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LAURIER WARMLY GREETED AT THE FEDERAL CAPITAL

Liberal Chieftain Addressed a Big Audience in the Russell Theatre---Declares He Strongly Disapproves of Any Interference With Speech---Does Not Believe in Applying the Gag Either in Parliament or Elsewhere.

Ottawa, Nov. 27. — For a little over an hour tonight Sir Wilfrid Laurier addressed a crowd which filled the Russell Theatre. Outside there was a long queue of people who vainly sought admittance.

E. J. Daly, vice-president of the Ottawa Reform Association, in his introductory remarks, as chairman, asserted that five thousand had been turned away.

Sir Wilfrid was received with loud cheering. He spoke of his twenty years' residence in Ottawa and remarked that when he finally left public life he would suggest that the government of the day—whether Grit or Tory—should appoint him to the Ottawa improvement commission.

"I do not say that to a Unionist government," he remarked, "although I see no difference between Unionism and Conservatism."

He referred to a question put to him by Mr. Frupp, a couple of weeks ago, whether Sir Wilfrid approved of the tactics of the crowd at St. Aselme, in Dorchester county, Quebec,

when they prevented the Hon. Mr. Selwyn from being heard.

"I am proud and happy that the question was put to me by Mr. Frupp," Sir Wilfrid went on, "all the more so because the question has been aggravated by what took place three days ago, when the prime minister was refused a hearing in the city of Kitchener. He knows my sentiments upon that question. He knows them well. He knows that I am in favor of free speech. He knows that I disapprove of any interference with free speech when his friends are concerned. But I am not so sure of his sentiments when his opponents are concerned, because Mr. Frupp is one of those who in the last parliament, voted to gag the opposition, to impose the closure, and to interfere with free speech."

The audience broke into loud laughter and Sir Wilfrid continued: "I disapprove of any interference with free speech and I am sorry that the prime minister was not allowed to speak at Kitchener the other day. I want to have given to him every privilege that is due to his rank, due to the position he occupies and due also to the efforts he is making in support of a bad cause I do not approve of any interference with free speech anywhere. The gag is the gag whether it is applied by a turbulent crowd in public meeting or whether it is approved by parliament by the obedient majority of a cold-blooded government."

Concerning "Win-the-War."

Sir Wilfrid proceeded to contest the claim that the Union party was entitled to style itself the "win-the-war" party. "I object," he said "to anyone in the Conservative party claiming the privilege of alone wanting to win the war. I say there is no one holding the position I occupy in this country—a position which is inherent to the system of government we have, the constitutional position I occupy as leader of the opposition—I say there is not a man in any one of the belligerent countries who has done more in his position to help his country to win the war than I have." (Applause.)

The opposition leader reviewed efforts which, he said, he had made to help the government in its war policy from the day that war was declared. He had not done it, he said, from any love of the government, but from love of the cause.

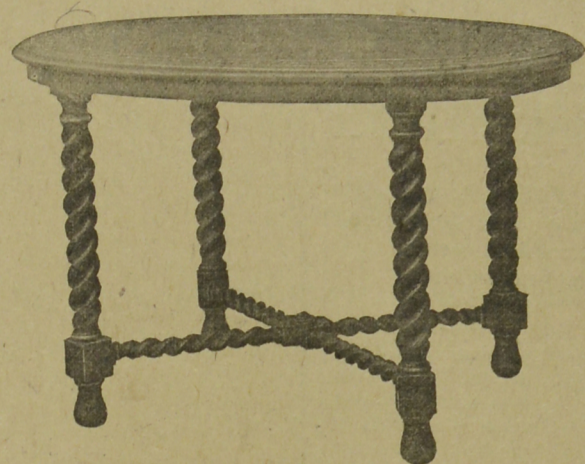
He had, he claimed, given the government every possible support to carry on the defense of the cause of liberty and civilization.

The Conscription Issue. Referring to his attitude on conscription, Sir Wilfrid said he had felt bound to differ with the government on its policy, and had said so with all frankness. He referred to a statement made recently by Hugh Guthrie that there was no Quebec in Australia.

"There is no Quebec in Australia," Sir Wilfrid went on. "It is a purely British country. There is not one of its inhabitants who has not come from the British Isles. Yet that country, composed of races from the British Isles, deliberately rejected Conscription. If Australia, which has no Quebec, which is all-British, has rejected conscription, then it is not a racial question, as is affirmed by so many papers in this country. There must be in Australia some other reason than the race question to induce the loyal people to reject the system of compulsory enlistment. It is because Australia has remained true to the principles prevalent in all British countries, prevalent in Great Britain and its dependencies from time immemorial up to till three years ago, that the British people will do their duty without being compelled to do it and will come forward like men to defend their country."

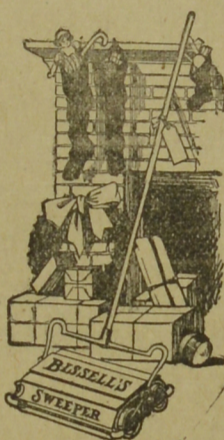
Up to 1915, he went on, there was no conscription in Great Britain, and Great Britain carried on her wars against Napoleon and brought down that colossus on the voluntary system. Great Britain changed two years ago, but if Great Britain had changed Australia had not changed. She still retains the voluntary system, and there in Australia the question was not one of race.

Sir Wilfrid then turned to the question of recruiting in the province of Quebec. He admitted that Quebec had not done her part as fully as the English-speaking provinces, but who he asked, was responsible for this? The



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all the harm he has done me and all the good he has done the present government, but he shall never dominate Laurier. In fact, he was opposed to our participation in the war. I, on the contrary, want to win this war, and I appeal to every one to rise up and do his duty. The war is the great issue of the present time. But I have already stated my attitude on the war and I stand or fall for my principles."

A DRESS REFORM.

Washington, Nov. 28. — With the aid of the French ambassador, M. Jusserand, reformation in women's dress styles for 1918 with a saving of 25 per cent, in the amount of material used, has been effected by the commercial economy board of the council of National license. Men's clothing styles also have been simplified and to a great extent standardized with a saving of about 40 per cent. in material.

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By order of Executive,
MISS DORIS McGRATH,
Secretary.

