

THE LIBERAL LEADER.

In Hon. Wilfrid Laurier the Liberal party has a leader worthy to wear the mantle of leadership which has descended in line of succession from such men as Robert Baldwin, George Brown, Alexander Mackenzie and Edward Blake. He is a born leader of men, firm, patient, steadfast of purpose, high minded, Liberal in every thought, and thoroughly Canadian in his every ambition and aspiration for this country. His charming eloquence as a speaker is known everywhere in the Dominion. In his oratory, he combines with the direct and practical qualities of the Englishman, aesthetic and magnetic characteristics of the highest attractiveness. Although of French-Canadian origin, a fact in which he takes pardonable pride, he has been a close student of English history, and a follower of English Liberalism. His political principles and love of liberty have come to him through the same fountains from which his fellow Liberals of British origin have drawn their inspiration. As a parliamentarian he is the peer of the most skilful and resourceful of his contemporaries. He has made no mistakes or mis-steps since his accession to the leadership in 1887, either in Parliament or face to face with the people in the country. He fought the general elections in 1891 with a manliness, vigor and temperateness which drew from his opponents words of unusual praise and respect. Since 1887 he has visited Ontario every year at least once, and sometimes oftener to address the people of this province. In 1894 he not only toured Ontario, but went to Manitoba, the Territories and British Columbia. He has also made personal acquaintance with the Maritime Provinces. Through the means of these visits he has created a profound impression throughout the Dominion, not less by his earnestness, frankness and the vigor with which he discusses public affairs than the magnetism of his personality and the brilliancy of his eloquence. He has become more than a party chief; he is a national leader to whom Canadians of whatever province, origin, condition or creed look as the exponent of the principles of freedom of trade, freedom of speech, freedom of conscience. For nearly 25 years he has been a representative of the people in Parliament. His qualities as a citizen and a statesman have become thoroughly known to the public; and by opponents as well as friends, after his long and severe ordeal, is admitted to be a statesman of broad, liberal and patriotic aspirations, and as a man stands before the people of Canada without fear and without reproach.