

THE MAN FROM BROCKVILLE

ONE difficulty in selecting "The Second Man Up" in the Liberal party is that there is no "Second Man Up." There are many aspirants and lots of possibilities, but all carry with them a big question mark. The Liberal party during the past five years of Opposition has not developed political leadership. I make this statement not on my authority, which might be regarded as prejudiced, but on the authority of a recent addition to the Liberal ranks, with all the enthusiasm of a convert. There is no outstanding leader to whom the Liberals will naturally turn when Sir Wilfrid hands in his resignation. A new leader will have to be developed as did the Conservatives after the defeat of 1896. However, until this man is developed some one will have to guide the fortunes of the party, and this temporary choice may prove the looked-for Moses. My selection for "The Second Man Up" is Hon. George P. Graham. I reach my conclusions by a process of elimination.

It is presumed that Sir Wilfrid Laurier when he decides to retire will place his resignation in the hands of the Liberal members of Parliament. Following Canadian precedent his successor will be appointed by a party caucus rather than by a general convention of the party. They will naturally be inclined to keep the question of choice among themselves. The selection of a man from without the House, with no parliamentary experience, would be regarded as too dangerous a political experiment. On the front Liberal benches at present are five men beside Sir Wilfrid, all ex-Cabinet Ministers, with long experience in politics, in parliament and as administrators. They are: Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux, Hon. William Pugsley, Hon. Frank Oliver, Hon. Chas. Murphy, and Hon. George P. Graham. All these men will have to be given serious consideration. Back of the front benches are but two men who might be in the running. They are Mr. E. M. MacDonald and Mr. Frank Carvell.

Aside from the question of Mr. Lemieux's ability it is doubtful whether the Liberal party would select a French-Canadian to succeed a French-Canadian. They would certainly not do so unless he was a commanding figure. Mr. Lemieux, with all his ability and his industry, cannot claim such distinction. Hon. William Pugsley is without doubt one of the brainiest men in the House of Commons. He is a shrewd politician and a most resourceful parliamentarian. However, rightly or wrongly the public has associated his name with certain scandals under the old Liberal regime. With the present public sentiment and with the new ideals which the war has created no political leader can hope to be permanently successful whose name bears the slightest tarnish.

If it could the Liberal party would likely turn to the West for its next leader. With Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta now held provincially by the

*Hon. George P. Graham,
Ex-Minister of Railways,
is the Man Picked for
SECOND MAN UP
To Sir Wilfrid Laurier*

By ARTHUR FORD

(Ottawa Correspondent of the Toronto News.)



Liberals, with largely increased western representation, and with the West strikingly radical and progressive in its views, it would seem good politics for the Liberals to make such a bid for strength west of the Great Lakes. There is no such man on the horizon. There are none in the local legislatures, and Hon. Frank Oliver is the only possible man in the Dominion House. The member for Edmonton, with all his admirable qualities, is not big enough timber for national leadership.

As for Hon. Chas. Murphy, his health, which has recently been far from satisfactory, would, if there were no other reasons, preclude him from consideration. Mr. E. M. MacDonald has marked ability, loves a parliamentary skirmish, is a powerful speaker, at times rising to eloquence, and has the natural aptitude of the Nova Scotian lawyer for politics. However, it is questionable whether he would be acceptable to the Western Liberals, who would be suspicious of his "trade" views, and doubtful as to his connection with certain corporations. Mr. Carvell is the most industrious private member of the House of Commons. He never stops burrowing after Tory scandals. Being a burrower he is not broad-visioned. He is a useful man to a party, but his tongue would not elevate the dignity of the party. He is too much of the rough-and-tumble fighter to expect ever to take up the mantle of Sir Wilfrid.

This brings me to Hon. George P. Graham. Graham may not be a heaven-sent leader, but he has a lot of earthly attributes which commend him as "The Next Man Up." He has plenty of political and parliamentary experience both in office and out, and although not a lawyer, has, for a layman, a wide knowledge of parliamentary rules and regulations. He is a first-class debater, and what is more important as an Opposition leader, is stronger on the stump than in the House. Few Canadian politicians can catch the ears of an audience better than George P. Graham. He is popular in the House, and on both sides, for he has all the sunny ways of his present chieftain. He is tactful and diplomatic, qualities he doubtless inherited from his father, who was a Methodist clergyman—the parsonage is a great diplomatic training school. He also inherited from his father the ability to tell a good story. His father was the champion tea-meeting yarn-spinner of four conferences. He has Irish wit, and is ever ready with a retort for the most annoying heckler.

