

# ALUMNI ORATOR CHOSE THE WAR FOR HIS THEME

**A Masterly Address at the University Encoenia by Rev. Father Meahan, D. D. of St. Andrews--Unstinted Praise for Canada's Citizen Soldiers--Great Problem's Which Will Confront the Empire When the War Ends.**

Rev. A. W. Meahan, D.D., of St. Andrews, in his alumni address at the encoenia exercises at the University of New Brunswick this afternoon said:

The world over, alumni, by their unselfish and personal endeavors, are accomplishing a work in matters educational greater than they know. Membership, therefore, among the alumni of the University of New Brunswick makes known the fact that you have retained a deep interest in the education of the youth of our province and consequently a broader, if not deeper, concern in the moral, intellectual and I might add physical well being of Canadians in general.

In thus exerting your influence, varied as it is, you are worthy both of commendation and imitation; and because I feel assured that you would welcome the thought of still further improvement along such lines, I am convinced that you will bear with me in reviewing what must have often-times, during the last two years, been your own thoughts as well as mine, upon a subject rather very close to us all. The question must have come home to you with repeated insistence. "Will those bright minds, the products of our brightest standards of educational system, who have gone forth to do battle for the empire, return to Canada from the European conflict, made or marred for a splendid Canadian citizenship?"

For myself, the answer to that question is more than a hope, greater than a speculation; and there is but one answer. From what we know of those who have gone out from university and college, from what we know of the ideals which actuated them in their going; from what we know of the lessons of the war which their trained minds cannot but assimilate and digest, we may with assurance, reply, Yes; they will return made, not marred, for a better Canadian citizenship and Canada will be greater because they have lived.

## When Europe Fell to Pieces.

To quote a writer of the day: "One might well have supposed that we were independent of the heir to the Austrian throne. We in Canada did not even know his name. But one day in the year 1914 they killed him, and Europe fell to pieces." Since that time our thoughts with difficulty disassociate themselves from the events which followed in such startling rapidity, till in August England declared war in defence of the neutral flags of nations, in protection of the weak against the strong. The empire at war, Canada declared herself at war; and then we in this country were privileged to witness a spectacle such as the world has rarely seen. For a moment all industrial activity seemed to halt. There was only one business. The flower of Canadian youth and manly intelligence gave themselves without hesitation or reluctance in defence of such an appealing cause. In homes of affluence and intellectuality, in homes frugal and unpretentious, kindly family ties were severed at the call to arms. The workman's tools were left upon the bench; the student's books closed upon the table. Every rank and file of the social order was threatened with depletion; until a land of peaceful prosperity was changed to an armed camp. Not Shakespeare's soldiers these, "Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard, jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel, seeking the bubble reputation even in the cannon's mouth." There is no frenzy of excited minds here, but the cold deliberateness born of an upright courage and a courage gained by habit and education and not enforced by law.

## A New Democracy.

Here "clay and clay did not differ in dignity." It was a new democracy that shot into existence so that today we find employers and employed, master and man, standing side by side in the sodden trenches of Flanders.

Ours is a citizen soldier of the highest type. This man has carried into the barrack room the culture of the home and the learning of the schools. Young as he may be in years, his cultivation of mind has prevented his becoming a mere machine of war, but rather has made him a man, whose loyalty engendered amid surroundings of peaceful pursuits, has urged him for the moment to suffer privation and cold and hunger—even death itself—for the cause he has espoused. Viewed in

this light we must with just pride, look to him for the highest measure of success in the field.

But our range of vision must stretch farther than usual.

One day the world war will be over. The last shot will be fired, the last trench vacated. Then out from the mud and noise of the shambles will come those glorious sons of Canada eager to return to the land they have so fittingly honored. Who can picture what that home coming is to be; with victory—to many a bereaved home so dearly won—perched upon their banners; but no doubt exists with us as to the security of that victory or the wonderfulness of that scene.

We have watched the progress of their arms, now what of their power for the general good in this young and growing country? What inspiration to nobility of character in the youth of succeeding generations of their fellows will they excite? Let us examine.

