

FRITZ THINKS THE DEVIL IS AFTER HIM



HOW the London Sphere artist saw a British "Tank" in operation. Of course he wasn't just on the spot, but he had seen the tanks at home and read the descriptions of how they affected the Germans when they first came into use. This picture of a perfectly good German trench being smashed to chaos is the result.

but a year when Saskatchewan rose up and became a Province. In that bald, bounding police-haunted little city of Regina he felt all the queer pulsations of a new life that grabbed the prairie schooner from over the border, the immigrant on the C. P. R., the plodding farmer on his quarter section, the townsman learning a new trade, the real estate bulging out his eyes for the subdivision millennium, the ambitious candidate, and the old-timer with a perpetual grouch—all these jostling melting-pot symptoms of a new way on the prairie of which Regina was the historic centre.

THOSE were colourful days; not less so, but different from what Regina had been in the bleak, trail-hammering days of Flood Davin. The carving out of Saskatchewan and the making of Regina into the capital of the Province as it once had been of the Territories, gave Martin an early big hold on public affairs. He only knew in a vague way what a vast potential province lay all about that odd big town, clean down to the Montana border and up to Prince Albert and the Pas and beyond. But he knew he would learn that province, with its scattered dots of homesteads, its winding trails and creeping railways, and its crescendoing caravans of settlers.

He played on the Regina lacrosse team and kept his eyes open for a bigger game than lacrosse. In

1906 there was a Federal bye-election in West Assiniboia. Martin was offered the nomination. He declined it. In the redistribution of 1908, the eastern part of Assiniboia became the constituency of Regina. He got the Regina Liberal convention by acclamation. He was elected by 760 majority. In the 1911 election he increased that majority to 1,730. Arithmetic on the prairies was coming his way.

But now what did Ottawa do for or against Martin? Here was a young M. P. who was too much of a progressive politician to be back-benched for long by the Ottawa Liberals. Would he enter the fold or would he become something of a broncho like Richardson and Oliver had been, like Michael Clark still was and is? For a couple of years Martin kept pretty quiet. He was studying Ottawa—and Parliament. He was also more diligently studying his own bailiwick. He knew that big movements were being cradled out there. He knew that it was only a good Exeter hop-step-and-jump from the politics of his law office to the sentiment of the whiskered man on the quarter section, the man with the oxen or the gasoline tractor, the elevator on the siding, the implement buyer and the lien note. He knew that elevators and grain growers' associations and co-operative movements were forming out there as fast as gophers burrow holes in the sand. He understood, or was beginning to comprehend, the vital difference

between a politician who takes his cue from Ottawa and one who never commits himself until he has found out what the people want round and about Regina and Saskatoon and Moose Jaw.

Martin decided that he could become a bigger political force by not traveling too far from the man whose business it was to fill the elevators and to build more. He became a grain-growers' candidate. Ottawa might or might not like it. That was for Ottawa to decide. The grain-grower movement was growing as fast as a field of Number One Hard in a good season. It was gathering into itself all sorts of political forces. It was striking at the economic roots of the country. There were basic principles which to the western farmer were bigger than eastern politics; bigger than western politics—able to give rise to other movements; to the Grain Growers' Grain Company, the co-operative buying movement, the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company—all radical organizations made up of men who down east or wherever they came from might have been old-liners.

ONE of the live-wire men in the Saskatchewan Cabinet is a winner picked by Martin. That is C. A. Dunning, President Co-operative Elevators and Minister of Agriculture for the Province. Dunning has had a remarkable and romantic history, and is one of the youngest men in western public life, one of the essentially modern type, an Englishman who became thoroughly Canadianized by experience. The present Premier's selection of Dunning is a proof of his shrewd knowledge of the political value of a man in a movement.

Martin became the kind of Liberal that just now is giving the Liberal chiefs at Ottawa a great deal of concern; the westerner who, with a university and legal education, had probed into the realities of western life and discovered that they are strange sociological phenomena which no hidebound politician is able to estimate. With all its apparent dogmas and fanaticism the grain growers' movement in that part of the world was a broad phase of evolution. The practical politician might poohpooh it. Martin knew better. Votes were not omnipotent. Price per bushel, cost of a machine, the whole ratio between production and profit and the cost of living might be a bigger fact than winning this or that election. It might even be bigger than Liberalism. Some day Liberalism would have to count all these chickens. Some of them might be missing. Ottawa's clucking—

But all this is somewhat begging the question. Anyhow, Martin is Premier of a Province which is five to one Liberal in the Legislature. This is no place to examine just how Liberalism stayed so powerful there. No doubt radical movements find more support among the Liberals. But if you should examine the Liberalism of Saskatchewan with a good high power political microscope you might find it a much different thing from the Liberalism of Ontario or Quebec. What it is and what it may become W. M. Martin knows as well as anybody.

He has a large opportunity. His six foot three and all it represents will yet have to tackle a number of very radical and soul-searching problems before the politics of the West jumps with those of the East—if they ever do. And whenever Martin finds it necessary to repudiate anything in old-line Liberalism perhaps he will be good enough to let us know precisely what kind of Canadian politician he is; whether he has a mind to put the best united interests of the whole country just a little ahead of the immediate interest of Saskatchewan et al. Martin is too sane a brainy man to ignore any essential forces that make bigger politics in his own party. He is too much aware of the necessity for a clean, progressive programme, to waste his time excusing the maladministration of the former Government. His nomination speech, with all its breadth of view, was a party speech, a good deal of it concerned with muckraking the Opposition, not in Saskatchewan, but in Ottawa. Ottawa bothers Premier Martin. Yet he prefers to be independent of Ottawa. Which is it to be? It is for W. M. Martin to decide, not in the interests of Ottawa or Saskatchewan, but on behalf of the country at large.

Canada has her eye on Martin quite as shrewdly as upon Premier Brewster, of B.C., Premier Gouin, of Quebec, or Premier Norris, of Manitoba. All these are Liberals. Otherwise they are as different personally and problematically as Grits differ from Tories. One of these days it will be a fine stroke to re-assemble all the Canadian Premiers, not in Ottawa, but in a place picked by a name from a hat. If they ever get together they will have a much bigger work to accomplish than any other congress of Premiers in this country—and W. M. Martin will have a large share of the work.