

CROSS BENCHERS IN PARLIAMENT

Five Lonely Figures, Who are Known as the "Lost Legion."

MACLEAN IS ABLEST

Buchanan Wasting His Talents? — L. J. Gauthier on the Way to Cabinet?

OF MR. GRATTAN O'LEARY.

ONE of the strange developments of the present strange parliament is the "cross bench" group. Without a leader, whips, or caucus, owing allegiance to no defined principles, unhampered by traditions and too small in numbers to determine issues, its membership is mostly the flotsam and jetsam of war politics, but not without interest. Its most important figure, perhaps, is Mr. A. K. Maclean. Twenty years ago, Mr. Maclean, then a rising barrister, promised a brilliant political career. He had ability, education, the Nova Scotia's aptitude for politics, and had made a successful debut in the legislature of his province. In 1904, when he entered the House of Commons, he was singled out as one of the ascending stars of Liberalism. With Mr. F. B. Carvell and Mr. E. M. Macdonald, he formed a trinity of aggressive ability that was of infinite value to the Laurier ministry and to which the Conservatives paid homage with the title of the "dark lantern brigade." Nothing visible stood between Maclean and an appointment to the Liberal cabinet but time, but in 1909, to the surprise of everybody, he resigned from the Commons to become attorney-general of Nova Scotia for Mr. Murray. It was a retrograde and mistaken move, and although Mr. Maclean endeavored to retrace his steps in 1911, when he returned to the federal arena, the goal Chance was against him, and he found himself without even the prestige of being an ex-cabinet minister in the wilderness of opposition. It was the beginning of an eclipse from which he has never permanently emerged. In opposition, where the militant, positive mind is the kind most likely to prevail, he divested himself of the aggressiveness of his salad days, shrinking from one fierce, snarling party, developing more and more the detached attitude of the student and philosopher, and coming to be regarded as almost lukewarm toward his party.

Joined Union Cabinet

IN 1917, when party dykes were broken, Maclean was one of Sir Wilfrid's old followers who joined the Union cabinet. By so doing he probably revealed a greater courage than most of his party who acted similarly, because in Nova Scotia the party break-up was less severe than in any of the other provinces. As a Unionist, however, he never appeared quite happy. What duties he had to perform he performed with earnestness and ability, but he was too deeply bred into the tenets of Nova Scotia Liberalism to be at ease in a ministry which was so far from being increasingly Conservative, and last season found him outside the ministry, still on the government side, but looking wistfully to the left. Opposition would probably have welcomed him with open arms for the "light in the window" had attracted a few of the wanderers, but Mr. Maclean's progress homeward has been slow, and for the time being he is a "cross bench" member. "No Man's Land." How long he will remain there it is not easy to tell, but it is hardly likely that he will ever again become the uncompromising partisan that the house knew some fifteen years ago.

Another ex-Liberal on the cross benches is Mr. W. A. Buchanan. A working journalist, an excellent debater and with far above the average of political capacity, one wonders why Mr. Buchanan should waste his time and talents in such a field of barrenness and futility. For the cross-bench area, everything considered, is the section in parliament. A member of any of the three parties, by influencing his colleagues in caucus or by inducing him to adopt his ideas in the house, has a chance of promoting something, but the cross-benchers, without influence with any party, and with no dependable support, any character behind him, can exert and plead and advise until eternity without the slightest chance of getting what he wants. He is a voice crying in the wilderness. Mr. Buchanan would be an asset to any party. He has capacity for ideas, power to express them, a fund of useful information, no high public spirit, and more than one minister or front benchman could advocate in his favor without loss being sustained by the country.