## Something Big to Think About.

Because they number in their ranks every avocation that falls to the lot of man, their return will act as a new leaven to purge out such social, political and religious decadence as may already in its youth beset our land. They have had time to think and they have had something big to think about. The man in the trenches has been sobered in these tense times. He has left all behind him. The voice of the world is dead in his ears; in any one moment all may be over forever. He must think and he must think right, and the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts. His civil life has only been interrupted, it has not been abandoned. As he lies in watchful waiting, as he suffers in hospital wards, his thoughts must often turn, by comparison at least, to the life's work which is awaiting him at home. He beholds that work from new angles, strange and searching lights are reflected on it. He has grown up suddenly. A noted divine has put him to the test when he says, "The war is teaching a lesson deeper than all things because it combines and contains them all. It is either God and the Law of God with all the difficulties which that possession implies, but with the absolute certainty of moral security and eternal hope, or else the deceits of guilty conscience, the fading intoxication of ill-gotten wealth, the butterfly happiness of agnostic science; one or the other, but not both." We know what choice the war in the trench has made. We hear it in his speech. It has dropped from his pen as he writes the loved ones at home. It lies hidden in the phrases, "If I am spared, if God spares me." The language of a man whose soul has been simplified and purified in the havoc of death and carnage about him. He becomes true. He becomes a moral member of society and his home coming will become a powerful force for good. I repeat, therefore, that from a religious point of view we may look in them for a splendid Canadian citizenship.

## Effects of War on Youth.

But we may not stop here in considering the effects of the war upon our intelligent Canadian youth. It has been already stated that a wonderful democracy has sprung into existence at the call to arms. Social cant and class distinctions have all gone down before the test of war. The old professional army has almost vanished. Even in the established army there has come a change in officers and in men. The soldier of other days had the shortcomings and virtues of his class; today we find him very often socially and intellectually the peer of his officers. They tell us that in one company two sappers were found to be undergraduates of one of our best universities. A hospital orderly, when asked said that before the war he had been an organist, a driver in the artillery had been a noted elocutionist.

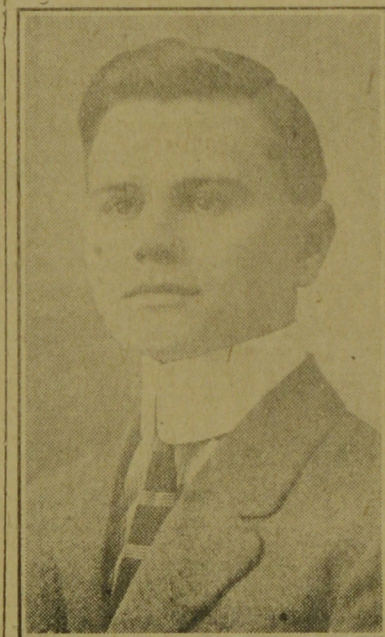
Two years ago these men were living the life of the cities and the rural life of selfish idleness or ill-paid toil. For more than a year they have lived a man's life in the open, and they have imbibed the spirit of that life. Conventions which have hedged them in at home have melted. The bonds of red tape have been severed, and they have come face to face with things as they are. A transformation is taking place within the confines of the British Empire. We may be unable as yet to define it, but we feel that it is there. The Canadian at the front realizes for the first time a clear vision of himself as a living part in that Empire. It is a new experience. It is a new experience. It is a new experience.

a readjustment of thought. Out there he is getting the broader view, the grand lessons in self-government that will fit him for the part he is soon to play in the duties of state control and policy. A healthy enthusiasm will be infused, for political catchwords of the past have lost all their meaning and are no longer powerful to mislead a generation of men strengthened by this great "Pentecost of calamity."

As they have fought like brothers in a common cause, and for a country, they deemed worth fighting for, so will the fraternity of the trenches be an earnest in the future of their efforts for the good and proper government of that country. I repeat, however, that from a religious, political and social point of view, those bright minds—the highest product of our educational system—must because of noblesse oblige, return to their beloved land to lay the foundation for a more splendid Canadian citizenship.

