

HON. DR. MANION, MINISTER OF RAILWAYS HAS MADE A NAME FOR HIMSELF IN PUBLIC LIFE

Is a War Veteran and Won the Military Cross at Vimy Ridge—Represents Fort William in Parliament—Was First a Liberal and Was Electet in 1917 as a Unionist.

(M. Grattan O'Leary in McLean's Magazine).

From the little sawmill town of Pembroke and the board sidewalks of Fort William to the high office of Minister of Railways and Canals, all before the age of forty nine, is a steep rapid and spectacular climb. Milestones in the ascent to that dizzy peak of Robert James Manion, M. C., M. D., were:

At 14 he was going to high school in Fort William, roughing it at lacrosse, winning junior championships at hockey.

At sixteen he was earning money to put himself through college, working on a local newspaper, writing news, running errands for the editor, soliciting ads.

At twenty-three he graduated—gold medallist—from Trinity College, Toronto.

At twenty-five he came back from Edinburgh and Glasgow, a full-fledged physician and surgeon, a procession of letters after his name.

At twenty-six he married, settled down to homemaking, rearing a family, practising his profession.

At thirty-one, interesting himself in national affairs, he was president of the Fort William Canadian Club.

At thirty-two he was an alderman for Fort William, a radical reformer in Council.

At thirty-four he was nominated by Fort William Liberals as a Liberal for election to the House of Commons.

At the same age, thirty-four, he went to war, served with the French army, then joined the Canadian forces, won the Military Cross at Vimy Ridge.

At thirty-six, back from the front, he was elected to the House of Commons as a Liberal-Unionist.

At forty he entered the cabinet of Arthur Meighen as Minister of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment.

At forty-five he was promoted by Mr. Meighen to the portfolio of Postmaster-General.

At forty-seven he was a candidate for the leadership of the Conservative party.

At forty-nine he is Dominion Minister of Railways and Canals, charged with Parliamentary responsibility for the largest State-owned railway system in any democratic state; Is the Minister who will complete the Hudson Bay Railway, embark upon the Peace River enterprise, see launched the beginning of the St. Lawrence deep waterway.

First A Liberal

Manion, like his colleague, Hugh Guthrie, began life as a Liberal. His father, Patrick Manion, and his mother, Mary O'Brien, were of those Ontario Irish Grits who since the days of Edward Blake have been among the pillars of Liberalism in Central Canada. And when the present militant Lieutenant of Mr. Bennett was growing up in Fort William, his great political hero was Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and his chief aspiration was some day to come to Ottawa as a Liberal M. P. Ready-witted and ready-tongued, with a flair for public speaking, he was early marked out by local Liberal leaders as a potential representative for Fort William. And when, in 1915, "Bob" Manion received his party's nomination as a Federal candidate, no one would have dared predict that within fifteen years he would be an ardent captain and champion of Toryism. Manion himself insists that he hasn't really changed. When, in 1917, he came to Ottawa as a Liberal-Unionist, sitting behind Rowell and Guthrie and Pardee and the others, he still

spoke the accents of Liberalism, and less than three years ago he told the House that he was unrepentant and unashamed of his youthful support of the pact of Reciprocity.

Elected in 1917.

Manion was the most brilliant and certainly the most belligerent of all the young returned men who were swept into the House in the war election of 1917. Handsome, athletic, curly-haired, a creature of moods and enthusiasm, he almost immediately leaped into the spotlight with a dashing propensity to tackle the doughtiest of foes. Go after the Hons," advised Randolph Churchill; and that, seemingly was the strategy of Manion. He was as willing and as eager to cross swords with Laurier and Borden as with the most obscure backbencher, and the time soon came when the young soldier-doctor began to get into the headlines. His tumultuous, headlong manner, coupled with an extraordinary capacity for a rapidity of words, frequently got him into trouble. Mr. Tommy Church and Mr. Bennett were marvellously rapid talkers, but they were precision itself compared with the torrential fluency of the young member for Fort William. Hansard, indeed, stood in terror of his flow of adjectives, and no more than one occasion he was made to say things which have brought confusion to friend and foe.

