest of Canada at heart. They all grieved at the loss of the noble and patriotic Canadians, but their blood would not be shed in vain, as it would cement the unity of the Empire to which Canada was proud to belong. (Cheers.) He hoped Strathcona's Horse would return safe, after a successful and victorious campaign, but those who fell on the field of battle—and there was a possibility of some not returning—would know that their names would be handed down to posterity as having, at a most important crisis, shed their blood in the service of the Empire. (Cheers.) Those who did return would receive the warmest welcome of a patriotic people, who realized the deep obligation and honour which they had conferred upon Canada, while those who fell would fall with the conviction that their services would never be forgotten by a country upon whom they had shed the greatest glory and pride that it was the lot of man to offer. He was proud to know that in Col. Steele, their commandant, they had at their head a man who was recognized by Canadians of every class and party as an officer eminently qualified in fullest extent for the important duties entrusted to him. (Cheers.) He joined with the Minister of Militia in wishing them all Godspeed and a safe return. (Loud cheers.)

MR. DAVIN followed.

Enthusiastic cheers were then given for the Queen, for their Excellencies, for Colonel Steele and Strathcona's Horse, and the proceedings terminated.

A quaint little volume of pamphlets, containing, amongst other things, a speech delivered more than 26 years ago, takes us back to a time before Canada had become as great as she is to-day, when there had been only two general elections since Confederation, and when the tone and temper of public thought differed somewhat from that of these times; when Toronto was much smaller, and we had very few millionaires. In 1873 the Imperial sentiment, which within the last 15 years has become so pronounced, had not been heard of in Canada. At that time there was a powerful party in England which held the view that the sooner Canada set up housekeeping for herself the better. In Canada the Nationalist movement was nearly at its height, and there was much talk of independence and starting off for ourselves. In the spring of 1873 the Rev. Dr. Tiffany, an eminent methodist preacher, whose church in Washington President Grant used to attend, visited Toronto, preached in the Tabernacle, and lectured in Shaftesbury Hall on the "New Civilization"—this new civilization being that of the United States, which was to teach the world and con-

vert Canada, whose destiny it was to be immediately absorbed in the Republic. There was great indignation in Toronto, and a deputation of the St. George's Society, headed by Mr. Hague, waited on Mr. Nicholas Flood Davin, who had come to Canada on a visit in 1872, and was then living in Toronto, and asked him to reply to Dr. Tiffany. On the following Monday Shaftesbury Hall was crowded. Dr. McCaul, Principal of the University, was in the chair, and the speech was reported fully in the *Globe*, and is now before us. "The young Irishman, standing up for "British against American civilization," excited curiosity and interest. There was a great deal in the speech made that night that Mr. Davin would neither utter nor sympathize with now, though very natural in a man educated in the heart of the Empire, and the surprise was to the critical that certain of his words did not offend an audience in a democratic colony. On the contrary, the speech was well received by hearers and readers, and Lord Dufferin, the Governor-General at the time, praised its moderation. It will always be interesting, not for its oratorical merit (for notwithstanding its success, it was—owing either to hurry or to the fact that it was perhaps the first speech he ever made out of a Court of Justice—very crude and boyish), as for showing the ideas with which a young Britisher of the middle class in the seventies set out to see the world. But its main interest to-day, and the one which struck me in reading it, is that so far as I know the concluding sentence of the peroration was the first note struck in Canada of the Imperialism now so deep and universal. It is :

"That day will never come when scattered nations of the British race, looking with loyal love from every compass, to the little mother isles—

Girt by the dim straight sea,

And multitudinous wall of wandering wave,

and reposing safe and glorious in that sapphire embrace, shall turn round to call on Canada to add her voice to swell the peal of filial gratulation of proud assurance of co-operation, and, if need be, of help--and will turn in vain." Prophetic words truly, viewed in the light of to-day. Nor did Canada fail--nor yet Ireland.--Kit, in *Mail and Empire*, Sat., Dec. 2nd, 1899.

"If Irishmen have any quarrel with England on the field of history, it is not with the people who love justice, but with a class who oppressed the English people themselves. . . . And now once more I ask, who built up the British Empire as we see it to-day? . . . There is the fabric of the British Empire. It is a stately structure. It affords room for genius and activity of every kind ; opens up careers for all. Well, there is not a stone in it on which there is not the mark of an Irish chisel. (Cheers.) Irishmen have as much right to claim part

ownership in it as anybody else. It is a Hiberno-British Empire. (Cheers.) They have as good a right to enter its best rooms as anybody else. . . . I would say to you—' Never abandon Ireland, your country ; so long as there is one thing she ought to have—if you live in Ireland—struggle for it ; if you live here, give that struggle your moral support ; but do not deprive yourselves and your sons of your birth-right ; for there is no man, call he himself English or Scotch, who has a better right to walk into the best room in that building than you ?— . . . do not go and make yourselves aliens where you are sons of the house and can aspire to rule. (Cheers.) . . . The Empire is really a Brito-Hibernian Empire. (Cheers.)"—*Ireland and the Empire, a Speech by Nicholas Flood Davin, delivered before the St. Patrick's Society of Montreal on St. Patrick's Day, 1885.*



A SECTION OF THE SUDBURY MINES.