

I NOTICE that some of the Conservative papers are accusing the Provincial Governments of "starving" the Opposition at Ottawa. That is, they keep the big men in the provincial service when they would otherwise journey to the Federal Capital and do battle with the Dominion Ministers. The verdict on this charge will be a "true bill"; but the offence is covered by time-honoured precedent. Provincial governments of the same party colour as the Federal Opposition have always "starved" that organisation. When Mowat reigned in Toronto, he not only stayed out of the Dominion field himself; but he kept out of it such sturdy fighters as Mr. C. F. Fraser of Brockville, who could have made quite a dint in Sir John's "solid Ontario East," Mr. A. S. Hardy of Brantford and Mr. G. W. Ross of Middlesex, whom he actually kidnapped from Mr. Blake's slender lines at Ottawa. "Uncle Thomas" Greenway did the same thing in Manitoba. The Federal Liberals were strikingly weak in the West while Greenway had himself, Martin and Sifton. Fielding and Blair both tarried in the provincial arenas until the Federal battle was won; and Mercier was never seen at Ottawa at all.

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SO it is no new crime of which the provincial parties are guilty. And they may plead in defence that they cannot help themselves. As a rule, the big men will go where there are big things to be done. In the Provincial Government, there is actual work to be accomplished; in the Federal Opposition, there is only criticism of work. Hon. Mr. Graham exhibited the same spirit when he left the leadership of the Provincial Opposition of Ontario to take a portfolio in the Federal Government. Sir John Macdonald was wont to "starve" his local parties in the same way. He brought Chapleau in from Quebec, for instance. Still it is undoubtedly true that the local Conservative Governments to-day are absorbing men who would greatly increase the chances for victory of the Conservative Opposition at Ottawa. If Roblin and Rogers were to come down from Winnipeg, if Whitney, Foy, Hanna and Beck were to go down from Toronto, if Hazen were to come up from New Brunswick, things would look different.

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PREMIER McBRIDE of British Columbia seems to have been able to deliver his province without personally accompanying the consignment. Mr. McBride seems to possess the confidence of his people to an extraordinary extent, though I cannot quite forgive him for having—apparently—turned down Sir Hibbert Tupper. Just why the services of a man like Sir Hibbert should be lost to the nation is not clear, especially when our greatest lack is men. Undoubtedly the most striking success as a Conservative provincial administration is being made by that of Sir James Whitney, which is giving the Province of Ontario a progressive government, with radical trimmings, which quite belies its inherited label—"conservative." In fact, party names have become absurdities in this country. Sir Wilfrid is, if anything, more conservative than Mr. Borden, while "Billy" Maclean is the champion Radical of Parliament.