But Manion was much more than a fluent maker of phrases. A sound physician and an able surgeon, he made more than one authoritative contribution to the debates upon laws affecting health, and his maiden speech in the House, which attracted wide attention, was in defense of the medical benefits to be derived from daylight saving.

Apostle of the N. P.

Veering rapidly through perhaps unconsciously, from Liberalism to Conservatism, he remained staunchly a democrat. Thus he was one of those who, on the famous Nickle resolution, came out squarely against titles for Canadians. He declared himself in favor of military orders and medals—he himself was the wearer of the Military Cross—but argued that knight-hoods, hereditary titles, etc., did violence to Canadian institutions. In the course of this debate, Manion showed his independence and his disregard for the authority of great personages by a sharp exchange of repartee with his then leader, the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Borden.

From the outset of his parliamentary career Manion gave the closest study to questions of economics. While others played bridge or euchre in the card rooms, he would spend long hours in the parliamentary library, delving into dusty volumes of the political economists, and his intervention in trade and tariff debates always revealed a close study of the doctrines of the various economists. More and more, as time went on, he turned toward protection. This often brought him into conflict with free trade Liberals like Dr. Michael Clark, but to their taunts of apostasy to his low tariff past, he used to quote the words of Joe Howe that there was nothing for which he had such little respect as his opinions of yesterday. And so, at a time when the Progressive movement was at its height, and Parliament contained a greater contingent of low tariff disciples than at any period since the 80's Manion grew into a fiery apostle of the National policy. By 1921, he was, if anything,

a stronger protectionist than Arthur Meighen.

A soldier, with a sane and practical grasp of the problems and needs of returned men, Manion served on practically every parliamentary committee dealing with pensions, civil re-establishment, soldier land settlement, and other activities concerned with the welfare of veterans. In this work, perhaps, he rendered his most effective parliamentary service, and it was no surprise when, in 1921, four years after he had entered the House and when he had just turned forty, Mr. Meighen took him into his Ministry as Minister of Soldiers Civil Re-establishment. The fortunes of politics withdrew him from office before he had time to prove his administrative mettle, but the experience he gained added to his usefulness when later problems affecting soldiers came before the House.

"Manion Is Up"

In the parliament of 1925 and 1926 Manion had taken his place as one of the four most effective of the Conservative captains, ranking second only to Guthrie and Stevens as the most formidable of Opposition debaters. More effective on the hustings than in the more rarified atmosphere of the Oouse of Commons, he had yet a tempestuous enrushing style that endeared him to the partisan backbencher. There was nothing of subtlety or finesse about the attack of Manion. He tore into the enemy's lines with the same crashing vigor that carried him down the field in the days of his lacrosse triumphs, unconcerned with fine tactics and details, content to be right in the gross and seeing only the goal ahead. He was not given credit for what is called a "deep sea" mind; his range of knowledge was not as deep or as profound as that of Mr. Meighen or Mr. Bennett. He lacked the parliamentary manner of Mr. Guthrie, and has not the acute reasoning powers of Mr. Harry Stevens. But what he lacked in cold logic or in crystal clear argument, he more than made up with a passion and an enthusiasm and sometimes a fire, which, if it did not always impress, invariably stirred the House. The word "Manion is up" could always empty the smoking rooms.

Was Postmaster-General

In 1925, when the King Ministry fell and Meighen formed his brief Ministry, Manion was given the portfolio of the Post-office. In the election which followed, when Nemesis dogged the footsteps of Conservative leaders from the first, he was in many years the most trenchant and active of all his party's swordsmen. There were few constituencies in Ontario which Manion did not visit; fewer still in which his fiery eloquence did not make a difference.

It was this, his reputation as a fighting man, the color and vividness of his personality that made him a candidate to be reckoned with for the Conservative leadership when Arthur Meighen retired. And Perhaps the best tribute to Manion's place in the affections of even those who disagree with him, was that, Irish and Roman Catholic, his chief support at the Winnipeg convention came from the Orange Protestants of Ontario. It was an ardent disciple of King William who put him in nomination.

