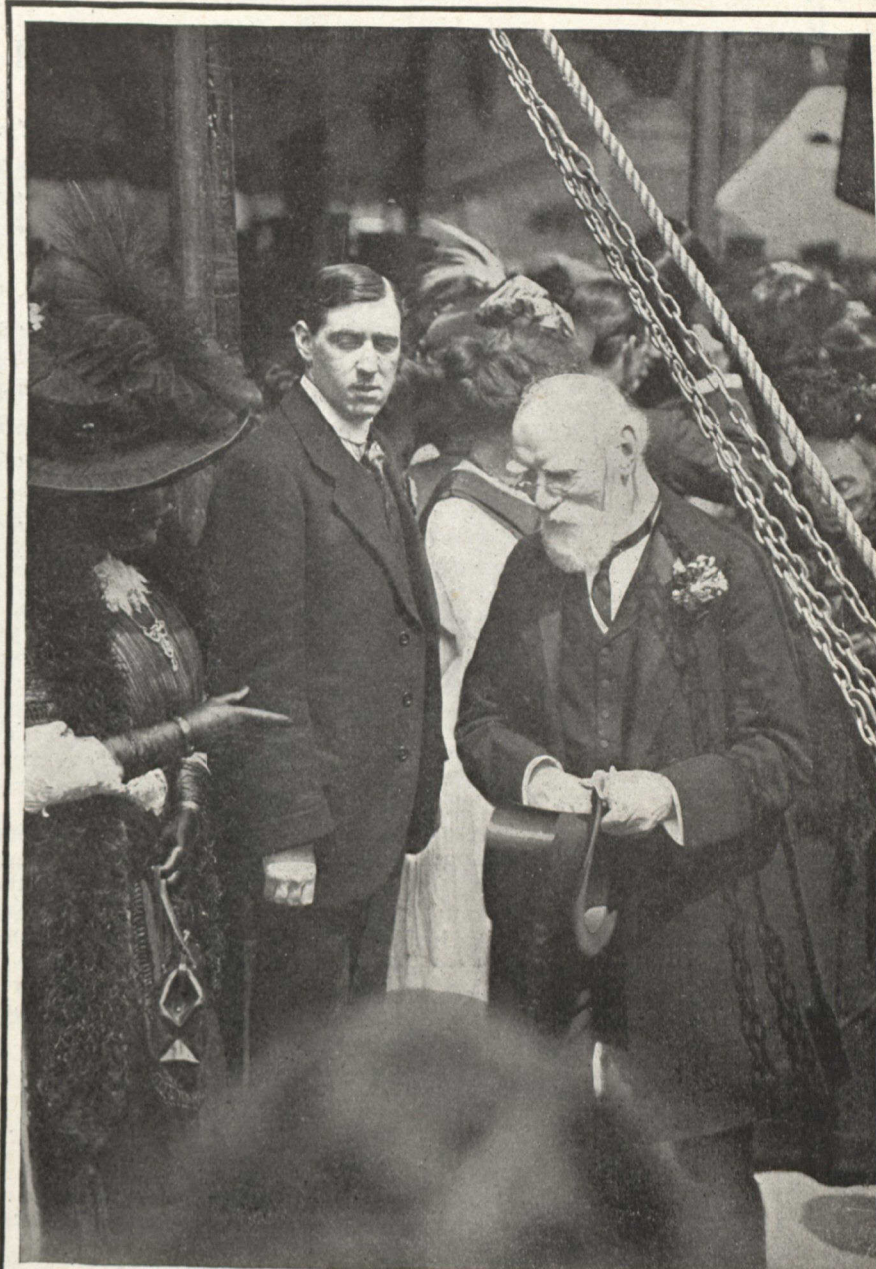


TWO OF THE EMPIRE'S GRAND OLD MEN



Lord and Lady Roberts and Miss Roberts at the Bisley Rifle Meeting.



Lord Strathcona at the Foundation Stone Laying of the Royal Academy of Music.