## Men Who Have Suffered.

All—all will be men who have suffered, who have witnessed death in all the grimness that human ingenuity could invent, who have seen strong human bodies broken, who have visited maybe for the first time in their young lives countries centuries old in which the world is pleased to call civilization, who have met and conversed with peoples of other and different nationalities, whose minds will have contrasted the possibilities of their own country with the achievements of older lands, who have lost the cocksureness of inexperience and insularity in the breadth of discipline, whose knowledge of what war really is will make for the betterment if hasty international diplomacy, whose spirit of religion and fear of God—the beginning of real wisdom—will be intensified by the sight of noble deeds performed amid ever-present death, who will have seen that material progress alone is not the end of created man, who have found out before it is too late that mental superiority alone does not necessarily heget honor among nations any more than it breeds respect between individuals. In a word, the return of these splendid men ought to be for us an assurance that every generation in its turn will be found saying, "Let us build a Canada for which these men lying in their scattered and unnamed graves over the face of God's green earth would have been proud, aye, proud to die."



MURRAY McC. BAIRD.

U. N. B. Rhodes Scholar, who won the Governor General's Medal and the Montgomery Campbell Prize.

## WILL "SWELLED HEAD" MAKE BENNY KAUFF A WONDER?

Benny Kauff, the Ty Cobb of the Feds, who will be with the Giants this year, says a Philadelphia sporting writer, is being roasted for his conceit. He is even called a "swell-head." Conceit made Ty Cobb the greatest of all ball players. Conceit made Bat Nelson lightweight champion of the world. Conceit made Frank Gotch wrestling champion of the world.

Red Dooin, former manager of the Phillies, once said: "Give me the conceited ball player. The fellow who thinks he is the goods will work his head off to make everybody else think the same."

"The chap who does not have a high opinion of himself doesn't care much what other people think, and it will show in his work." When Ty Cobb broke into the majors he was so "cocky" several Detroit players tried to take him down a notch. They are in the minors; Cobb is setting records.

Gotch had the idea he was the greatest wrestler the game ever produced. Some folks didn't think so. He started out to show them. He did.

Bat Nelson was always willing to admit the President was a great man, but playing second fiddle to Bat Nelson. His egotism carried him to the top.

Kauff was a bearcat in hitting and base running in his two seasons in the Federal League. He is to get his first chance in the real big show. He says he'll make Alexander look like a bush league pitcher; make fans forget Cobb; and give Jake Daubert batting lessons.

There is, of course, little chance that Kauff will accomplish all these things, but he is the kind of chap who will try them. If people think he has a "swelled head" he will try to make them think he has a reason to be. In the trying he will always be playing to the limit of his ability, and he is some bitter and hard runner.

The main difference between Kauff and other athletes who have been suc-

cessful is that he is boastful. His remarks will cause antagonism and he will have greater opposition than if he had kept his conceit more to himself.

As far as his idea of ability is concerned, he is starting with the right dope, judging from the success of other conceited persons. It's a ten to one shot he will make some far fly.

## SAVING MONEY.

"A dollar box of candy for me, hubby?" Really, I must curb such extravagance.

"I bought you one frequently before we were married."

"But things are different now. Instead of a dollar box of candy it would have been better to have gotten me a ten-cent box and a sport coat and that spring party. I want so much."

## BOB'S DEFINITION.

"Bob," said Cogate Jim, "that's one of those here optimists."

"Well," answered Ernoo Bob, "as near as I can make out, an optimist is a fellow that kin look at a pair of deuces an' imagine it's as good as three kings, an' still have sense enough not to bet on the hand."

## FORCE OF HABIT.

Judge—Discharged.  
Bridget—Without a reference?



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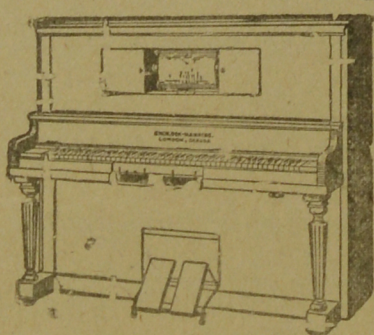
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