

sombre poetry. Most of us have been there. We sympathize. We also get over it. But the Pacific scandal—that was something to brood over. So let the pigs squeal and be hanged to them! On the way home from the post-office, behold the lad reading his way along the snake-fence corners, determining very likely that if ever he became an editor he would brand like Cain any man that had such a scandal up his sleeve.

About that time he moved to a place called Greenwood, in south Ontario county. Here for a few months he substituted for a dominie and taught school—without a certificate. He had never gone to High school. But here, at the village of Greenwood, he found the one thing that opened to him the gates of Paradise. That was the Mechanics' Institute. You have seen one of those dingy old libraries chosen by some wise old pioneers of culture; usually either in the same building as the town hall or above some bank. This one was a great library.

"Even now, when I have a library of my own, perhaps much more complete," said Sir John, with considerable enthusiasm, "I recall that Greenwood Mechanics' Institute as a really fine collection of books. And I read them all; not because I wanted to turn my reading to any particular account, but because I couldn't stay away from the books."

BEHOLD him every evening and Saturday afternoon, pulling along to the shelves, taking down a book that he began yesterday and left a mark in; poetry or history or science, or philosophy—for they had them all.

But even in those years without more than passing advice from a dominie or a lawyer or some doctor with a few books, or more than likely the village preacher who might happen to have been a B.A. or a theolog. in his time, he got the idea that it was better to read up one subject pretty thoroughly till he had got the general drift of it before going to something else. In this way he read economics and history. He memorized long passages of both poetry and prose. He revelled in Macaulay and Gibbon and Grote, in Froude and Gladstone and Burke, in Carlyle, Emerson and Ruskin.

"I still believe that is the best way to read," he said. "I don't mean that a man necessarily has to retain a distinct detailed recollection of all he reads in that way. But he must get a good working background and a sense of proportion; get a fair knowledge of the sort of men the authors were; the colour of the times and the customs."

No doubt he admired and all but adored every professor in a university; dreamed about college halls and wondered about Oxford. Doubtless he read the long, ponderously elegant speeches of Edward Blake and wondered why John A. Macdonald made such bad reading.

BUT before he had seen either of these great men he went on the London *Advertiser* as—I suppose a reporter. It was only a year till the young man found himself on the staff of the *Toronto Globe*; son of a Conservative doing press gallery correspondence in Ottawa for a clear Grit paper. And in those days of succession to George Brown the *Globe* was very Grit.

The period from 1883 till 1890 he spent in Ottawa. Those were the days of the beginning of the end in the Conservative Government. Sir John had three more elections yet. Two years after Willison began to wire copy to the *Globe* came the Northwest Rebellion, when Ottawa was in a whirl of strange excitement and the House stormed with lurid debate; when it seemed to the young correspondent as though the fate of Confederation hung in the balance, and he listened to every speech as though it had been an oracle.

In a few months, even without the *Globe* sending its Ottawa man to the camps of Saskatchewan, the war was over, Riel captured, tried and hanged; and then came along the commercial union agitation which, in 1887, began to be a great bugaboo in the minds of young knights of the pen. Up till this time I don't think Mr. Willison had ever met Goldwin Smith, whose fine, melancholy writings he so tremendously admired. Though every time he got back to the office between sessions he must have had a hero-worship notion that somehow the real intellectual centre of the Empire was up at the Grange, where, as yet, he had never been. He was yet to become an intimate associate of the Sage; and by turns his friend and—whatever else Goldwin Smith chose to regard him. Of course the *Globe* in those days wasn't very far from absolutely free trade; and the commercial union idea had friends on the *Globe* staff.

