

*Tributes to Deceased Members*

donald, K.C., one of the members for Halifax, whose death at the age of fifty-six occurred on November 19, 1946. The passing of these two hon. members is a loss not to the parliament of Canada only but to our country. I need not say it is a special loss to the Liberal party.

The Hon. Mr. Cardin, in years of service as a member, was at the time of his death the oldest member of the House of Commons. He was first returned to the House of Commons at the general election of 1911, and was reelected at all subsequent elections and by-elections, including the election of 1945. Each of these records in itself is a real distinction. To have been a member of this house continuously from 1911 to 1946—thirty-five years in all—is a record that has seldom been equalled in the history of politics in Canada. Sir Wilfrid Laurier was a member for forty-four years. Thirty-five years is a long period for an hon. member to be in the House of Commons. To have represented the same constituency for so long a period of time is also a quite exceptional record. That was also Mr. Cardin's achievement. To have enjoyed the unbroken confidence of the electors of the constituency in which he was born, and where he had lived his entire life is evidence of the high regard and esteem in which he was held by those who knew him best.

Mr. Cardin's life was given largely, in fact, over a considerable time almost entirely, to politics. As a young man, he began practice as a lawyer in Sorel, and at an early age made a distinct mark in his profession. Had he given his time exclusively to the practice of law, he would undoubtedly have risen to a foremost position at the bar, and, had he so desired, in the judiciary. However, like not a few of the members of the legal profession who have entered political life, he found there the opportunities of public service which appealed most strongly to him, and, as I have said, most of his time was given to promoting the interests of his constituents in parliament and to public business and affairs.

I need not remind hon. members how able Mr. Cardin was as a parliamentarian, or how effective and eloquent he was as a speaker in English and French alike, both in parliament and on the platform. In his own province of Quebec, I doubt if there was any member except the Right Hon. Ernest Lapointe, who exercised a greater influence over the people of his province than Mr. Cardin exercised in the years in which he was most active in public affairs.

Mr. Cardin was a man of deep and sincere convictions, with an intense love for the people, and enjoyed nothing quite so much

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

as the advocacy of causes which he believed would serve to enlarge their opportunities and to improve their condition. He himself was so humble-minded and unassuming that the latent fire which displayed itself in many of his public utterances often came as a surprise even to those with whom he was associating from day to day. He had a special love for the people of his own province and was intensely jealous of its rights and interests.

For over thirteen years Mr. Cardin was a member of the government. He first entered the ministry as Minister of Marine and Fisheries. Later he held the portfolio of Public Works, with which, during the early years of the war, was combined the portfolio of Transport. In all those years Mr. Cardin and I were colleagues at the council table. We shared together years of prosperity and adversity. It was a fortunate thing for Canada and for Canadian unity that Mr. Cardin was a member of the ministry in the years immediately preceding and in the early years of the great war. I doubt if the people of Canada will ever know the extent of the service rendered our country in keeping its provinces united at that time of crisis in world affairs by those who were members of the cabinet from the province of Quebec. Had Mr. Cardin's leadership and that of the late Ernest Lapointe been less courageous, less far-sighted, or less patriotic than it was, the story of Canada's war effort and her contribution to victory might have been very different from what it was.

It is true that in 1942 Mr. Cardin felt it necessary to resign from the ministry because of the government's policy in removing certain restrictions regarding military service from the National Resources Mobilization Act. At the time I did my best to persuade Mr. Cardin to remain in the ministry, but he felt that he owed it to pledges given some time before not to continue in the ministry so long as any measure of conscription, however slight, might be possible. I never questioned Mr. Cardin's motives or sincerity in tendering his resignation, nor did he question mine in taking the position I did, in the light of the world situation as it then existed and threatened to become. I did my best to persuade Mr. Cardin to remain in the cabinet, and I have never ceased to believe that had he been in better health than he was at the time and had some of his friends and opponents been a little more chivalrous toward him than they were he might have continued. Mr. Cardin like so many of his compatriots had a chivalrous nature. Had a measure of understanding been extended to him equal to that which