

having stated, on his return to Capetown, after meeting Sir Wilfrid Laurier in London in 1907 at the Colonial Conference, that he was impressed by no one whom he had become acquainted with in London as he was by Sir Wilfrid's unassuming personality. If this is true, looking at the South African Confederacy and Sir Louis Botha's position to-day, I will venture the statement that the British Empire owes Sir Wilfrid Laurier a greater debt than it can ever pay. (Loud applause.)

PLEA FOR UNITED CANADA.

Surely, surely we have heard the last sounding of the Protestant drum in the political life of Canada. (Hear, hear.) When you remember that 60,000 Canadian boys are buried in Flanders who were fighting to preserve and sustain Catholic France and Catholic Belgium against being overrun by Protestant Prussia, we can afford to live on terms of amity and friendship with our French and Catholic fellow-citizens. (Hear, hear.)

ORGANIZE! ORGANIZE! ORGANIZE!

Our duty as Liberals in the meantime is to organize. I believe in systematic organization. Not the official kind which has everything nicely tabulated and filed at headquarters. That kind of an organization is not only utterly useless but is deceptive to the last degree. Trust to that and you are depending upon a broken reed. The only organization that is any use is the side-line and concession organization. (Hear, hear.) Upon a certain occasion years ago we believed that West Durham voters' lists were perfect. Before the final revision I persuaded Mr. Edward Blake to let me spend my two weeks' holidays canvassing up and down the concession lines. The result was that we got 160 Liberal voters added to the lists. Mr. Blake's majority when the ballots were counted was 145. (Applause.) Let us realize that the contest, whenever it comes, is ours—our individual responsibility. And if we go into the fight with this spirit this county will take its place again in support of honest government. (Applause.)

A. D. 1887—A. D. 1919.

Note.—This report was finally revised when the unexpected tidings of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's fatal collapse reached me. The suddenness of the irreparable loss caused a momentary hesitation about allowing the publication. But only twelve days previously Sir Wilfrid expressed the wish that I should make this speech, reserving to himself one gravely important fact in the evidence, because it is constitutional as well as appalling in its character. In 1887, when resigning the leadership of the Liberal party, Edward Blake said to me: "Corruption has taken such a hold upon this country that my life is too short to fight it. You may live to see it eliminated. I won't." At that time one single act of electoral corruption banished any man from public life. In 1919 Sir Wilfrid Laurier said to me: "If these crimes against liberty and civilization go unpunished the future of Canada is hopeless." In 1887 election corruption was carried on in comparative secrecy; in 1917 it was flagrantly open. Two great Liberal leaders have disappeared in thirty-two years trying to stem this evil tide. But the duty of Liberalism to the cause of democracy is absolutely clear. Such electoral debauchery is a stain upon the honor and integrity of the Dominion. To allow it to go unpunished is to prove ourselves unworthy of the confidence of self-respecting nations.

W. T. R. PRESTON.