

An Open Letter
from
A Winnipeg Mother
to
Sir Wilfrid Laurier

An appeal from a mother whose two heroic
sons lie buried in Flanders' fields, for
help for our boys at the Front.

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A LETTER FROM A Winnipeg Mother to Sir Wilfrid Laurier

(Published in the Free Press, Winnipeg, the leading Liberal paper of Western Canada, on August 14)

TO SIR WILFRID LAURIER,
Ex-Prime Minister of Canada, Ottawa.

My Dear Sir Wilfrid:

You are an old man, you have passed the allotted span of life by several years, and during a long lifetime you have enjoyed the confidence, respect and devotion of a very large number of your fellow citizens of Canada—and in Great Britain, and the other dominions beyond the seas, your name has been honored by King and Commoner.

You have done much for Canada, you have left upon the statutes of our country legislation that is wise and good, and your errors and faults have been, in general, forgiven and condoned by friend and foe alike.

You have tasted of the sweets and joys of office; but there is one sweet and one joy you have not experienced in the course of your long life—the sweets and joys of fatherhood. God has withheld this blessing from you. In this you have missed the greatest pleasure of life, and my heart sympathizes with you in your great loss. Not to know the joy of witnessing your own flesh and blood grow up to man's estate, not to know the love and affection of one of your very own is, indeed, a loss beyond expression of words.

I, a mother, know the joys of having children—they are the breath of life to me, the essence of all that is good and pure in this earthly life. **And two of my children were sons who grew from perfect boyhood to perfect manhood**—boys and men I was proud of, boys and men I would have given my life for.

At the call of duty they enlisted to fight for their King and Country, and they left Canada with their mother's blessing. To-day they lie in their graves on the battle-scarred field of Flanders, honored in their lives, and in their deaths, by those who knew them as civilians, and by those who fought side by side with them as soldiers. And I, their mother, am left alone, but I do not mourn my gallant sons, my consolation being in the certain assurance we shall meet again in that Land where there shall be no more strife.

I write you from a mother's heart—a mother of the dead—on behalf of the mothers of those other brave lads who are fighting the dreadful Hun for the protection of all we hold dear in this life. **They cry for help, and Canada must lend a responsive ear. The mothers, the sisters, the sweethearts of those dear lads at the front must be listened to—and help, and speedy help, must be sent by Canada, if Canada is to remain honored in the eyes of herself, and in the eyes of the world.**

The letters and diaries of my dead sons reveal much to me—the hardships beyond the dreadful wounds, the physical ills, **but outstanding beyond all these ills, the splendid fortitude of our splendid men.** And you, Sir Wilfrid, an old man, ripe in years, but not ripe in fatherhood, propose to allow these brave men to fight on until exhausted without help from you. You say Canada has done well enough—I say Canada has done splendidly under the voluntary system of enlistment—better than even you, or any other member of parliament anticipated, but the time has come NOW when others must be sent—must be compelled to go—to defend the very existence of our heroes at the front, and the existence and happiness of those at home, and of those yet to be. **Canada must not shirk her duty, and the splendid women of Canada will see to it, when the polls are opened, that no man, no matter what his past record may be, shall be sent to Ottawa with power to annul the righteous cry from our men at the front.**

You have from your place in parliament decried the raising of racial and other questions throughout Canada, and yet you are the One Man in Canada, who, by taking a firm and imperial stand in this time of our national peril, has the power to quell. **Will you take this stand? It is not yet too late.** The women of Canada desire not to see an election, in which the passions of an angry country will be let loose. **Are you big enough, are you sufficiently British, are you sufficiently French to lift your hand and cry "Peace"?**

If you fail your "white plume" will be stained with the blood of your fellow man, and your name will go down to posterity in deserved shame.

The blood of the dead heroes in Flanders calls to you—the blood of the living heroes boils in indignation over your lack of practical sympathy. Your words are empty of hope to the men at the front.

If you fail to listen to the cry from the wounded hearts of Canada, and from the battlefields of France—that glorious France, your motherland—the day of reckoning is near, and swift and just punishment will be meted out to you. The women of Canada are strong and determined in this matter, so pay heed while it is yet time.

"God save our splendid men," you sing, but what are YOU going to do to help God?

I am, my dear Sir Wilfrid,

Winnipeg, Aug. 14, 1917.

A WINNIPEG MOTHER.



IN FLANDERS' FIELDS

BY CAPTAIN JOHN McRAE
OF GUELPH CANADA, NOW SERVING IN FRANCE

"
IN Flanders' fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place, and in the sky
The larks still bravely singing fly,
Scarce heard amidst the guns below.
We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders' fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe,
To you from falling hands we throw
The Torch—be yours to hold it high;
If ye break faith with us who die,
We shall not sleep though poppies grow
In Flanders' fields.