

ARE the elections coming? Unless the politicians are trying to fool us, they are. Everybody is visibly getting ready for them, and, if they are not held this autumn, any business men or publishers, who make financial arrangements based upon their expectation, should have actions for damages against somebody. Just why we should so seldom let our five-year Parliaments run more than four years, may need some explaining; but we have caught the habit recently of quadrennial elections. Sir John Macdonald had it, too, though he did put an additional half-year on the life of his second Parliament after the Mackenzie regime. Governments dread to find themselves crowded up against the ropes. They like to have plenty of foot-room in the "ring" when the battle approaches. The only Parliament which ever ran out its term ended in complete disaster for the party in power. People seem to rather like a Government which is plucky enough to face them before it is constitutionally necessary.

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THE making of predictions as to the probable result is now our great national sport. Every other politician you meet will take out a pencil and jot down on the margin of a newspaper his reasons for believing that "the country" will go thus-and-so. Even great newspapers have begun to publish estimates which show results that they would dearly like to see. The Conservatives make great play with New Brunswick and the election of Bourassa for two seats in Quebec; while the Liberals retort with Saskatchewan and the sweep of the Gouin Government back into power. The victory of Mr. Hazen in New Brunswick—though a bi-partisan victory—certainly indicated the final break-up of the Blair party in that province; but its effect upon federal politics is more difficult to prophesy. If New Brunswick is convinced that the Liberals are going back to office, most people will look to it for a fairly strong Liberal delegation. As for Nova Scotia, few imagine that it will repeat the unanimity of four years ago; still the chances for this are much better than they were when Sir Hibbert Tupper was talking of "taking his coat off" and making a fight for the province.

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IF the Liberals are still further crushed in Ontario, they ought to know who to blame. They have neglected this province federally. To-day their most effective leader here is Hon. George Graham, a superfine fellow and a capital campaigner, but a recent minister and an importation from the local legislature. Ontario deserves at the hands of the Liberal party a great national leader of the size of Blake, George Brown, or Cartwright at his best. There should be a man in the Cabinet from this province who shoulders up beside Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Mr. Aylesworth has earned our enthusiastic approval on more occasions than one; but he is debarred by physical affliction from taking a leading part in the rough-and-tumble of politics; and then no one imagines that he would succeed Sir Wilfrid were the Premier to retire. Mr. Fielding of Nova Scotia outranks him; and, if Mr. Sifton of Manitoba were not out of the Government, he would out-rank him too. Should the Liberals be routed in Ontario under such conditions, they can credit it to their own neglect.

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IN fact, we could wax quite indignant over this matter if we did not see quite as bad—or worse—when we look across the House. Where are the Conservative giants from Ontario? Where is the man who has stepped into the shoes of Sir John Macdonald? Mr. Foster is the most vigorous debater from this province; but he is not an Ontario man—only a New Brunswicker who has found a temporary resting place here for the sole of his foot. Is it that we do not grow the public men we once produced? Have we no more Macnabs, Macdonalds, Browns, Sandfield Macdonalds, Mackenzies or Mowats? Or is it that we will not elect them to Parliament? We did have a B. B. Osler; but he never got to Ottawa. We have yet a Sir William Meredith; but he is on the bench. Sir William Mulock was just beginning to bulk large in our eyes, when he, too, went to the bench. The truth is that our Lauriers, our Fieldings, our Siftons, our Bordens,

our Fosters, our Fitzpatricks, do not go into politics. Commerce, finance, and the law swallow up the men who should represent us in our great national council.

