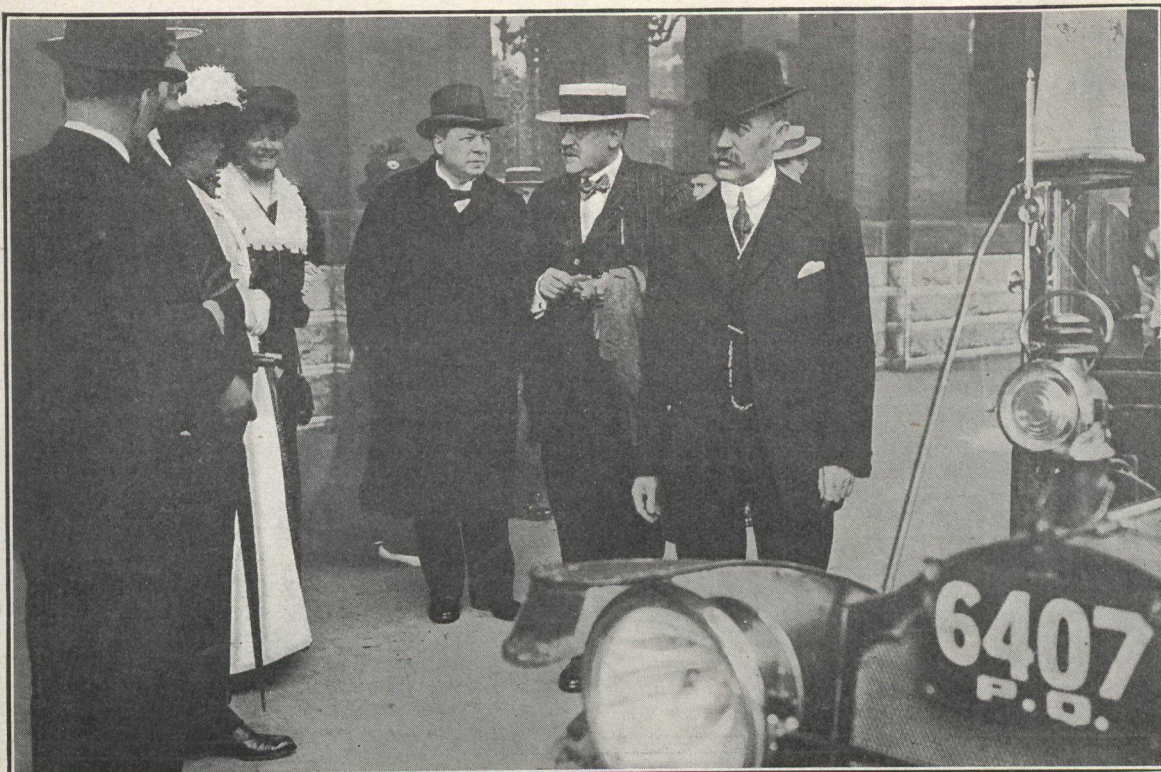




Lord Haldane, in Montreal, Talking to Mr. Charles E. Butler, of Washington. To His Left, Miss Haldane and Mrs. Severence.

Lord Haldane in Canada

By AUGUSTUS BRIDLE

THE Lord High Chancellor is a remarkable man. We knew he was remarkable before he came to Canada to deliver the opening address to the American Bar Association at Montreal. He is the first Lord High Chancellor that ever left the Great Seal behind him. As keeper of the Great Seal he is not allowed to quit England without special permission from the King. He can't take the Seal with him. All he could do in order that supreme executive acts of the British King, Lords and Commons might continue to be carried out in his absence was to place the Seal under commission. And the Seal is no bauble. It is a solemn, indispensable fact. It is one of the few thousands of symbols and images that make it possible for England to govern about one quarter of the known world without a shred of a written constitution. And it dates back to the days of Lord Bacon; farther, clear back to Lord Wolsey and before that again—but that's far enough in these practical days.