On Way to Cabinet

THIRD in interest in "No Man's Land" is Mr. L. J. Gauthier, a lawyer who has been in parliament since 1911 without attracting much attention. Cultured, eloquent, with a wealth of Gallic fervor and passion, he has landed on the cross benches on his way to the cabinet. There are those who believe that he will never reach his goal, that, in fact, he has fallen between the stools of the ministry and the opposition, but it may be that these predictions take account of what a certain kind of persistence can achieve in the way of political promotion. Mr. Nelson of Le Pas and Major Andrews of Winnipeg, make up the rest of the group. It is not an impressive triumvirate. Mr. Davis, some say, is the kind of pedant who is all principle and no action, a mind confused by all kinds of undigestible theories. Mr.



Lord Edmund Talbot

FIRST viceroy of Ireland under the new Home Rule Act. Lord Talbot is the first Roman Catholic to be appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He is the foremost lay Catholic in England. The Irish leaders regard the new viceroy as a "dummy" of Premier Lloyd George and do not expect any change in the government's policy toward Ireland. Lord Talbot is the uncle and heir-presumptive of the present Duke of Norfolk.

Nelson lacks both experience and distinction, and Major Andrews a strange combination of Toryism and Radicalism, does not appear to have a definite political objective.

Taken all in all, it cannot be said that the cross benchers—in the gallery they are the "Lost Legion"—are a powerful or very useful group. Even with cohesion and simple purposes they would be too few in numbers to be influential, but, as they are, a fortunate group of wanderers, without definite policy or direction, their disappearance would scarcely be noticed.

STILL GOING STRONG

THE other day Mr. Bransby Williams, the English actor, declared recently he had occasion to visit his solicitor.

Business over, the legal gentleman suggested some refreshment.

Bransby agreed with quite a considerable show of alacrity.

Whereupon the lawyer got up from his chair, opened one of the black japanned deed boxes ranged around the wall, and disclosed a spirit stand syphon and glasses.

On the flap of the deed box was painted: "Estate of John Walker, deceased."

A PAGE ABOUT PEOPLE YOU KNOW

Sidelights on Men and Women in the Public Eye

Kaiser in Was Curious Combination Of Propriety and Desire for Show

Her Court Was Dullest and Most Decorous in Europe—Ruthlessly Censored the German Drama.

TO the honor of the ex-Empress of Germany it must be said that she was a good wife and mother. How far she subscribed to the Kaiser's war program has never been told but she went with him into exile and died an old woman removed from the pomp and glory she had known for over forty years. And one of the greatest blows she received during the past few years was the news of the death by suicide of her son, Prince Joachim.

Most writers who in the past have given us pictures of the ex-Empress represented her as possessed of all the virtues, but narrow-minded, old-fashioned and necessarily prim.

A German writing some years before the war, said: "She fights doggedly against any ease or comfort at court and stands out grimly for the stiff old feudal spirit. As is sometimes the case with aggressively virtuous persons she is sad, rather dull, determined and sectarian and uncharitable in her estimates of those around her."

To me she is the most bore person in the world. More than to his religious education, more than to what he considers his political necessities, William I. owes to his wife that sort of absurd piety which often gives his discourses a note so comical and false.

"The empress's regard for the proprieties has led her to assume the bureaucratic mission of censoring the pieces which are presented at the Schauspielhaus of Berlin, and I can assure you that she fills the place of the censor of Schiller and Goethe."

Without mercy, the word "love" in all manuscripts. It is a word which she regards as highly improper. She only tolerates it in the drama of Schiller and Goethe, in French works played at the national theatre by Coquelin. Of course, the awful word when said in French doesn't so much endanger French virtue. If the empress could see the drama of Schiller and Goethe, and statues to be draped in advance of her arrival.

"With such conceptions of life, literature and art, you may imagine whether the court is amusing. The Kaiser and his wife were not so loaded with heavy pomp and icy etiquette as to be entirely funereal."

One art, however, the Kaiser delighted in, and that was photography. She had taken a really magnificent series of her travels with her husband in the Holy Land, England and other countries. To her influence was largely attributed the photographic art.

But she had very extreme views on dancing and always objected to married women dancing in the arms of their lawful husbands.

