

LAST WEEK IN PARLIAMENT

By OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THOSE of us who spent our week-end at Montreal were surprised to see Sir Wilfrid Laurier in his seat on our return to work on Monday.

The Montreal papers had informed us that in consequence of his failing health he had gone away for some months. Journalists always believe what they see in the papers, hence we were agreeably surprised on Monday to see Sir Wilfrid in his usual place and looking particularly well. There is little doubt but that he will be there till the end of the Session. The House will not rise before Easter as some members hope. One day during the third week in April will be the earliest date when legislators will be at liberty to return to the bosom of their families.



E. N. Lewis, M.P.,
West Huron.

Monday saw the return of the Hon. G. Eulas Foster after his sojourn in the law courts of Toronto. It was interesting to watch him in earnest conversation with his chief. There was a pleading expression on his face, but the consul's face was dark and the consul's brow was low and if I can read expressions correctly there was also written there death to the Hon. George Eulas' political career.

Later in the week Dr. Macdonald was to be seen flitting about the lobbies and corridors. One of the most pleasing things about the editor of the *Globe* is his frank boyish expression which is always an open index to his innermost thoughts. The strain was over and he looked as happy as a schoolboy who had just defeated the school bully.

STATISTICS have been prepared giving the time consumed by speeches on the Naval Bill. A decision will be taken probably long before these lines meet the light of publication. Up to the

time of writing the honours are even, speakers on each side having consumed about the same amount of time. The government benches however, have to date contributed the longest and the shortest speech. Sir Frederick Borden claims the record as to length a score of three hours and forty-five minutes. Dr. Clark, of Red Deer holds the shortest record of thirty-five minutes.

Dr. Clark has already made a reputation for himself in the House as to clearness of thought and expression and this was not diminished by the brevity of his remarks on the Naval Bill. He is one of the settlers from the Old Country most welcome in Canada. For the sake of his sons he gave up a lucrative practice in one of the great northern cities of England and has taken up a large farm in Alberta. His natural ability and intuition not only made him a success as a rancher but quickly gained for him the respect of his neighbours who expressed their appreciation by electing him as their member. He has been in this country only eight years.

"Into the jaws of death, into the gates of —, the place I referred to in my discourse last Sunday morning," said the modest curate, who had undertaken to recite the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava for the amusement and edification of the audience at the Village Penny Reading. Mr. C. A. Magrath, the member for Medicine Hat, does not suffer from the same excess of modesty, for on Monday he plainly stated that a Canadian navy would be as useful to Canada as a buffalo overcoat to an inhabitant of Hades.

The curate was run close by Mr. E. N. Lewis (West Huron), who repeated this statement with a variation more vivid than wise. He stated that a Canadian navy would be as useful as "a fur coat in the place to which a good many of us are going." These references to the great unknown proved the merriment makers of the week, though it is difficult to understand why reference to such a serious subject should be received with hilarity.

The member for West Huron is "a prophet of lost causes." He retains his early hopes and aspirations and gives vent to his enthusiasm by introducing into the house periodically measures which have some sense and reason in them. It was quite expected on Monday that his standpoint would be original and probably reasonable—hence amusing. The idea of one of the rank and file daring to have opinions of his own has tickled parliament ever since party government was instituted.

Mr. Lewis really had a sensible suggestion to make. He pointed out that there were a large number of men employed both on the maritime coasts and on the great lakes who are thrown out of employment during the winter. "Take these men," said the prophet, "and train them during the winter and so form the nucleus of your navy." Even the member for West Huron cannot always be reasonable for even after his brilliant suggestion for the nucleus of a Canadian navy, the crack of the Opposition whip will drive him into the contribution lobby.

An election will come sooner or later and those who vote for an immediate contribution on account of the crisis will have to justify their vote to their constituents. As far as I can see, nothing but a war with Germany in the meantime will save them.

I VENTURE to think the closing words of the address by Mr. Magrath (Medicine Hat) will be interesting:

"In concluding my remarks there is another feature to which I will briefly refer and that is Canada, in years gone by, has appealed to the United States for reciprocity, but without success. The next request, I believe, will come from our friends to the south of us and perhaps much earlier than we imagine. Now, I realise that it is not our place to interfere in the politics of Great Britain, but I would like some of our free trade friends in Britain to keep that feature in view when studying Canadian conditions, and upon which I have attempted to throw some light to-day. Again I say there is too much drifting, too much running to political corners to sift out the winds of temporary political advantage, too much placing of ears to the ground to listen for the rumblings of discontented vote manipulators, too little thought of great principles and the willingness to go down and out for them, too little effort to create a strong healthy public opinion in

this country to deal intelligently with all large issues. The next few years will determine whether the British empire is going to enter upon the greatest epoch-making period of its history, the greatest epoch-making period in the history of the world. Canada had an epoch-making period. I refer to the days immediately preceding confederation. There is a confederacy in the balance, greater the world has never seen. And it is for us to do our duty—to-day, not to-morrow, it may then be too late. I say, then, let us play up! play up! and play the game as members of the great British family.

