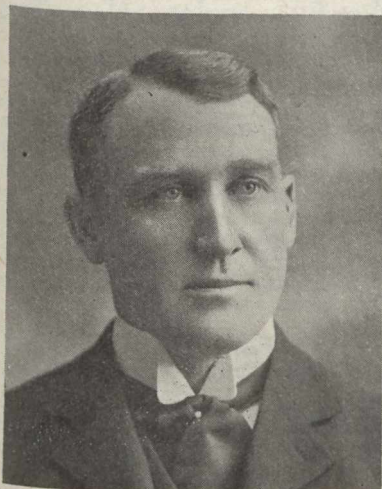


CORRIDOR COMMENT

Ottawa, April 1st.

IN every well-built, soundly-constructed and workable bit of locomotive mechanism there must be driving force and brake. Both are essential. It is true that the function of the latter is not so spectacular as that of the former, but it is none the less important. It is protection against the runaway. It regulates and defines progress on safe lines.

Among the rank and file of the Liberal membership of the House of Commons Hon. A. K. Maclean is the brake. The freedom of Opposition and its lack of direct responsibility has a tendency to develop either of two things, mere negation, or daring trail-blazing. With the present Opposition any danger which might arise would be wholly from the latter.



Hon. A. K. Maclean.

A brake doesn't come amiss, and Mr. Maclean supplies the brake.

He is built for the job; quiet, observant, forceful. There is nothing theatrical about him. He does not pose. He is devoid of affectation. He is no demagogue, and he doesn't practise the arts of popularity.

Maclean is a canny Scot, and will not be stampeded. His keen, grey-blue eyes do not miss much. He studies a situation before he deals with it, and even the enthusiasm of "the boys" will not carry him along until he is satisfied to go. He is invaluable going down hill—as most brakes are. When things are coming easiest Maclean is most cautious.

He has had a good deal of experience, too. He was elected to the Nova Scotia Legislature in 1901, and resigned his seat three years later to become a candidate for the Commons. Lunenburg elected him, and repeated the trick in 1908. In October of the year following, however, Premier Murray came to Ottawa looking for a wise and safe Attorney-General, and he secured the services of Mr. Maclean. When the federal election of last September came round Ottawa Liberals again appealed to him as the man who could win one of the Halifax seats, both of which were at that time represented by Conservatives. Again he served his party. He resigned his provincial portfolio, threw himself into the campaign, and redeemed the seat, despite the general swing of the pendulum in the other direction.

Mr. Maclean entered upon what was to him a new parliamentary experience with the present session. He had never before served in Opposition. And he has proved one of its most effective members. When he speaks he receives respectful attention from the Government benches. He is not a spell-binder. Others may appeal to the heart; Mr. Maclean

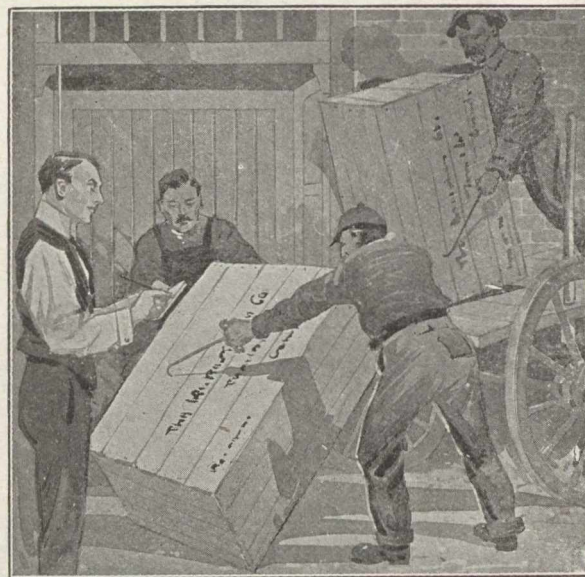
goes after the head. He speaks, too, less as an advocate and more as a business man expounding a business proposition, which he understands, with considerable lucidity and logic. He is no carping critic with a microscope tucked under his arm on the search for minute faults. He gets the larger viewpoint—the general affect for weal or ill, and deals with his subject from a national standpoint.

NO man is more methodical in following the regular forms of Parliamentary expression and procedure than Hon. T. S. Sproule, the present Speaker of the House of Commons. When the House adjourned the other morning shortly after one o'clock, Mr. Speaker caused a smile by seizing his three-cornered hat and gravely declaring: "This House stands adjourned until this morning at eleven o'clock in the forenoon." It does not appear to be the Speaker's fault if certain members forget or neglect the morning sittings these days.

IT has fallen to the lot of Mr. J. H. Burnham to inject what a member of the Press Gallery termed "historical metaphysics" into the considerations of Parliament. Following Mr. A. Verville, Labour member for Maisonneuve, who was the other day criticizing the increased expenditure on the Militia Department, the Peterboro' member gravely announced: "Ten minutes' study of history will show that if the ancient Empire of Rome had been able to defend herself, we would have been two thousand years ahead of where we are now, instead of being two thousand years behind." And accurate Hansard chronicled the utterance.

THE House of Commons enjoyed a genuine sensation this week. Mr. Emmanuel Devlin, the eloquent member for Wright, has for years worn a luxuriant moustache and a bunch of waving black hair which would have done credit to any embryo artist or musician. But the barber bided his time and finally got Emmanuel. The latter is a faithful attendant in the Chamber, and the long night debates, followed by the recently inaugurated morning proceedings, proved too much for tired nature. According to the story going the rounds of the corridors, Mr. Devlin fell asleep under the operations of the tonsorial expert and when he awoke found himself minus his moustache and sporting a real short military hair-cut. This was, in itself, bad enough. But other tribulations awaited him when he reached the House out of breath just after prayers en Francais. He had doffed overcoat and chapeau and was heading into the Chamber when Joe Demers, of St. John and Iberville, spotted him and gave the alarm. "A stranger coming into the House," was the appalling whisper with which Demers startled Mr. H. W. Bowie, the stalwart deputy Sergeant-at-Arms. Mr. Bowie is nothing if not alert and efficient. He gripped his sword and started menacingly towards the supposed intruder, waving at him to halt. Mr. Devlin was late, and wasn't halting. Member and officer met within the doors of the Chamber. The latter conducted a searching inspection, but Mr. Devlin finally established his identity. And he maintains that the officer most gallantly atoned for his error by observing: "Well, sir, you cut ten years off your age."

H. W. A.



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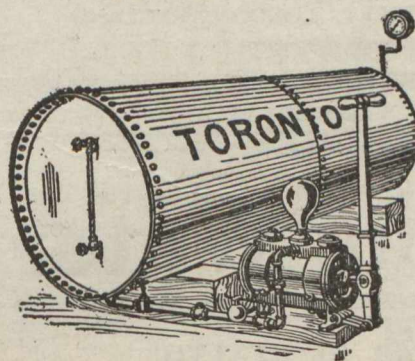
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