The result was that court balls were planned beforehand and actually were above reproach herself. She had one weakness at least—jewelry—and wore far too much. The desire for the possession of gems as she grew older became a mania. She added a fifth row to her famous pearl necklace at a cost of \$250,000. Along with this she was accustomed to wear an emerald bracelet comprised of stones of unexampled size, with the front of her gown so covered with diamonds and pearls that none of the material could be seen.

The Kaiserin was represented as having a dual personality. These two souls of hers fought for years without either one entirely gaining the mastery. One soul made for superhuman propriety, peace, monastic seclusion, and a somewhat morose, but the other, the other resolutely struggled for worldliness, courtly state, magnificent display, glitter and a worldly soul.

German court during the last couple of years' exile the first soul was given full sway, without any opposition from the other.

"Splendid! And where would you like your spirit to sit? I have tickets for half a dollar, a dollar, and 'two dollars.'"—The Drexler.

"I'm sorry that my engagements prevent my attending your charity concert, but I shall be with you in spirit."

"The other day one of the manufacturers who is very strong with us told me of a non-church friend of his who has never taken a drink in his life; who writes and speaks with unusual force; whose first public speech was in support of prohibition; but who had done nothing for the cause publicly for twenty years. This man, my friend told me, offered to help the Committee of One Hundred to secure the repeal of the prohibition law. Why, he asked me, have prohibitionists not encouraged the active aid of men like this? He said he was thinking, and I believe we ought to take more trouble to gain the co-operation of such a man. As I am a member of the committee, I will try to get him to do so."

"The other matter concerns my ministerial position. Another friend told me that he had been asked how would you like to go back to religious duty again?—that was the key to his character. To-morrow you see a side of him that is utterly strange and incomprehensible. There is no key to him. He is a man apart, a human riddle to which there is no answer. And he is the most misunderstood man in the United Kingdom."

Catch him at the right moment and he is the soul of gentility, a good companion, equally ready to crack a joke or a bottle. Catch him at the wrong moment and he will freeze you with his aloof austerity, his brusque economy of words, his apparent desire to be rid of you and everybody else at the earliest possible moment. Yet he is a man who inspires the utmost trust and confidence.

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Even to his most intimate friends—and they are very few—Bob Smillie has always been an enigma. Says H. R. S. Phillips in the London Daily Express. He is a man of moods, of contradictions, always sure of himself, but never sure of others. To-day you think you have discovered the key to his character. To-morrow you see a side of him that is utterly strange and incomprehensible. There is no key to him. He is a man apart, a human riddle to which there is no answer. And he is the most misunderstood man in the United Kingdom."

Catch him at the right moment and he is the soul of gentility, a good companion, equally ready to crack a joke or a bottle. Catch him at the wrong moment and he will freeze you with his aloof austerity, his brusque economy of words, his apparent desire to be rid of you and everybody else at the earliest possible moment. Yet he is a man who inspires the utmost trust and confidence.

His appearance exactly fits the type of man that he is. He is slightly bowed, spare figure, heavily lined face, beetling brows, and keen penetrating, swiftly appraising eyes transmit at once a sense of power and personality. He is sagacious and shrewd, far-sighted and cautious, warmly human, but unrelentingly bitter when he has made up his mind about a person or a cause, a friendly soul who has forced himself to be one of the most formidable fighters the modern industrial movement has known.

The popular view of Bob Smillie is that a fight is to him as the very breath of life. Nothing could be wider of the mark, but—spent his early days in the mine under almost unbelievable conditions, he saw his fellows working in these same conditions, he set himself to put things right, and he found he had to fight. The point is that he has always had to force himself to fight. There have been times when he has spent sleepless nights of heart-searching inquiry when he has been about to lead a strike, brooding over the great crop of human misery that was involved, and the conviction that a fight was the only way, and a fight it has been.

With the Miners' Federation Great Britain involved in its greatest

struggle