

Hugh, with his remarkable energy and mastery of tactics, was—up and doing.

Between the announcement of the *Daily Mail* and the recent upheaval—with which it has nothing in the world obviously to do—there is a gap which to bridge over we must go back a little into the history of another Montreal newspaper. About two years ago, it will be remembered, the *Herald* building on Victoria Square was wiped out by a fire caused by a toppling water-tank. The *Herald* was fully insured and might have started up again on an even keel without any financial assistance. But "Brer" Brierly, as he was called, went in stronger than ever to house the *Herald*, then just a hundred years old, in a new, modern building, to accommodate also the huge job plant; seven storeys high on Craig St., a block west of the *Witness*. It was Sir Max Aitken who furnished the extra capital. The *Herald*, however, remained Liberal, though since the last election it swung over to the policy of a naval contribution. So far as is known, Sir Max had nothing more to do with the *Herald*. He was then in England and in politics.

HOWEVER, since the *Herald* took outside capital and had broken away from the Laurier navy, why should it not be a negotiable concern? What was to hinder Sir Hugh Graham with his immense prestige and profits of the *Daily Star* from considering it possible to buy the *Herald*? There were good reasons why he should do so. He had already branched out from the *Star* in advancing capital to the Tarte brothers on *La Patrie*, which Mr. Bourassa accused of being the French projection of the *Star*. To acquire an out-and-out Liberal paper might be an even better stroke.

Sir Hugh gave himself but five years more of active life. He had all his fine, consummate ambition and more sagacity than ever. Besides—would it not be good tactics to appear to be circumventing the *Daily Mail* by getting hold of the *Herald*?

In other words as some of his critics might put it—having reached the end of a long tether in the *Star*, Sir Hugh had some desire to prevent any rival interests from blocking his ambition to become the dictator of English journalism in Montreal. And since the *Herald* had spent years lambasting the *Star* the idea was quite Quixotic enough to fascinate a man with such brilliant business sagacity as Sir Hugh. Nominally the *Star* was independent. By times it had been Conservative. Since Sir Hugh's many trips to Imperial Conferences the *Star* had put the loud pedal on its Imperialism, which began about the time of the Boer War. In fact Sir Hugh Graham has always considered that Sir Hugh was a bigger fact on the *Star* than either of the two political leaders or programmes. The Conservative Government was not likely to see eye to eye with Sir Hugh upon all things—forever. Conservative leaders not in the Cabinet had broken with him. Why should Sir Hugh consider himself bound by a mere political programme?

It is certain that Sir Hugh made more than one attempt to buy the *Herald*. It is equally certain that he held no direct conferences with Mr. Brierly, owner of the *Herald*. It is now quite clear that he did not buy the *Herald*. For which degree of unmistakability let's all be duly thankful.

On the other hand—there was the *Witness*. Years now with its blue laws on morality, its daily passages from the Scriptures and its refusal to publish either sensational news or objectionable advertisements, the family organ founded by the older Dougall had got into a financial backwash. It was no longer part of the big current of men and events. Besides, it was independent in politics.

Nobody knows as a matter of court-room evidence exactly what might have been the nature of any negotiations of Sir Hugh Graham to buy the *Witness*. Nobody is likely to state in print that Sir Hugh ever directly approached Mr. Dougall, or that he ever balanced the *Witness* against the *Herald*, or entertained any notion of focussing both in the same camera. But between the two Craig St. papers the newspaper financier had enough to engage his attention for some time without troubling over the German scare.

All this while a new journalistic figure had been coming into view; a man who for several years had been a close friend and co-political worker with Sir Hugh. A little more than a year ago D. Lorne McGibbon made his first dip into the newspaper field when he became financial backer of the *Financial Times*, a new weekly started by Messrs. Edward Beck, once of the *Herald* and later of the *Star*, and Mr. Kelly Dickinson, financial editor of the *Herald*. Very few knew of the connection. Quite likely Sir Hugh Graham did. At any rate the president of the Consolidated Rubber Co. and the man who

has dealt constructively with a large number of industrial and commercial interests in Montreal, had been enough in the game of politics to recognize the power of a newspaper. He had been in contact with Sir Hugh Graham enough to know what one man may do with a big newspaper. But a year ago D. Lorne McGibbon had no more definite intention of buying a daily than he had of starting a new party.

Meanwhile, the financier had been associated on the Tramways Board, with Mr. E. A. Robert, president of the Tramways Co. and a close personal



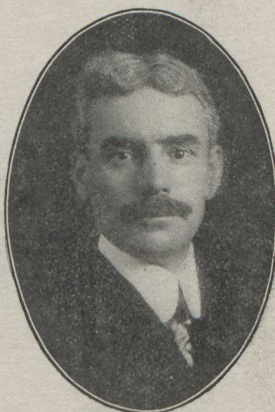
A Year Ago D. Lorne McGibbon Had Nothing to do With Newspaperism. Now He Owns the Montreal Daily Herald.

friend of Sir Hugh Graham. As developer of Cedar Rapids Power, up the St. Lawrence, he had industrial reasons for having something more or less in common with the president of the biggest power-consuming corporation in Montreal. But the two men were never quite compatible and for some time have not pulled in the same boat on financial matters. It has since been stated in the press that Sir Hugh Graham and the *Star* have been allies of Mr. Robert and the Tramways Co. in all the negotiations with the Quebec Legislature, though on the face of it the *Star* always seemed to be on the side of the people. Which is—well, if true, at least brilliant.