But before this, in 1887, the *Globe* correspondent at Ottawa became fixed with admiration of a new commanding figure in Canadian politics. That was

Wilfrid Laurier. With what mingled emotions the ambitious scribe on copy bent regarded from the press gallery the middle-aged, chevalieresque figure of the brilliant French-Canadian Liberal leader, history has not altogether related. The most convincing evidence of the impression made on such an imagination by such a man is to be found in "The Life and Times of Sir Wilfrid Laurier," written by the editor of the *Globe* near the end of last century and shortly after Wilfrid Laurier became Premier of Canada. As this book has been freely bandied about by Liberal newspapers without heart, and I have not read it, because it costs too many dollars a volume, further reference to it must be omitted from this article. But to any in search of a clue to the evolution of a politico-journalistic career, only less interesting than that of Goldwin Smith, this work should be exceedingly valuable. Times have changed. Even the London *Times* has changed—since Northcliffe got it, and since Sir John Willison became its Canadian representative.

THIS is getting ahead of the story. In 1890 Mr. Willison became editor-in-chief of the *Toronto Globe*. This was a rare distinction. The *Globe* was the leading Canadian newspaper. John S. Willison was only thirty-four years of age. He was fed up on political reading, much of which he had only begun to digest. But for twelve years he remained editor of the leading Liberal organ during the period of the *Globe's* greatest development.

The year after that came Sir John Macdonald's last election and the Durham letter of Edward Blake repudiating commercial union. Then it was that the President of the Commercial Union Club, Mr. Goldwin Smith, might have been seen austere and portentously in and out of the *Globe* office, into his slow family carriage, the lean ascetic with the low felt hat and the eagle visage—to whom every editor of those days when in doubt on anything from housing the poor to the future of the Empire in India went or sent for the last word. And the *Globe* was much nearer the Goldwin Smith idea than any other paper. There was a rather famous editorial writer on the *Globe* under Mr. Willison who became personally an open advocate of commercial union. For the sake of intellectual equipose it became necessary for the *Globe* to come out with a leader one day in 1891 explaining that the said writer's views on that subject were his own personal property and had necessarily nothing to do with the *Globe*.

I suppose Mr. Willison wrote that leader.

At any rate the *Globe* did not succeed in keeping Sir John Macdonald from winning the election in February; neither from passing off the stage in May, 1891.

AT this time the leading newspaper in Canada was set by hand, and printed on slow, flat-bed presses. The premises were illuminated by gas and heated by hot air, which was a new thing. There were arc lights on the streets; incandescents were not yet in use; linotype machines were unheard of; a Hoe web press four decks high was not even a dream; modern advertising methods were unknown; stereotyping was not necessary; everything was almost crudely elemental—compared to 1913. Yet the *Globe* of those days was reckoned a highly-civilized institution; and there is no doubt that John S. Willison, as he corrected galley proofs in his office or leaned over the stone in the composing room making up his editorials felt that he was some kin to Warren Hastings, of whom he had read in Macaulay. Hastings was the youth who lay on a bank one day and dreamed he would buy back his patrimonial hills—and he did it. John S. Willison had dreamed of being an editor—almost any kind would have done—as he did chores on the farm. Now he was head of the greatest newspaper in Canada.

Space will not permit reminiscences of those days. Sir John has a complete list of them. There is nobody on the *Globe* now that was there when he became editor—except Stewart Lyon and Senator Jaffray. John Ewan, who antedated Sir John, is dead. John Lewis has gone to the *Star*. Charlie Taylor, business manager during all the Willison regime and before it, has gone. E. E. Sheppard, ancient confrere of J. S. Willison, founder of *Saturday Night* in that era, has left town. Goldwin Smith is gone. *Grip*, the comic weekly of those times, long since quit the field.

In fact, the number of journalistic people and things that have quit since 1890 is pretty good proof that Canada is a land of progress. In the *Globe* files of 1890-1893 may be seen many columns devoted to the story of the "boom" that struck Toronto about the time J. S. Willison went on the *Globe*. The boom burst—along about 1893. Hard times. The *Globe* still put on a few hundred extra

subscribers every year. One reason of this was that it began to circulate somewhat among readers of the *Mail* and of the *Empire*; because for the first time in *Globe* history the parliamentary and political correspondence was ordered to be both-sided and impartial. The *Globe* gave both sides of the news. This was the work of the editor.

