

occupation we see Viger and Bedard carrying their grievances to London and invoking the principles of British government to obtain a larger measure of legislative authority for the colony. Later we find united two great Canadians to whom the country is greatly indebted for their indomitable courage, William Lyon Mackenzie and Papineau, who struggled to secure for upper and lower Canada the right to manage their own affairs, and who fought against grave abuses and for the redress of serious injustices to the mass of the people of the two provinces.

This question of legislative authority was to the fore during all the period and brought together two other great Canadians who led the liberal forces of the times, Baldwin and Lafontaine, who can equally share honours for their fight for responsible government. Up to these days the only party that believed in responsible government as being essential to the progress and prosperity of Canada, and that the granting of this right of self-government would not only not weaken but strengthen our loyalty to the crown, was the Liberal party in Canada.

Then came Cartier and Macdonald, whom the former conservative party have a right to be so proud of for their part in the building of confederation. Both were great Canadians whose aim was the greatness of the country and its advancement in the path of self-government. History already recognizes the part Laurier has played in the further emancipation of the country. Barely a year after his getting into power, Laurier, when in London for the diamond jubilee of Queen Victoria, was consistently maintaining the position that Canada had reached the status of a nation, and he obtained recognition from the British government that such was the case. Later on his return he was able to state that he had "longed to live to see the day when Canada would no longer be a colony but would be a free nation within the empire, and he was glad to be able to say he had lived to see that day."

Laurier impressed consistently upon British statesmen during the succeeding imperial conferences this thought of Canada's emancipation. The Hon. Newton W. Rowell stated in Montreal in 1912:

This assertion of our national status was necessary for the people of Canada to develop our own national self-consciousness and our own self-respect. It was necessary for the people of Great Britain in order that they might realize that they were dealing not with subjects but with fellow citizens. That this is our position, and that we are now a nation, is not only recognized by the statesmen of Canada but by the statesmen of the mother country.

He concluded by saying:

I venture to suggest that when the history of our constitutional development is written among the great things that Sir Wilfrid Laurier has done none will appear greater than his perception of the fact that the status of Canada must be changed and that this change must be brought about, not by legislative enactment, but by the demand on our part for a new status.

It must be said that at the time all the Conservative press of the country was accusing Laurier of being a separatist. But soon afterwards another great Canadian, Borden, had occasion to demonstrate that the successor of Macdonald could, when faced with the responsibilities of power, broaden his outlook on the same question of Canadian autonomy, and a further step was made during the last war in the negotiating and signing of the peace treaty, when Borden convinced the British statesmen that nobody could speak for Canada but its own Prime Minister.

When one of the treaties ending the last war was brought before this parliament for approval there was given to the country the evidence of true cooperation of great Canadians to the cause of autonomy when the present Prime Minister, then leader of the opposition said, as reported at page 472 of *Hansard* of March 16, 1920:

I would say frankly that Sir Robert Borden and his colleagues stood firm for the maintenance of Canada's status—they did their duty by Canada in that regard. If they had done less they would have been derelict in their duty and would have been liable to the censure of this parliament. Having done their duty, and done it well, they are entitled to the thanks of this parliament and of this country.

On the same day the Right Hon. C. J. Doherty, Minister of Justice in the Conservative cabinet, answering the leader of the opposition, had this to say of Laurier, as reported at page 474 of *Hansard* of March 16, 1920:

... that status was the result of a growth, a growth to which succeeding statesmen, one after another, contributed. Let me say at once, that I take off my hat without hesitation in respect to the memory of Sir Wilfrid Laurier for the great contribution that he made to that growth.

This exchange of honours between the Liberal leader and a prominent member of the former Conservative party took place a quarter of a century ago, nearly to the day, that is, on March 16, 1920. Since that day Canada has made great strides towards the attainment of full nationhood under the guidance of the great Liberal statesman who now leads the country. At the moment when he asks us to approve of his participation in the momentous conference of San Francisco I consider it is appropriate to look back on the road followed since 1921 in order to deter-