

reach before long. He was then thirty years of age.

Three years afterwards he entered the Federal arena as a supporter of Alexander Mackenzie, and within three years more, at the early age of thirty-six, he became a Cabinet Minister and one of the recognized leaders of his Province. Up to that time no career in Canada had been more rapid, more brilliant. But, strange to say, upon his return to his native county for endorsement on his elevation to the ministerial rank he was defeated, where he had once carried it by one thousand majority. This appears to have been the first rumbling of the downfall of the Mackenzie Government. East Quebec was opened for him at once, and there he was easily elected and became Minister of Inland Revenue. On the downfall of the Mackenzie Government in 1878, he returned to Arthabaska and resumed the practice of law, where he enjoyed a lucrative practice.

On the Hon. Edward Blake assuming the leadership of the Liberal party in 1880, Mr. Laurier became his first lieutenant from Quebec. The speech which gave him national reputation was that delivered on the 16th March, 1886, in the House of Commons on the execution of Louis Riel, when he delivered his great Phillipic against the Government. In this occurs the famous sentence that, if he had been stationed upon the banks of the Saskatchewan River he would have shouldered his musket in defence of the rights of the half-breeds. Next morning the ministerial press from ocean to ocean named him the "Silver-tongued Laurier," and his name was in every man's mouth.

During the campaign of 1887 he was, next to Blake, the most conspicuous figure in the Liberal party in Canada, and showed his bravery and courage in coming to Toronto, where the press said he dared not come, and deliver the speech he delivered in the House of Commons; but come he did, faced the three thousand people and won a triumph. After the defeat in 1887 he was elected to the Liberal leadership, and has since continued in that position.

Mr. Laurier as an orator calls into play logic, reason, scorn, contempt, wit, laughter, pathos, and often apologizes and the apology is an insult; he oftentimes eulogizes his opponents, and they wake to find themselves absurd. His speeches are studded with brilliant sayings, repartee and startling apostrophes; in a single sentence he oftentimes demolishes an argument that an opponent has taken an hour to evolve. As for instance, who can forget the Board of Trade banquet held in the city of Toronto in 1893, when after an hour's speech delivered by Hon. George E. Foster, in which he proved by column after column of figures and by mathematics that we were all rich, on the Hon. Wilfrid Laurier rising to speak, with quiet good humored sarcasm, he said, "When I am Premier it will not be necessary for you to read statistics to know whether you are rich or not; you will simply have to put your hands in your pockets and feel it." What could be finer? It simply exhausted the question, there was nothing more to say. It reminds one of the celebrated prize essay upon the Lord's first miracle, which exhausted the question in seven words: "The