IN 1895 a fire—it was the hard-times period of many fires—did its best to wipe out the *Globe*; which came out next day with its own story of the fire set up and printed in the offices of the old *Empire*, a terribly Tory sheet, afterwards absorbed into the *Mail*. John S. Willison, chief Liberal editor in Canada, made up his Grit editorials on Tory stones, with Tory type and had them printed on Tory presses. He must have had re-visions of the day when in the Huron farmhouse he devoured the Tory contents of the *Leader*.

One result of this unholy alliance was a friendship with Mr. A. H. U. Colquhoun, then editor of the *Empire*, now Deputy Minister of Education in Ontario.

In 1896 the *Globe* got the Tories out of power at Ottawa and put Sir Wilfrid Laurier in. The millennium seemed to have begun. Mr. Willison was then forty years old; a singularly alert and dignified man; apparently austere and looked upon by readers of the *Globe* as next to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the greatest man in Canada. Which was about the time that the *Globe* editor began to dream of his "Life and Times of Sir Wilfrid Laurier."

And so, as told in the daily columns of the *Globe*, the story of Canada and the rest of the world came to the end of the nineteenth century. Heaven knows what conferences were held in the *Globe* offices those last few years of the 1800's. But two institutions were on the eve of a great change. Many had an idea that the Liberal regime, almost thirty years old in Ontario, was due for a change. Some people round the *Globe* may have thought so. But the *Globe* never said so. And so far as is known nobody had the faintest idea that the *Globe* itself was about to be reconstructed.

IN 1902 a well-known financier in Toronto became seized of a desire to start a paper. His intention was to found a religious publication for which he had the clerical editor almost picked out, when a friend of Mr. Willison got wind of the intention and decided that it was time the editor of the *Globe* and the aforesaid financier became acquainted.

The result was that Mr. J. W. Flavelle bought the old *News*, paying therefor a goodly sum; also the editor of the *Globe*, who became managing editor of the new *News*, an independent journal devoted to—see the once *News* motto on the editorial page. Mr. J. S. Willison and Mr. A. H. U. Colquhoun organized the new *News*. A fortune was spent in a new building and equipment and the finest newspaper staff in Canada. Once more John S. Willison must have harked back to the pitchfork days, saying to himself that even in his wildest fence-corner dreams he had never conceived it possible to become the managing editor of a paper untrammelled by party politics, blessed with a practical endowment, and animated by the loftiest aims known to modern journalism.

And in 1905 the independent *News* did more than any other paper to put out of office Sir George Ross, who, as Minister of Education and Premier of Ontario, had long been a great friend of the *Globe* under Mr. Willison. Such are the exigencies of political journalism.

This brings us down to the present time; to the day when a big metropolitan newspaper is not the slow growth of an idea in the mind of an editor, but the obtrusion and expenditure of a huge fortune by men who make their money out of the people that buy advertising space in newspapers. For seven or eight years the *Toronto News* occupied the building at the south-west corner of Adelaide and Yonge. Then the real estate boom boosted prices. The *World* and the *Star* both pulled away from Yonge St. The *News* did likewise. It went to the site of the old emergency hospital on Bay St., next to the National Club. Mr. Flavelle withdrew from journalism. Other men took hold of the *News*, which became an out-and-out Conservative paper, opposed to modern Laurierism—not contained in the Life and Times, etc.—and supporting Mr. Borden.

The editor of the *News* had worked out the complete cycle; from the pitchfork days when he read his father's Tory *Leader* to the day when he became editor of a real Conservative paper that grew out of an independent journal; till he became Canadian correspondent for the London *Times*, also metamorphosed by the millions of Harmsworth; till he shaved off his very becoming beard and became Sir John Willison on the day of the New Year 1913.