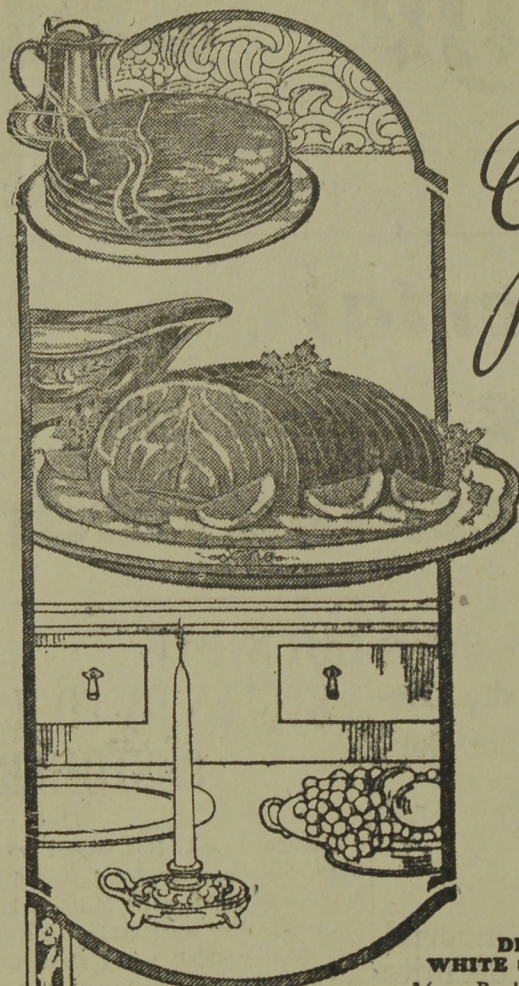
A Flying Column

Manion, like Guthrie and Cahan and Drayton, bowed before the summons to Bennett, but his speech and conduct at the convention strengthened his place in the hierarchy of Conservatism. Nor has his devotion to his new leader been less than his loyalty to Meighen. In the campaign of July, Manion was a Flying Column all by himself on the Conservative side, rushing hither and thither on the Ontario front, slashing out in his own vigorous way on almost every dangerous salient, penetrating the west to preach protection in the fortress of the enemy. None of Mr. Bennett's platform lieutenants were so effectively in the thick of the fray. He was the essence of the first-class fighting man in politics.

Thus he earned his claim to what is perhaps the third major portfolio in the Government of Canada. Justice may carry greater precedence. Finance higher responsibility, but upon the man who in the next half decade directs the department of Railways and Canals, there must, if disaster be averted, be high challenge to brains and courage.

Liaison Officer

As Minister of Railways, Manion will be the liaison officer between the (Continued on page three)



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1 cup Borden's St. Charles Milk; 1/2 cup water; 1 1/2 tbsps. butter; 1/4 tbsps. flour; 1 scant half tspn. salt; high seasoning of pepper or paprika.

Melt the butter in a small saucepan, stir in the pepper and salt mixed with the flour and stir until well blended, away from the heat. Then gradually stir in the milk and water mixed, preferably using a wire whisk, and taking care that all of the liquid is thickened before a further amount is added. Let boil a moment or two, then add the vegetable and let stand over hot water for ten minutes to become thoroughly heated. Serve with asparagus, string beans, peas, brussels sprouts or potatoes.

STEAMED SALMON WITH WHITE SAUCE

1 slice salmon, about 2 pounds; once the recipe for white sauce as printed at left; 2 hard cooked eggs; parsley.

Wipe off the salmon with a damp cloth; lay it on a well-oiled plate, dust lightly with salt and pepper, and steam for thirty minutes. Then carefully remove the skin, transfer the fish to the center of a medium-sized platter, surround with white sauce and garnish with the egg cut in sixths, and the parsley.

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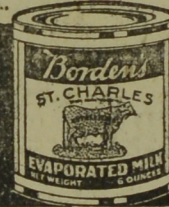
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