

was well enough and needed no change. His friends mourn the best of friends, his followers an ideal and inspiring leader, the country the most illustrious of its sons.

I have in my hand a letter which I received from the honourable gentleman from British Columbia (Hon. Hewitt Bostock) who has been the official mouthpiece of the Liberal party in this Chamber, and which I feel it my duty to add to the remarks which I have just uttered. That honourable gentleman says:

It is a matter of great regret to me that the illness of my mother in England necessitates my leaving Canada to-day when the people are mourning the loss of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who through his long and active life has rendered to his country services which are equal to those of the great men who have predeceased him, and which will be more fully appreciated as time goes on than they are to-day.

Coming into public life when the Confederation agreement was completed, he set himself to the task of more fully bringing together and welding into a harmonious whole the interests of the Dominion. His grace of manner and his personal charm especially fitted him for the position of leader, for which he was chosen by the Liberal party in 1887 upon the retirement of the Hon. Edward Blake. A liberal of the school to which Burke, Bright, Cobden and Gladstone belonged, he strove all his life to forward and uphold Liberal principles.

Through his death the country has lost a statesman of great and proved experience, who has been recognized by those who are competent to judge not only as a great Canadian statesman but as one who stood in the front rank of the statesmen of the British Empire, who has rendered great services outside of Canada by the influence he has exerted on those he has been brought in contact with during his long life.

The country, while mourning their own loss, will sympathize most sincerely with Lady Laurier in her bereavement.

Hon. PASCAL POIRIER: Honourable gentlemen, much has been said, and well said, of the mental gifts of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Let me add a few words concerning the qualities of his heart; these are the greatest, the noblest, the best. Napoleon, while a prisoner on St. Helena, meditating on fame and its vanities, and wondering why it was that the great men who had come and gone since the beginning of the world—warriors, Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, himself included; philosophers, Plato, Descartes; poets, Homer, Dante, Corneille; savants, Galileo, Roger Bacon—were admired all, but that one alone was loved, by all men and at all times—Jesus of Nazareth, in whom Napoleon, like ourselves, believed. And Napoleon came to this conclusion, that, leaving aside His divinity, it was because

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Jesus loved men most, because love is greater than genius, sacrifice mightier than conquest. Without making any irreverent comparisons, and confining my remarks to what is strictly human, let me say that in Sir Wilfrid Laurier the virtues of the heart even excelled those of the mind, and that the spectacle that we witnessed here, of the whole city of Ottawa turning out in an interminable procession to view his mortal remains in this building, of the whole nation deeply mourning his demise, is due less to the fact that for fifteen years he governed this country to the best of his ability, than to this, that at all times, at all periods of his public and private career, he loved his country and his countrymen in all sincerity, with the full loyalty of his Canadian heart. In this he resembled another illustrious Canadian, Sir John A. Macdonald. I like to associate the names of these two men, because they were both great and good men. I had the privilege of knowing both with a certain degree of intimacy. I hold with reverence and piety the last invitation issued to a public dinner by Sir John A. Macdonald, at Earnscliffe, which was countermanded on account of his illness. I was in Ottawa when Sir Wilfrid Laurier first entered the political arena. I followed the career of these two men closely, and if my preference, possibly owing to gratitude, goes to Sir John A. Macdonald, my admiration for the one and the other is equal. Leaders of men must be lovers of men; the heart must go out in order to carry back the hearts of other men. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, as we say in French, "avait le cœur sur la main, et la main toujours ouverte"; many an indigent in Ottawa knows it. To give an instance: On a cold wintry night near the Rideau canal a friend met him carrying a parcel under his arm. "What are you doing here?" said the friend; "are you lost?" The reply was, "No, I had business here." That business, honourable gentlemen, consisted in taking warm garments to some poor whom he knew, and, that his household might not be aware of the deed, he carried the parcel himself. Similar traits are recorded of Sir John A. Macdonald. I could give you the names of musicians, of painters, of singers, who would tell you with tears in their eyes that, in the critical days of their artistic careers, but for the protection and pecuniary help they received at the hands of Sir Wilfrid and Lady Laurier, whose name will be associated with that of her husband in history, they would not have been able to pursue their studies.