

THE NATIONAL LIBERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

When a few of the bolder and perhaps more advanced spirits in the Liberal Party mooted the idea of a National Liberal Advisory Committee they did not meet with universal approbation. There were not a few in the party ranks who viewed the innovation, for varying reasons, with suspicion. It was sincerely believed by some that the establishment of the Committee might disturb existing political institutions and interfere with well-recognized practices, while others felt that it would not be wise to change the status quo in the government and direction of the Party. Happily and as is usually the case, the judgment of the Chief, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, in deciding to organize the Committee has been abundantly justified by the excellent and useful work performed by the Committee at its Convention held in July at Ottawa. It was the practically unanimous verdict of those who were present at that meeting, that the Committee is a great success and may now be considered as an established institution in the organization of the Party. Those who at first were most suspicious of the movement became loudest in its praise.

The meeting which extended over three days was very largely attended, notwithstanding the almost intolerable weather conditions.

The following gentlemen were present:—

The Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, P.C.,
G.C.M.G., M.P.
Hon. W. S. Fielding, Ottawa.
A. K. McLean, Esq., M.P., Halifax.
G. Fred Pearson, Esq., Halifax.
Hon. Wm. Pugsley, M.P., St. John, N.B.
F. B. Carvell, Esq., M.P., Woodstock, N.B.
O. Turgeon, Esq., M.P., Bathurst, N.B.
E. M. Macdonald, Esq., M.P., Pictou, N.S.
Hon. Senator Dandurand, Montreal, Que.
E. Lapointe, Esq., M.P., Fraserville, Que.
Hon. A. Taschereau, Que.
Hon. Sydney Fisher, Ottawa.
Hon. Senator J. M. Wilson, Montreal.
Hon. Sir Frederick W. Borden, K.C.M.G.
Phillippe Paradis, Esq., Quebec.
A. Verville, Esq., M.P., Montreal.
S. Letourneau, Esq., M.P.P., Montreal.
Hon. Geo. P. Graham, M.P., Brockville, Ont.
F. F. Pardee, Esq., M.P., Sarnia, Ont.
Hon. W. L. MacKenzie King, Ottawa.
P. C. Larkin, Toronto.
Gordon D. Conant, Esq., Oshawa, Ont.
Thos. McMillan, Esq., Seaforth, Ont.
Geo. H. Watson, Esq., K.C., Toronto, Ont.
John Muir, Esq., Brantford, Ont.
Hon. Walter Scott, Regina, Sask.
Hon. J. A. Calder, M.P.P., Regina, Sask.
J. G. Turriff, Esq., M.P., Regina, Sask.
John Bain, Esq., Ottawa.
Alex. Smith, Esq., Ottawa.
A. R. McMaster, K.C., Montreal, Que.
S. W. Jacobs, K.C., Montreal, Que.
Stewart Lyon, Esq., Toronto, Ont.
J. E. Atkinson, Esq., Toronto, Ont.
H. B. McGiverin, Esq., Ottawa.
A. K. Cameron, Esq., Montreal, Que.

Hon. Chas. Murphy, M.P., Ottawa.
Hon. W. G. Mitchell, Montreal.
C. M. Goddard, Esq., Ottawa, Ont.
Hon. E. Brown, Winnipeg, Man.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier presided and was never seen to better advantage. From morning until late at night, in the extreme heat, he was at his best directing with care, counselling with wisdom, and showing throughout his masterly grasp of the political situation

The first day was devoted to meetings of the various Sub-Committees that had been appointed to consider and report upon vital political questions, and the two days following, to the consideration of these reports.

Social Reform and Health Legislation.

Quite the most interesting and informative report was that presented by Mr. J. E. Atkinson of Toronto, as Chairman of a Sub-Committee on Social Reform and Health Legislation. In a speech of great power, indicating the most marked ability, Mr. Atkinson completely enthralled the Committee and succeeded in obtaining their unanimous consent to the following declaration of the principles:—

"This Advisory Committee believes that the problems concerning the physical and moral welfare of the working population of Canada demand earnest study and effective action and that legislation should be enacted to improve the social and economic condition of the masses of the people."

"Old age pensions and mothers' pensions are measures upon which immediate legislative action should be taken."

"National systems of Health Insurance and Unemployment Insurance also should be established as soon as possible after a thorough investigation has been made so as to effect as wide an insurance as possible against the suffering, poverty and economic loss which is consequent upon sickness and unemployment."

Welfare of Returned Soldiers.

Excellent work was done by the Sub-Committee headed by Mr. H. B. McGiverin, Ex. M.P. of Ottawa, which was appointed to study questions as to the welfare of the returned soldiers. The report of the Committee which evidenced the most careful thought and diligent enquiry was summarized as follows:—

"1. That the system of Pensions adopted by resolution of the House of Commons of the 15th of May last, should be carried out in every particular."

"2. That Canada's obligations to Returned Soldiers cannot be adequately discharged by the provision of Pensions for those or the dependents of those who have died or those who have been wounded and incapacitated in the Defence of their Country's Liberties, and that it is the imperative duty of the Government to take immediate action also along the lines set out in the following paragraphs of this Resolution."

"3. That a Federal Board should be appointed by the Government, composed of capable, leading men having agents at each Provincial Capital and in the other chief cities of Canada with power to administer the provisions of the Pension Act and to deal with all questions concerning the welfare of Returned Soldiers, their families and dependents, acting always in sympathy but without interference with Provincial, Municipal and voluntary Organizations."