The plot thickens. Pretty soon the caldron will boil over. There now began to be the strangest series of behind-curtain dickerings ever known in Montreal newspaperdom. The Royal Trust Company entered the field. It was the Royal Trust that approached Mr. Brierly. It was the Royal Trust who opened negotiations with the *Witness*.

Who—was behind the Royal Trust?

At the same time there were reasons why the *Herald* should deal directly with D. Lorne McGibbon, who felt himself being drawn nearer the middle of that fascinating game known to wealthy men as acquiring newspapers. By this time he had certain more or less definite reasons for considering a purchase of the *Herald*. Some of his money had



Edward Beck, New Editor-in-chief of the Montreal Herald and President of the Company.



T. Kelly Dickinson, Business Manager of the Herald and Vice-President of the Company.

already gone into the *Financial Times*, whose office is in the *Herald* Building; some into the *Saturday Mirror*, a local weekly started in the *Times* office, and since absorbed into the Sunday edition of the *Herald*; some in other similar directions.

The next step must be taken quickly. The *Herald* was definitely on the market.

By way of *entr'acte* there now began to be much talk of a new Liberal paper approved by Liberal leaders at Ottawa and conducted partly at least by ex-members of the Liberal Cabinet. Sir Wilfrid Laurier's recent visit to Montreal was made the alleged pretext for getting this new paper under way—in the Conservative stronghold of English-speaking Quebec.

Then, almost like two claps of thunder from opposite quarters, came the announcement that the *Witness* was bought by Liberal interests and transformed into the *Daily Telegraph*; and that D. Lorne McGibbon, Conservative, had bought the *Herald*.

Now for another crop of rumours. Strangest of all improbabilities, it was said, and is still said, that Sir Hugh Graham is the personal power behind the *Daily Telegraph*. Vol. One, Number One, on July 12, contained a remarkable thesis on Liberalism; written by one who knows Liberalism. The writer of that was not Sir Wilfrid Laurier, as was once predicted; neither was it Hon. Mr. Fielding, who is supposed to be editorially connected with the new venture. Neither was it Sir Hugh Graham, who has very little time for writing. But it was skilfully written. In newspaper circles in Montreal it has become a classic. And it has earmarks of having been done by one who is in very close touch with the editorial policy of the *Star*.

Who was the writer?

Also—how did it happen that in spite of a rule made by the *Star* to publish no advertisements of rival newspapers, there appeared in the *Star* several display ads of the *Daily Telegraph*. On the strength of this and other more or less technical evidence, it has been openly stated in the press that Sir Hugh Graham and his friend, Mr. Robert, president of the Tramways Co., are the joint powers on the *Daily Telegraph*. Neither has explicitly denied the fact. A display advertisement in the *Telegraph*, however, stated that Sir Hugh Graham had been one of the first to offer the *Witness* assistance when it was in trouble. As for the *Star* advertising—Sir Hugh explains that there was a prohibitive price of fifty cents a line—and that the *Telegraph* met that price. What could the *Star* do but publish the ad?

So, whatever Mr. Robert, in Montreal, and the Liberal party, in Ottawa, may have to do with the *Telegraph*, it seems probable that Sir Hugh Graham, owner of the *Star*, has more to do with it than he is likely to admit.

To some Liberal readers of the *Herald* it looks as though the *Herald* might become a Conservative newspaper. But the instructions to Messrs. Edward Beck and Kelly Dickinson, respectively president and vice-president, are—to publish a newspaper. Since the transfer of the *Herald* Liberal editorials have appeared in the paper. They may continue to appear, even though the man who bought the *Herald* is a Conservative with critical leanings.

The *Herald* is at present non-partisan. It expects to carry to greater lengths the *Herald* policy of Clean up the City Hall and improve Montreal. But the chief interest in the *Herald* will begin to emerge a few months previous to the next general election. McGibbon's personal and unconcealed attitude on the navy question will prevent him from endorsing any species of Liberal programme in that direction. His business sense will keep him from dictating the details of newspaper management to men who have made it their life business to run newspapers. His ability to play the game in a big way makes it certain that when the time comes to declare the ultimate and immediate policy of the *Herald*, he will not bedevil it with petty or personal issues.

BUT it would take a modern Solon with the sagacity of a Sherlock Holmes to predict what complexion English newspaperism in Montreal will wear ten years from now, when Sir Hugh Graham is out of the field. Even Sir Hugh might be pardoned for being unable to predict with much certainty, though his present attitude of skilful concealment impeaches him of much wisdom.

The writer went to Sir Hugh for enlightenment. He was handed—a lamp with no oil. Sir Hugh declined to answer verbal questions.

"Put your questions in writing and I will consider them," he said, genially, with a superb mastery of any temptation to be irritable.

From that the interview shifted to Mr. Gordon Smith, managing director of the *Telegraph*, as he was of the *Witness*. It was Gordon Smith through whom the *Witness-Telegraph* deal was effected, whoever were the dealers.

"What can I do for you?" he asked, courteously.

"Well," was the reply. "I have asked Sir Hugh

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