

THROUGH A MONOCLE

WHEN SIR WILFRID LED BEFORE.

IT must be curious to see Sir Wilfrid once more in Opposition! When a man has spoken so long with authority, it cannot fail to be something of a shock to find him speaking as a critic. Of course, much of the authority still clings to his criticisms. There is no critic like the man who has carried the "role" which he is now criticizing. It is not only that he knows just where the weak spots are likely to be; but that the listening public know that he knows and pay especial attention to his lightest hints. What in another would be merely vague, in him becomes significantly mysterious and pregnant with unknown meaning. There is tremendous "steam" behind his blow. That is one reason why politics are usually so much more virile in London than they are at Ottawa. Ex-Ministers are commonly quite numerous on the Opposition "front bench" there; while they soon disappear from ours, so long are our Governments in power.

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THOSE of us who can go back to the days when Laurier sat in Opposition before, will picture him again as he was then—slim, alert, picturesque, almost dramatic in his appeal to his auditors. When stirred, he reached the high-water mark of eloquence as far as my experience goes. I have never been as thrilled as deeply as when, sitting in the gallery, I heard Sir Wilfrid make an appeal to the House of Commons on behalf of his race and its beautiful language. That was eloquence, if such has ever been heard in Canada; and those who have only heard him make commonplace speeches in which his inner heart was not engaged, have no notion of the forensic power of the man. He is, perhaps, more halting and dull when making a perfunctory address than most speakers. His is not the tiresome gift of glibness. I know book agents who talk much better than he does. But his tongue has been touched by the divine fire from off the altar; and he can move his fellow-men as can no one else of his generation in Canada.

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BUT where have gone the fighters of other years who stood beside him? Cartwright—dour, grim, sarcastic—dozes in the Senate. Davies—fresh, vigorous, incisive—is on the Supreme Court bench. Langelier—quiet, effective, faithful—is at Spencerwood. Mills—learned, watchful, the most dangerous antagonist for a high-flown orator—is dead. Mulock—cynical, effective, pitiless—is on the Bench. Charlton—plausible, argumentative, always apparently pained because his speeches did not cause the then Government to change its plans—is gone. Paterson—popular, amiable, earnest, his heart as big as his voice—was a victim of the late "debacle."

I rather fancy we could say with truth that he was killed by a policy for which he had little liking; though he was one of the men who, from force of habit, accepted it in Washington. Then there were Edgar and Lister—both hard fighters—and genial "Jim" Sutherland, who seldom talked and always worked. Trow was the "whip" and, perhaps, we might say that McMullen—now in the Senate—was the "lash"; and old Peter Mitchell stood like a post on the flank of the party and gave some shrewd blows to both sides.

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THEY were a great fighting combination; and when they got Israel Tarte attacking from "the oasis," they made the Government uneasy. But I remember the Government best before the uneasy days. Then Sir John Macdonald sat firmly in the leader's seat, and guided the destinies of the nation with a hand which would have been autocratic, had it not been so gentle and human. Sir John was by disposition a lover of men; and, if he had been made an absolute monarch, his would have been the most benevolent despotism history you ever saw. He ruled in the sense of the majority, not so much because he had to, as because he wanted to; and he was always ready to take a good hint from the Opposition. Again and again have I seen him come into the House after one of his Ministers had got into a snarl with the Opposition over some item in the estimates, the Minister bound to force his policy through by weight of the majority which was Sir John's and not his at all; and, after consulting with the badgered Minister and hearing what it was all about, get up and suavely accept the proposal of the Opposition. He was giving this country the best government that was practicable; and, if he fought the Opposition at the polls, that was about all the faction fighting he proposed to be bothered with.

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THE desks about Sir John were very ably manned. There never was any truth in the story that Sir John dreaded a strong force near the throne. Sir John Thompson was the heaviest gun in the Ministerial battery; but he did not speak as often as some of the others. Mr. Foster—the sole survivor of the long journey in the wilderness—was a rough-and-ready fighter; and Sir Hector Langevin was one of the best hands at getting his estimates through that the Government possessed. Sir Mackenzie Bowell had the confidence of the Opposition—a rare thing in those strenuous times—but the speaker whom Sir John evidently loved most to hear and whom the Opposition loved least, was Sir Herbert Tupper, who was fiery, frank, almost reckless, and given to "stump" oratory of an elevated character. One of the most impressive men outside of the Cabinet was Peter White; and I am glad to be

able to remember also Alonzo Wright, "the King of the Gatineau." George Airy Kirkpatrick and Lt.-Col. Tisdale were effective supporters; and Mr. Hazen, of New Brunswick, came into the House as a young man and was regarded as very promising. Dr. Weldon, of Albert, was the great Independent on general topics, though the eruption of race and religious issues brought the singularly able and hard-hitting Dalton McCarthy and "Jesuit Bill" O'Brien to the front. The "bolting" of Clarke Wallace came later. Chapleau—so mighty a figure on the "stump" and so picturesque as he sat in his seat—was disappointing on the floor, and did not often speak.

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SIR WILFRID to-day looks around upon a new House. Not so old by six years as was Sir John when he died, he has still come a long way. He sat as a Minister with Alexander Mackenzie, and watched as a young man the making of Confederation. About him rise the waves of the new generation. Mr. Borden was a Liberal while Sir Wilfrid was already leader of that party; and Mr. Borden's Cabinet is largely a Cabinet of new men. It does not mark the return of an old party to power; it is the arrival of a virile Opposition in office. Mr. Borden's colleagues—with a single exception—made their reputations fighting a Government. And the vacant seat beside Sir Wilfrid is for a new man—George Graham. Genial George Graham is so new a recruit that it seems only the other day that he was the rising hope of the Opposition to Sir James Whitney; and now he looks like the "leader designate" of the Dominion Liberal party when that organization finally consents to let Sir Wilfrid retire to his loved retreat in Arthabaskaville.

THE MONOCLE MAN.

The Football Final

"HURRAH, Hurrah, we're champions again!" Sixteen thousand people at Varsity Stadium heard the exultant song of the Blue and White sweep over the gridiron as the referee blew his whistle for full time. It was a tremendous moment. University of Toronto 14, Argonauts 7—the big, black letters on the white scoreboard at the south end of the field were visualized by the minds of every rooter, from the little freshman, who had staked the tail of his month's allowance on the result, to the fair Co-ed, who had coaxed her big brother to take her to the Stadium. The last great football game of 1911, in central Canada, was over.

For the third successive time in three seasons. University of Toronto are Canadian champions. In 1909, Captain John Newton's team tripped up the Ottawa Rough Riders; in 1910 punting Hugh Gall and his outfit laid low the Hamilton Tigers in the jungle under the lee of the mountain; in 1911, neat John Maynard and his band pulled out ahead of the scullers from Toronto Bay, bringing to the University of Toronto permanent possession

"HURRAH! HURRAH! WE'RE CHAMPIONS AGAIN!"



General view of the Varsity oval on Saturday last when Varsity defeated Argonauts for the (so called) Rugby Championship of Canada by a score of 14 to 7.

Photographs by Pringle & Booth.



The Varsity "Rooters" were on hand early in order to work out their colour effects and general chorus arrangements. Hence it was thoughtful of their leaders to provide them with hot coffee.