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Montreal's Great Reception To the Liberal Chieftain

Sir Wilfrid Laurier Welcomed by Over One Hundred Thousand People--Reception Described by the Premier as the "Greatest of My Life"---Montreal Shows Its Affection For Canada's Greatest Statesman and Strength of Liberalism in the Commercial Metropolis is Demonstrated---The Nobility of Labor.

(Montreal Witness.)

The bonfires that blazed last night on either river bank; the fireworks that flashed across the sky, or detonated like cannon; the dense crowds of shouting thousands that lined the St. Lawrence, the line of triumphal march and contiguous streets, the Champ de Mars, the Vigor Square; the score or more large steamers following close in the wake of the Druid, brilliantly lighted and decorated; the Druid itself, with its lines of white, red and blue electric lights, strung in turn from bowsprit to masthead, from masthead to masthead, and from masthead to stern; all the acclaim and the shouting, the marching and the flag-waving, the playing of bands and the swelling of songs; all these things that gathered themselves into one magnificent ensemble, that moved alongside the boat and the later line of march, and that closed in behind and followed after in undiminished splendor, were there to greet and acclaim one man, had as the object and centre of the whole tremendous ovation the desire to honor and show appreciation of the work and efforts of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Yet behind all this enthusiasm for the man, the

and numbers, last night's demonstration eclipsed all previous efforts of the kind ever seen in this province. From the platform behind the City Hall, one could not see a single inch of Champ de Mars on the first arrival of Sir Wilfrid Laurier at that point, because of the sea of upturned faces. Back towards St. James and Notre Dame streets, the crowd presented the same unbroken surface, and carriages being a and notables to the platform, moved with great difficulty to their place, and mounted police could not always clear a passage for them through the dense throngs.

Those who stood on the pier could not at first see Sir Wilfrid Laurier, but they shouted greetings to others whom they recognized on the stern deck. The Hon. L. P. Brodeur, the Hon. Mackenzie King, the Hon. Sydney Fisher, the Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux, the Hon. Jacques Bureau, Senator Dandurand, Senator Belieu and others all received a salvo of cheers, which swelled into a roar when Sir Wilfrid stood up for a moment from where he had been sitting, hidden from sight behind the others.

When the bow of the boat swung

are pleased to see that, in the interesting deliberations of the conference in the midst of the most prominent men of the Empire, your opinion has often prevailed and has always been respected. As regards our relations with the Mother Country you have eloquently pleaded the cause of the colonies.

Those in Canada, as well as in England, who do not share your opinion concerning the application of certain principles, admit nevertheless that in the great scene at the capital of the Empire, you have played a part which does honor to Canada. Please accept, sir, our most sincere congratulations.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier spoke briefly in reply as follows:

"It is with emotion that I listen to this address at the moment when I first put foot into the City of Montreal. The reception of the City Council is kindly expressed, all the more so as I know your council is not of one political opinion, and that you have set aside these divisions, and have received me as a citizen of Canada. We should remember most the things that keep us together, rather than the things which keep us apart, as you have done here to-

WELCOMING THE CHIEFTAIN



spontaneous welcome from the throats of the people, and the more formal addresses read on the Champ de Mars platform, something behind, in, below, greater than Sir Wilfrid, and yet best exemplified in him, the consciousness of a nation grown to manhood, lent depth, volume and an almost passionate sincerity to every expression made last night in welcome to Canada's premier. The fervor with which the hands played and the people sang "O, Canada," made it evident that they were exercising their franchise and choosing from among many a national song for Canada, and the applause that greeted, during the speeches, every reference to Canada and her destinies, showed beyond a doubt a national consciousness in the people more alive and more aware even than that of race or province, or as yet, than of empire. The fact that Sir Wilfrid, with Canada behind him, has stood in the council's of empire among those others who had represented all the prestige and might of the other component parts of the empire, and had made Canada's will felt and accepted in regard to the most important questions that could possibly come up in an imperial conference, gave a thrill of pride that was as much for the country as it was for Sir Wilfrid, and all the more for Sir Wilfrid, because it was for the country.

In point of numbers it was believed and stated freely last night by everyone that upwards of a hundred thousand people must have taken part in, or been spectators to last night's demonstration. A common exclamation heard on every side among the crowds last night, "What about Bourassa now!" and its response, a quiet chuckle, showed sufficiently that in the minds of everyone, in the points of both enthusiasm

into the pier for a moment a number of people went aboard to give a personal welcome to the returning delegates from the Imperial Conference. Among those noticed were: Mr. Geo. W. Stephens, chairman of the Harbor Commissions, and Mrs. Stephens; Mr. C. A. Wilson, M.P. for Laval; Mr. L. A. Rivet, M.P. for Hochelaga; Ald. Dandurand and L. A. Lapointe.

ADDRESS OF WELCOME.

Sir Wilfrid, on arrival, was escorted to the pier, where Acting Mayor Gauvin read the following address of welcome on behalf of the city:

To the Right Honorable Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Prime Minister of Canada:

Right Honorable Sir,—On the occasion of your passage through Montreal, the members of the City Council deem it their duty to welcome you most sincerely and to congratulate you upon your happy return to Canada.

Our citizens acknowledge, with pleasure, that Canada was honorably represented during the coronation festivities as well as during the important deliberations of the Imperial Conference. The great organs of public opinion in England, even those who differed with you in many respects, rendered unstinted homage to your eloquence, your towering influence and your sterling qualities as a statesman; they acknowledged that Canada occupied the foremost position in the great assembles of the Empire.

If, in the past, Canadians were proud of being represented in London by such men as Macdonald, Cartier, Thompson and Tupper, they have also reason to congratulate themselves upon having, at the present time, as their representative in the capital of the Empire, a man whose merit is universally recognized. They

night. I appreciate what you say about the part I took in the Imperial Conference, and while the references to myself are too flattering, you do me justice on this point, that I did the best I could for our common country. Once more, Mr. Acting Mayor and Messrs. the Members of the City Council, I say that I am deeply touched with the kind reception you are according me, not as the leader of a political party, but as a Canadian citizen." (Applause.)

Successive banners outlined in electric bulbs, met Sir Wilfrid's eye, saying in turn, "Canada's National Port Welcomes Canada's Illustrious Son," "Honor to a Great Canadian," "Montreal Welcomes the Premier," "Defender of Our Rights," "Long Live Sir Wilfrid Laurier," "Nestor of the Conference," "Well Done, Sir Wilfrid," "The Country is Satisfied with its Representatives," and so on. The way was as bright as day, the explosion of bombs shook the air, and the occasion was one that will be long remembered.

ON THE CHAMP DE MARS.

The vast concourse gathered on the Champ de Mars last night to see and hear Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his ministers was the most inspiring spectacle in point of unanimity and numbers ever gathered at one given point in the City of Montreal. The willingness displayed on the part of tens of thousands to stand for over three hours in order to catch a glimpse and hear a certain man speak is a more convincing proof of the place he has gained in the public estimation than the addresses of welcome. It was impossible for many at first to hear a word at the outside edges of the throng, and many of these eventually moved down to Vigor Square, hoping to get a place. (Continued on page three.)

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