

common sense and ready wit. He will be remembered among those who have helped to build the Canadian west, and who have made an enduring contribution to Canadian agriculture.

Sir George Perley's death was so recent, and so very sudden, that it still remains something of a shock to all who knew him. In our references to him, I do not think Sir George would have wished us to strike a sorrowful note. In the manner of his passing, as in his life, there was much for which his friends may well be grateful. He had lived to the great age of eighty years. In appearance he was much younger. He had been spared any impairment of his faculties, or any prolonged suffering.

On New Year's day, which was a Saturday, Sir George had taken his part in the life of the capital. Sunday saw him at his accustomed place of worship. On Monday, the day before his death, he had been following his usual activities. That night, he passed away quietly in his sleep—"Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him, and lies down to pleasant dreams." As he had lived at peace with the world, so, in peace, he ended his days.

Sir George grew up in the picturesque surroundings of the Ottawa valley, in the days of the early lumbering industry. How long a career his was, how much of change he witnessed in its course, and how considerable the experience he brought to his public life, we realize when we recall that he was ten years of age at confederation, and had lived in Ottawa before it was chosen to be Canada's capital. He told us in a broadcast but a few months ago that he could remember the time when the settlement consisted of but two small struggling communities, one in Lower Town and one at the Chaudiere—separated by some two miles of poor road; while in between, there were practically no buildings, except the barracks, standing on the site of these Houses of Parliament.

Entering parliament when all but fifty years of age, Sir George Perley occupied, for over three decades, in years of war and peace alike, a foremost place in our public life.

I rather hesitate to attempt an enumeration of significant features in his parliamentary career, or the nature of his public services. As, however, few men, in the history of our country, have given more completely of their time, and of their lives to the public service than Sir George, it is, I think, desirable that, at this time, some mention should be made of the positions of great trust, honour and responsibility which he held in the course of

his long and useful life, and in which, both at home and abroad, he gave so much of disinterested public service.

Sir George entered this House of Commons as the member for Argenteuil in 1904. He had previously unsuccessfully contested the constituency on two occasions. He became chief whip of his party in 1910. When Sir Robert Borden was returned to office in 1911, he became a member of the cabinet without portfolio. As early as 1912-13, Sir George became acting Prime Minister in the absence of Sir Robert Borden, and this position he filled time and again during absences from Canada of both Sir Robert and my right honourable friend. There quickly developed that intimate association between Sir George and Sir Robert which made him the most loyal and helpful of colleagues of the Prime Minister. He preferred, through the years that his party was in office, not to accept a portfolio at Ottawa, though, he was at all times, prepared, as a member of the government, to assist the Prime Minister and his colleagues, in an acting capacity, to the extent of his power, and exceptional opportunities.

Few prime ministers have ever had a more loyal and helpful colleague than Sir Robert Borden had in his friend, Sir George Perley. That helpfulness and cooperation was extended in equal measure to Mr. Meighen and to my right hon. friend during their years of office. May I here express to my right hon. friend the very sincere sympathy I feel for him in particular in the loss of one who shared his desk in this House of Commons, and with whom he was so closely associated in all his public duties.

During his visit to England in the early part of 1914, Sir George assumed the temporary charge of the then vacant office of High Commissioner for Canada. With the outbreak of the war, he remained in charge of this office, and added to the duties of it, those of Minister of Overseas Military Forces.

When he relinquished the latter post in October, 1917, Sir George accepted the appointment of High Commissioner for Canada, and remained in that office until March, 1922. He was, during the period of the war, and the years immediately succeeding, a member of the Imperial War Cabinet, a delegate to the Imperial Conference of 1917, to the Conference at Versailles, 1919, and to the Assembly of the League of Nations, in 1921.

Of Sir George's political career, it is perhaps sufficient to say that, throughout it all, he was true to the best traditions of public life, something which was never more needed than in these times of changing values and loyalties.