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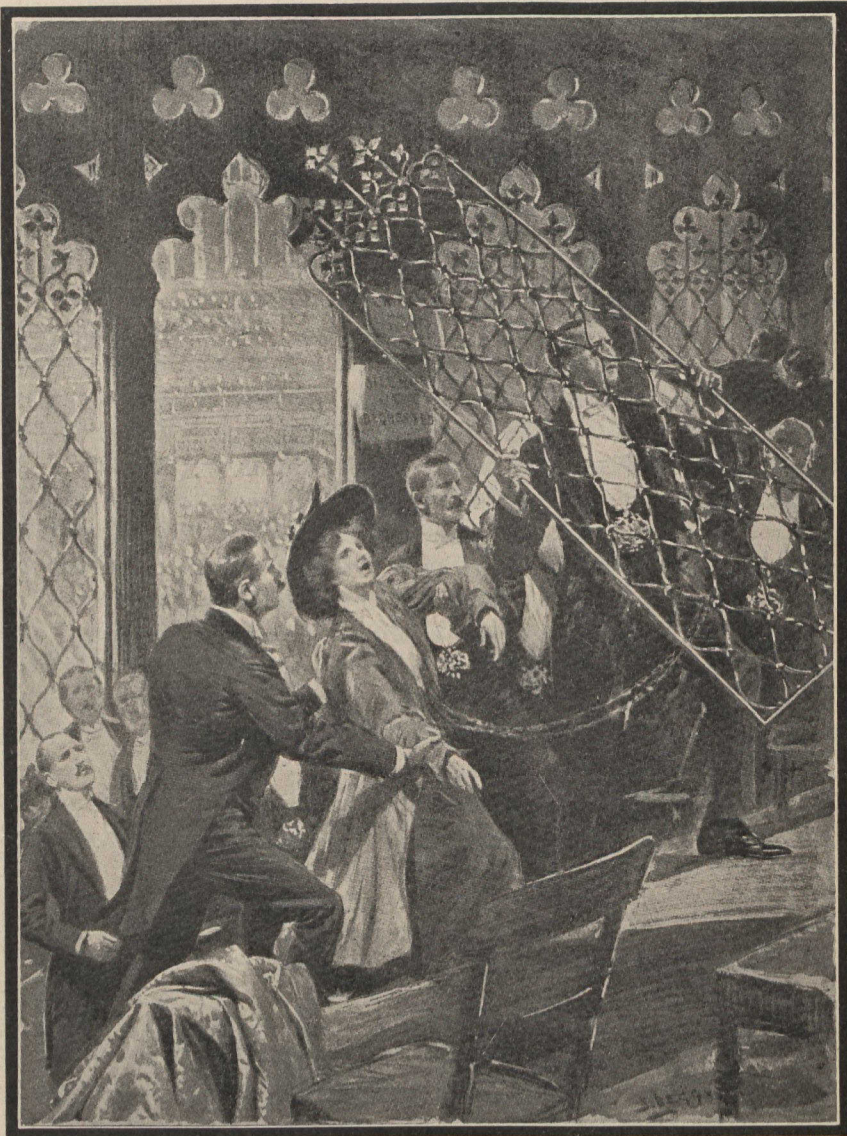
SIR WILFRID and Mr. Borden have meantime gone off to the South to recover from the strain of the campaign. Just the other day, Sir Wilfrid was sixty-seven. This is nine years younger than Sir John Macdonald was when he fell on the field, his sword still in play. Why anyone should imagine that Sir Wilfrid will retire before another four years have passed, passes my comprehension. He is still in buoyant health. There are no signs that a few years "Parliamenting" will wear him down. He never fought better than in the last campaign—physically, I mean. And his party needs him as a drowning man needs a plank. Mr. Fielding may have his ambitions; but one of them is hardly likely to be preference for leading an Opposition over the possession of the Finance portfolio. Then the rest of the party have their ambitions, too, chief among them being a passionate desire to stay in power. If the word were to be sent

along that Sir Wilfrid was thinking of retiring, the storm of protests that would sing about the ears of the Premier would soon disstade him from his purpose.

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OUR political life is so much a question of men that it is a wonder both parties do not take more pains to seek out promising young chaps and train them for public life. They seem to accept their representatives in the most haphazard fashion. Whatever the constituencies choose to send them, they take and are thankful. That is not the way that public life is recruited in the old country. There, constituencies are found for young men who promise to be of value to the party. The leaders think more of the effect on the nation and of the future than they do of satisfying the ambition of every local magnate whom they meet. Such a selection as that of Mr. Mackenzie King was on British lines; but he was practically in a class by himself at the last elections. Now I myself know several young fellows, attached to both parties, who are excellent raw material for public men, and whom the parties ought to get into Parliament. They might not set the river on fire the first session; but, with training, they would become better leaders of public opinion and better workers in Parliament than most of the veterans who are to-day dozing in the "seats of the mighty." But these young men as a rule cannot get constituencies without help. They lack the local "pull." This is where the party organisations should come in and secure them seats. They would be worth ten times more than "back benchers" to begin with, and might turn the tide of victory at some future election.

W. J. M. porte



IN THE BRITISH HOUSE OF COMMONS: SUFFRAGETTES CHAINED TO THE GRILLE BEING REMOVED BY ATTENDANTS.

The action of the two Suffragettes in chaining themselves to the grille of the Ladies' Gallery, and demanding votes for women, had at least one curious result that does not seem to have been much noticed. When the grille is in place, the ladies behind it are not technically within the House, but so soon as the grille is removed they are in the House. Thus the two Suffragettes in question were actually placed in the House by the attendants of the House. The chains used by the ladies were bound with wool, that no noise might be made while they were being fastened round the grille.—Illustrated London News.