There are big problems ahead for Canada to face and knotty questions to solve. The reconstruction period will require statesmanship of large calibre. Whether Hon. George P. Graham is far-visioned and broad-minded enough to make a successful leader during such a period of national flux can only be determined by actual experiment. In the meantime he is the best guess for the Liberal party as "The Second Man Up."

Graham's Hold on Quebec

AND then—with George P. Graham as second man up to Laurier—what sort of man have we in the possible place of the Liberal leader, perhaps in the Premier's seat in the House? George Graham has positive qualities that cannot themselves be eliminated. He is not a heavy-weight statesman. But he is a shrewd, facile master of "savoir faire." He knows the French-Canadian better than any other Anglo-Canadian member of Parliament. And that is a requisite in an English-speaking leader that is absolutely indispensable. Sir Wilfrid Laurier understands Ontario and the West, not so consummately as the Toronto News would have him do, but far better than most of his critics give him credit for. To balance the score any Anglo-Saxon leader must understand Quebec. Sir John Macdonald in his day knew Quebec well. It was part of his uncanny genius for understanding any element in Canadian statecraft. One way by which he obtained a hold on French Canada was his knack of telling stories. He was no orator. But he could make an audience laugh even when the language he used was not always thoroughly understood. It was the Macdonald personality.

We must expect the same quality in any Anglo-Liberal leader. Has George Graham the ability to understand, and in a measure to interpret Quebec? It must be admitted that he has. His long intimacy with Sir Wilfrid has not been a merely personal affinity. It is not to be assumed that Sir Wilfrid chose Graham as his lieutenant for any specific purpose concerning French Canada, or for any qualification which Graham might develop as a possible leader of the Liberal party. It is not clear that Sir

Wilfrid has ever designated either directly or indirectly who or what kind of man that successor should be. The close correspondence between Sir Wilfrid and George Graham had a useful "raison d'être" in keeping the French-Canadian's hold on Ontario which was becoming more and more difficult. But George Graham is far too clever a man to limit his experience in the counsels of Sir Wilfrid Laurier to that. He is much too temperamental a man not to grasp the opportunity of studying through Sir Wilfrid the French-Canadian people. This may not have been done for any more ulterior reason than because he couldn't help it. But the result is to give George Graham a peculiar insight into the French-Canadian temperament.

And Graham has that insight. He exercises it naturally. He makes himself instinctively "en rapport" as the French would say. He has a fund of bonhomie that counts for much. He laughs as easily as a Frenchman. He has a sense of humour that makes his work easy. He cuts out resistance. He avoids antagonism. He can tell a good story. He can sit down anywhere, at any time of day or night, informal and bohemian, to make himself at

ease with any company. He knows how to knock off from the tension of political routine to make himself humanly agreeable to any man. And that human disregard of the merely conventional is one of his strongest holds on the French Canadian.

Whether that compensates George Graham for any shortcomings he may possess in other directions as a Liberal leader is quite another matter. But no Anglo-Canadian leader can expect to succeed Sir Wilfrid who does not instinctively interpret the French-Canadian as well as Sir Wilfrid understands the genius of English-speaking Ontario.

A Newspaper Man

GEORGE PERRY GRAHAM had for a father a Methodist preacher, and for his vocation before he entered politics, newspaper work.

He was born in Eganville, Ontario, in 1859, and schooled locally until he was old enough to attend first Iroquois High School and then the Morrisburg Collegiate Institute. He was first a school teacher and then editor of the Morrisburg Herald. He held this post from 1880 to 1892, when he became assistant editor of the Ottawa Free Press. From 1893 to 1907 he was managing editor of the Brockville Record. His first plunge into politics was not fortunate. That was in 1890, when he unsuccessfully contested Dundas in the Provincial general elections. In 1898 he was more fortunate, and sat as M. L. A. for Brockville from that date to 1907, during part of which time—1904 and 1905—he acted as Provincial Secretary under the late George Ross. After the defeat of that Government, and the translation of Sir George Ross to the Senate, he became leader of the Opposition in Ontario. In 1907 he took the portfolio of Railways and Canals.