

would quicken his attention at once, and he would give the following line.

It is very difficult to describe his oratory. He was a master of all the arts of public speaking except that of being eloquent, if in these days this is an art of any value. He debated with great skill; and he preferred brief speeches, though he could, and occasionally did, speak for hours at a time. His manner was at times hesitating, but not from want of matter, for he never rushed into a debate without preparation, and he knew always how to obtain accurate facts at the shortest notice; in this respect his officers and secretaries served him with conspicuous fidelity. He could be humorous; he could be pathetic; he could make dignified and touching appeals to loyalty to the crown, to the party, to himself. Before a crowd on the hustings he was unrivaled in the deadly dexterity of his criticism, his humor, his appeals to popular interests. It was, of course, in the House of Commons that he was always at his best; and his respect for the traditions of the house, the rules of the house, the kind of conduct most likely to touch and please and lead the house, was almost inspired.

He succeeded in keeping together for a quarter of a century a political party singularly composed of English, French, Irish, Scotch, of Catholics and Protestants, of Orangemen and Home Rulers, of old family-compact Tories and sharp democratic labor agitators: and all these men had mingled during his life on terms of such friendly fidelity to the Old Man that it will be some time before they remember that they have serious differences of opinion; the habit of

acting together will remain with them for some years, at least. The clergy were largely on his side, and he had a strong party among what may be called the academic classes. The reason for this adherence to him of the clergy and the professors was probably to be found in the fact that in all things religious he was known to be a sound thinker; he had no tolerance for the "scientific" view of man's destiny and origin; the agnostic spirit of the age did not touch him. This "orthodox" habit of mind and the well-known taste he exhibited for an intellectual life and for historical and literary studies gave him a command of the clerical and academic forces which added much to his strength.

The loss of Sir John Macdonald leaves his party weaker and his country more or less in doubt about the immediate political future. But other men will follow in his footsteps, and indeed other men are carrying on his policy and perfecting his measures, with what success we shall not know till the next general election. The old chief had faults; he often admitted them; but it is not yet time to count them over. He made mistakes; these he also would refer to, though, like other men, he naturally preferred to have them regarded as strokes of genius; but we need not dwell upon them now,—it is so short a time since his hand on the shoulder, his touch on the palm, could thrill the feudal blood of his followers with somewhat of the tribal loyalty of the Highlands; and in this discussion of his career perhaps the reader will pardon the impossibility of writing without the sense of his presence and of the sound of his voice.

*Martin J. Griffin.*