

that Sir Wilfrid Laurier's judgment had been the right one.

Sir Wilfrid often had to wrestle with problems where conflicting interests seemed well-nigh irreconcilable or where opposing sentiments appeared in sharp relief. The material interests were generally adjusted by compromise without too deep heartburnings, while divided interests based on sentimental reasons were always a cause of anguish and, at times, of real despair. The late Prime Minister, on many an occasion, with uplifted hands, gave vent to his anxiety when facing the complexities of such a situation. "How hard it is," he would repeat, "to govern a country which has not a common national ideal!" He realized that this unfortunate lack of unity was naturally due to the fact that we are still in the colonial stage of our existence—that we are here an agglomeration composed of many races, and that there can be no national ideal where there is no nation.

There are those who draw their inspirations from the sole love of their native land, Canada, and those whose love extends beyond Canada's borders. So long as this situation endures we shall have to face recurring crises of more or less acute forms arising from divergent ideals. Sir Wilfrid strove all his lifetime to mould the soul of the people in a Canadian matrix from which would arise citizens who would be, in the exact and complete sense of the word, compatriots.

Has he laboured in vain? The days to come will disclose the answer. This much can, at least, be said, that within the last twenty years a greater pride has arisen in the breast of many a man for his adopted country, and I have seen men of my generation, men of Canadian birth, gradually dropping the hyphen, and simply calling themselves Canadians, who previously had spoken of going home when crossing to Europe.

Sir Wilfrid well knew the goal where unity could be found. He pointed to it on a solemn occasion when representatives from all the British Dominions were gathered together in the presence of His Majesty George V when he was the Prince of Wales. We were celebrating the tercentenary of the founding of Quebec by Champlain. At the dinner presided over by Earl Grey Sir Wilfrid uttered these words:

As I advance in years I appreciate more the wisdom of that British constitution under which I was born and brought up, and under which I have grown old, which has given to the various portions of the Empire their separate free governments. It is our proud boast that

Canada is the freest country in the world. It is our boast that in this country liberty of all kinds, civil and religious liberty, flourish to the highest degree. To those who look only on the surface of things, this may not be apparent. The fact that we are a colony does not alter the truth of his statement. The inferiority which may be implied in the word "colony" no longer exists. We acknowledge the authority of the British Crown, but no other authority. We are reaching the day when our Canadian Parliament will claim co-equal rights with the British Parliament, and when the only ties binding us together will be a same flag and a same Crown.

Has not that day come which he felt to be near at hand if the news be true that in the League of Nations which is being formed Canada will be directly represented to express its views therein and to defend its interests as an autonomous nation?

Towards the same end of forging a united Canadian soul, Sir Wilfrid preached the gospel of toleration by inculcating in the people a spirit of forbearance and compromise. In this field he met with many a bitter disappointment. When passions were aroused to a dangerous degree over a school and racial question between the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, he expressed to his followers his intention to raise his voice in the Commons on an impending motion, counselling a friendly, a brotherly solution of the difficulty. It was my mission to inform him of the divergence of views among the members of his party. I have still before me his sorrowful attitude. He stood silent, with eyes gazing afar; and then he sat down and scribbled a few lines addressed to his first lieutenant, the Hon. Mr Graham, conveying his resignation as leader of the Liberal party. He had come to the conclusion that his usefulness was at an end, and that his most cherished hope of a happy and a united Canada was a vanishing dream. I owe this testimony to his English-speaking supporters, that it was through their pressing intervention that Sir Wilfrid continued to lead his party.

He had for a long time looked forward to the enjoyment of peace, away from the turmoil of public life, but he felt it his duty not to desert his post in times of stress. He has given a long life to the nation. History will tell the part he played in the upbuilding of Canada and will do him full justice. He guided its destinies during fifteen years, and one can safely boast that he left it a more prosperous and a happier country. As much was admitted by his adversaries. He went down to defeat in 1911, when the strongest argument heard against freer commercial relations with the United States which he propounded was that the country