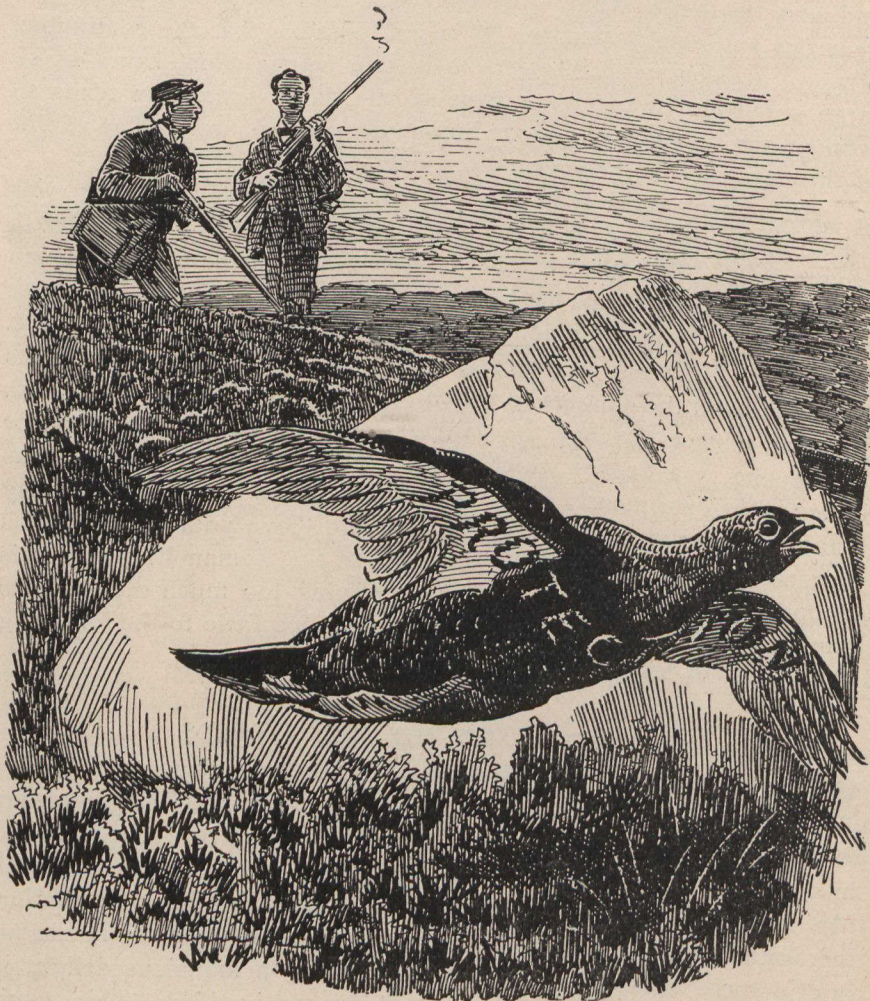
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BUT we were talking of election probabilities. The West has as yet shown no signs of change. Roblin is as secure as ever in Manitoba; and so is Scott in Saskatchewan. Nor is there any evidence of change in Quebec. Bourassa captured two seats; but he ran as a Liberal. One of his two seats was St. Hyacinthe; and if any one imagines that an opponent of Laurier can win in St. Hyacinthe, he does not know much of the condition of politics in Quebec. The people of that province like to "see sport" in politics as well as most folk, and were very willing to have Mr. Bourassa promise them a bit of liveliness in the deadly monotony of their local legislature; but it would be quite another matter if they were asked to destroy their idol, Sir Wilfrid Laurier. What it all comes to when added up—all these probabilities for the whole Dominion—I will let some more venturesome prophet declare. When we do not know how large a majority the Conservatives will have in Ontario, how Manitoba and British Columbia will go, or how New Brunswick will pan out, prediction is a pretty risky business. But it is a significant fact that Sir Wilfrid is to make his first appeal to rural Ontario. Rural Ontario was for long the staunchest stronghold of Liberalism.

Wilmporte

MAJOR HODDER is a very inquisitive Englishman, who has been wondering why the Barbados, alone of the Antilles, are free from malaria. He thinks it must be because the Barbados, alone of the Antilles, are free from gnats. But why no gnats? Because of the wild and beneficent profusion of fish called "millions." The millions eat the gnats while they're still larvae. Acting on Major Hodder's theory, the Jamaicans, the people of Colon, and the colonists of British Guiana have imported millions, and lo! the gnats vanish. In Africa, where rage the most deadly swamp fevers, millions are employed with immense success. The same means has been adopted by the Italian government to rid the Roman Campagna of its insect foes.

"Protection" is still a live issue in England and "Punch" takes advantage of the opening of the grouse season to represent its vigour.



AN OLD BIRD.

First Gun (Mr. Asquith). "Seems to carry a lot of shot! I thought we both hit him."
Second Gun (Mr. Winston Churchill). "I know I did." Bird. "Ha! Ha!"