Lord Haldane is as capable a Keeper of the Great Seal as ever wore a woollack. He belongs to the ages. The twentieth century has no hidden mysteries for him; and he would be as much at home with Lord Bacon in the days of Elizabeth or Wolsey under Henry the Eighth, when a king could have six wives and kill as many as he wanted to. If the Cardinal and the author of Bacon's Essays and Shakespeare's plays were alive, Lord Haldane would be quite capable of taking both of them to the Cheshire Cheese on Fleet St. and give them as good a time as Dr. Johnson ever did Oliver Goldsmith and David Garrick. He is mediaeval and modern England rolled into one rotundity of learning, ceremony and downright, democratic hard work. He would be as naive in shirtsleeves as "Big Bill Taft," and as impressive in a woollack as Lord Wolsey. Which, whatever G. K. Chesterton may think of the Lord High Chancellor, is one proof that he has some claim on merely personal merits to be considered a universally great man.

LORD HALDANE has never depended on his personality for eminence. He has done things. Of course he made himself an encyclopaedia of language and philosophy at Edinburgh and Göttingen, long before he cared a brass farthing for a public career. He has been lecturer in St. Andrew's University, Rector of Edinburgh and Chancellor of Bristol University; as academically profound as Balfour or Lord Wolsey or Lord Rosebery. These were mere intellectual pastimes. He was steeped in law from Justinian to Coleridge, with an uncanny knowledge of the subject—realizing that it was a great thing to be a lawyer, when several hundreds of Canadian little-wiggers regarded law as only a means to an end.

In 1885 he entered Parliament at the age of 29. From that until 1911 he was plain member for Had-dingtonshire—writing treatises and translations in his leisure moments. And when in 1911 he was



Lord Strathcona, Age 93, Arriving at the Grand Trunk Station



Sir Kenneth Muir-Mackenzie, Secretary to Lord Haldane, and Mrs. Severence.

suddenly shot into the office of Secretary of State for War—he knew as much about war as a blind horse knows about astronomy. It was then that Mr. Haldane really began to emerge as a great man. He was made Viscount of Cloan, but that again was a mere episode. He was busy mastering the art and the science of war. He had a vast programme of reform to carry out. He had a whole cosmos of new details to master, and he did it with the chuckling zest of a boy at a new game. When Lord Haldane got through with his reforms the army was a different machine from what it was in the days of the Boer War. When Lord Haldane visited the Kaiser in Berlin, all Europe wanted to see what this dynamic fat man would have to say that Winston Churchill wanted to hear.

And when he became Lord High Chancellor in succession to Lord Loreburn he pigeon-holed all his knowledge of war and took up with the law again. When he started for America he made up his mind that no New York reporters ever should worry any copy out of him; which also Mr. Bryce and Lord Morley had said before him—but the reporters got him, nevertheless, and by the time he got to Montreal the papers were full of Haldane.

HIS address at the American Bar Association was the profoundest delivered in this country since the days of Hon. Edward Blake. With him on the platform were many eminent legal lights, ex-President Taft, Premier Borden, Hon. Charles D. Kellogg, President of the American Bar Association, and Chief Justice White, of the United States Supreme Court. He was the biggest oracle of the lot. His speech was amazingly formal. It dealt with law and lawyers. The Chancellor emphasized the power of lawyers in creating and developing law; the influence of lawyers on the New World, where legal matters are supposed to be so transparently easy—when if he had been at the Privy Council session over the Hebert marriage case in Ottawa last summer, or at any of the sessions of Chief Justice Meredith's court at Osgoode Hall he would have known better. He quoted President Wilson anent lawyers who ought to be statesmen, when he seemed to forget that three-fourths of the members of the Canadian Parliament are lawyers and statesmen every one.

The rest of his address was an exposition of the "Sittlichkeit," which is the philosopher Fichte's term for the common sense of a community rising superior to mere law or the impulses of an individual or the spirit of a mob. This part was well worthy of Bacon and was surely much in advance of any theories of Lord Wolsey. The hundreds of lawyers and plain people at that congress had never heard anything so tremendously logical and intellectually satisfying.

He showed them all what the noble army of lawyers must do to preserve amity between Canada, Great Britain and the United States—by the "Sittlichkeit" of international community.

But there was one international complication which the Lord High Chancellor did absolutely nothing to clear up. There were thousands of people in Canada who would have been immensely relieved to know what Lord Haldane might suggest to do with one Thaw. He surely knew that Messrs. Greenshields and Aime Geoffrion and the Minister of Justice and the Minister of the Interior and the Province of Quebec and the sheriff and the plain man on the street were all at their wits end to know what to do about Thaw. But he ignored the whole matter. This is unfortunate.

And when it was all over the Lord High Chancellor got out of Montreal just as quickly as possible.