THE TRUTH ABOUT LACROSSE

Shifting Story of the Big Canadian Clubs

By W. F. WIGGINS

NEVER since the National Lacrosse Union was organised has the Toronto Lacrosse Club won a championship. This season their chances looked good and the experts were touting them as a world-beating aggregation, when the Nationals—an exclusively French-Canadian team in Montreal—loomed up large on the lacrosse horizon and the roseate sky of Toronto's hopes faded away to an ashen grey.

For those fleet-footed French-Canadians did something that never before in the history of the N. L. U. had they been able to accomplish. They defeated the Torontos in Toronto—trimmed them cleanly and clearly in one of the best games seen there in years. The score was five to three, and the Torontos were beaten in every department of the game. It was no fluke victory.

After that it was easy for the Frenchmen. Nothing could hold them. Previously the two teams had been tied for first place. Torontos went out of the race from that day. They even allowed the Cornwall Colts to trim them in the Factory Town, where a year ago they had triumphed over Lally's legions by the somewhat ridiculous score of fifteen to four. Then Nationals got them in Montreal on July 23rd and clinched their championship chances by a five to one victory.

And that last game is worth some comment. It established some new records in the N. L. U. Nearly fifteen thousand excited lacrosse fans saw the struggle. Thousands of them could not get within the grounds, but from an equally excited compatriot, standing at a club-house window, they heard through a monster megaphone the story of the game, and they went into raptures of joy as the man with

the megaphone detailed the daring deeds of their idols. The gate receipts were over \$5,000, eclipsing by several hundred dollars the gate taken at the great Shamrock-Capital struggle some years ago. This is a new world's record for lacrosse gate receipts. Inside the National grounds the crowd was so great that the game was delayed while part of the field was roped off.

Nationals are deserving of all the credit they can get for their fine showing this season. It's something like a decade or more since they won the N. L. U. honours, and they had degenerated into almost a tail-end team of late years. This season "Newsy" Lalonde, formerly goal-keeper for Cornwall, took over the management of the team, and he has put new life into the French-Canadians. They are the fastest outfit in the league, they are skilful stick-handlers, and they are close checkers. All they needed was brainy coaching and good management. This Lalonde has supplied, though it must be recorded with some regret that in the last game with Torontos he spoiled a good season's record by a dirty and deliberate attack on Ernie Menarey, the Toronto captain, when the game was safe and there remained only two minutes to play. The N. L. U. has long been noted for its laxness in dealing with such offenders, and it remains to be seen whether it will as usual content itself with informing the offender that he has been a naughty boy.

Torontos have themselves to blame for their failure to live up to the hopes of their backers. Their weakness is in petty tripping and slashing of opponents, and games are never won by players on the penalty bench.

Montrealers have just returned from their

Minto Cup-chasing trip to the Pacific Coast—without the Cup. They will have to yield up the N. L. U. honours, too, for it begins to look as if the Nationals are invincible. They have won seven straights and lost none, and they may even go through the entire season without a defeat. If they do it will be another record broken.

Tecumsehs this year seem to be in-and-outers. They will do well if they win half their games.

Cornwall has a new and nervy home and practically the same old defence. They'll come stronger next season.

Shamrocks are using only three or four of the famous old brigade that won so many championships, and the new chaps somehow seem to find the shoes of their predecessors hard to fill.

The once great Capitals have faded away, and the team was recently organised. It is almost entirely made up of juniors now, and they broke into the win column last Saturday after seven straight defeats.

The Minto Cup games resulted as almost everybody expected they would. Montrealers could not put up as good a battle as did Tecumsehs a year ago. New Westminster has a team of legitimate world-champions, and there seems to be no team in the east good enough to go west and bring back the Minto Mug. It is doubtful if Nationals will fare much better than Montreal when they get their chance at the champions. But somehow, easterners can't help feeling that they'd like to see Torontos or Nationals play off at Winnipeg, or some other neutral city, for the coveted trophy. Of course the conditions for the contest would be more even, but there wouldn't be nearly as much money in it.

And nowadays, even in sport, money talks louder than anybody else in the conversation.

We are modern. Only college professors when they take a day off to roast in the bleachers watching a lacrosse or baseball tussle, wonder which is the more important—the money or the game—it wasn't so in Arnold of Rugby's time! Fans would pay fifty dollars to see some games.