"Sir, we are engaged in the building of a ship—the Empire. Civilisation also demands the strengthening of the union of the elements of that empire throughout this world, therefore let our constant cry be:

"Sail on O ship of state!
Sail on, O union strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!"

ANY relief from the dull monotony of the oft-repeated arguments used on the Naval Bill is welcome and when Colonel Sam Hughes charged into the House with a Ross rifle at full cock and began to yell "treason," he was greater even as a palm tree in the desert. According to the gallant Colonel the English authorities who attend to the Bisley meeting, are afraid of the Canadian marksmen and not being able to beat them by fair means are employing foul. He unfolded a tale of underhand perfidy which should have made the flesh creep and the blood boil of every true Canadian. Unfortunately he somewhat missed fire and subsequent explanations enabled members to keep their temperature normal.

Friday, as is usual, was devoted to supply. The government is making good progress in this direction. This fact coupled with signs of early spring will do much to shorten the Session.

WYNNE GRANVILLE.

Canadian Amateur Art

UNDER the heading "Amateur Art" the *Canadian Century* a recent arrival in the weekly field of Montreal discusses the exhibition of the Canadian Art Club in that city. The exhibition is said to be "remarkable in more than one respect." The writer elaborates this by alleging that it is the first since the organisation of the club, and by adding what may be regarded as a corollary—that "it is purely and distinctively an amateurs' exhibition."

Perhaps there was never so sweeping a criticism of Canadian art anywhere. Merely as a matter of detail, it happens that the Canadian Art Club have given four annual exhibitions in Toronto since the organisation of the club. It also happens that one of the best known artists in Montreal, Mr. William Brymner, R.C.A., President of the Royal Canadian Academy, is a leading member of the club; likewise that several of the most capable Montreal artists are exhibitors; and that Horatio Walker, who does most of his painting in the Isle of Orleans below Quebec, is the club's most celebrated exhibitor and member. It is no novelty for Mr. Walker to get \$10,000 for a picture in New York, and some of his canvases are priced as high as \$17,000; which, for an "amateur," is by no means discreditable. Just what Mr. Walker will get for a picture when he becomes a professional deponent saith not. The prospect is alarming.

Mr. Walter Allward is another member of this "Amateur Club." He is at present at work on commissions for three public corporations which will aggregate more than \$100,000 when completed including the Bell Memorial at Brantford, which will cost something like \$60,000. The prospects are that when Mr. Allward becomes a professional he will charge a million dollars for a statue. Mr. Phimister Proctor, sculptor, now of New York, is another of those promising amateurs. Maurice Cullen, of Montreal, is famous as a painter of winter landscapes. J. W. Morrice, now of Paris, has sold pictures for much more than a thousand dollars each. Clarence Gagnon's etchings are as well known in Canada as Whistler's. Homer Watson, R.C.A., of Doon, Ont., President of the club, paints but a few pictures a year and his commissions nearly always run well over a thousand dollars. Curtis Williamson, R.C.A., of Toronto, is one of the strongest painters in Canada. Archibald Browne, executes nocturnes at a thousand apiece. Edmund Morris, R.C.A., has painted more Indians than any other artist in America, and there are others.

Still it is highly creditable to Canada that she should have so exacting a school of amateurs. Canadian art, no doubt feels deeply indebted to the *Canadian Century* for having made the discovery. When towards the millennium we get able to have a real professional exhibition of Canadian art, we hope the *Canadian Century* will be on hand to denote the event. Meanwhile perhaps the same enterprising publication might send a writer to Toronto to dilate upon that other exhibition of "amateurs," the Ontario Society of Artists now in progress.

"Art is long, but time is fleeting." However this is Canada's century. This is so serious a matter that it should be brought to the attention of Canadian governments—who have been guilty of purchasing several works from the above-said artists sometimes at quite fabulous sums. No government should buy amateur art.

Perhaps it may be worth while to define what amateurism in art really is. Now that art is becoming a consideration in various parts of Canada; not alone in Montreal with its two public galleries, its scores of private galleries, its Exhibition Association and its Learmont collection a gift to the city; not alone Toronto, with its Ontario Society of Artists, its Canadian Art Club, its two annual shows, and its proposed art museum; but also in Winnipeg, where they are talking seriously of a large art gallery and in Vancouver, where the Studio Club is beginning to make a collection for a public exhibition of a permanent sort—it is important to know when is an artist?

Some say an artist is born, not made; some that an artist is a person who starves in a garret in order to paint masterpieces fit for a palace; some that he is an individual who makes more or less clever drawings for advertisements and commercial literature from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on salary and does what little painting he can on Saturday afternoon and Sunday in order to get a picture a year hung in an exhibition; and there are those who define an artist as a man who paints solely for the passion and the love of it, dresses as oddly as possible, dodges his tailor, goes out to all sorts of functions, and waits for a wealthy patron to give him a commission. However it be, we shall be somewhat the wiser on national life in Canada when we come to know precisely what an artist is, whether amateur or professional, and what on earth to do with the artists after we get them.