

may lead a steadier, more responsible and more capable opposition.

May I be permitted to pass on that patriotic aspiration to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, or some of his lieutenants, for I do not expect to lead an opposition after the next general election. The country has had eleven years of Liberal rule and is tired of it.

No government in Canada ever had so splendid an opportunity as that which is now in power, and no government ever failed more signally in its duty. Even its most partisan supporters have become weary of voting to condone scandal, to deny investigation, to conceal the trail of the grafter.

#### THE MEANING OF POWER TO THE LIBERAL-CONSERVATIVE PARTY.

Shall our advent to power mean no more than a mere party triumph? Are the experiences of the past ten years to be repeated in all their degrading details of broken pledges, opportunist policy, stolen elections, indecent public appointments and robbery of the public assets? Those who know me best are aware how little I have desired a public career; and if I thought such an outcome possible I would turn with unspeakable aversion from the task before me. Victory must mean for us more than party triumph. The power to control the destinies of this great country in a most interesting and important period of its history should be received with a solemn and abiding sense of responsibility. In the Commons of Canada to-day there are Conservatives, good men and true, who at my urgent request have entered and continued in public life at the sacrifice of their personal interests and inclinations. These men were impelled by the duty of public service, a duty too lightly regarded by the representative men of Canada. Let the people send to our aid at the next election a reinforcement of sixty men, the best that Canada can produce, pledged to stand for a progressive policy, to maintain the rights of the people, to uphold honest government and no other, to enforce decency in public life. In return you have my pledge that any administration which I am called upon to form shall be so constituted that it will not be unworthy of the great country which it is to serve.