

# WORDS OF TRIBUTE FOR EDWARD BLAKE

Legislature Adjourns Out of  
Respect for His Memory.

HIS DEVOTION TO DUTY.

Sir James Whitney and Oppo-  
sition Leader Unite in Eulogy.

Legislature Owes Much to Hon. Ed-  
ward Blake's Work—His Deter-  
mining Characteristics—Eminence  
at the Bar in Canada and Eng-  
land—His Views Vindicated.

Out of respect to the memory of the late Hon. Edward Blake, P.C., K.C., LL.D., there was only a formal session of the Legislature yesterday. Sir James Whitney, at the opening of the House, referred in a few well-chosen words to the death of the man who had a long and "distinguished record in the life of this Province." Sir James paid a tribute to Mr. Blake's ability at the Bar and on the platform, and beyond that the outstanding characteristics of the man were his singleminded devotion to duty and the purity of his life.

Mr. N. W. Rowell, K.C., the Liberal leader, concurred with the suggestion of the Prime Minister. He reviewed Mr. Blake's life from his entry into politics in 1867 to his retirement in 1907. Few men who had fought so hard had lived to see so little placed upon the statute books, but the Province to-day was witnessing the realization of the principles for which Mr. Blake had striven. Through his voluntary retirement from the Premiership Sir Oliver Mowat had been brought into the service of the Province, and his withdrawal as leader of the Federal Opposition had brought Sir Wilfrid Laurier into the Liberal foreground. Ontario owed much to his presentation of constitutional questions before the Privy Council, and it was not too much to say he was the greatest pleader of his generation.

There was an intense silence in the House when Sir James Whitney rose to speak, a silence both profound and sincere, and it continued until the end of the sitting. Not many members of the Legislature were able to boast an acquaintance with Mr. Blake, but all were able to testify to the traditions he had established and the scope which had been given them through his advocacy of the rights and privileges of the legislative body were known to them.

### Sir James' Tribute.

"Under the circumstances," said Sir James, "I propose to ask this House, with the concurrence of hon. gentlemen opposite, to adjourn this afternoon as an act of respect to the memory of a man who had a long and distinguished record in the life of this Province. And before I make the motion I desire to say that when Edward Blake died three days ago the life of a great man, of a very great man, came to a close.

Canada had produced many men who were entitled to the adjective great, men of high rank in the learned professions, of high rank, in jour-

nalism and in the commercial life of the country, and, above all, of high rank in political life. For many years Mr. Blake had been the acknowledged leader of the Bar in this Province. He was the second Prime Minister of the Province of Ontario, and for many years a prominent figure in Dominion politics; and with his conspicuous ability in his profession and in public life he was easily the equal of any man in the rank of the great men of Canada.

### Devotion to Duty.

"Beyond that," continued Sir James, "the outstanding and marked characteristics of Mr. Blake were, I think, his singleminded devotion to duty and the purity of his life as a whole. For several reasons, Mr. Speaker, I do not propose to say anything further except that Canada is and has been better because he lived, and Canada mourns him now that he is dead.

"In pursuance of my announcement, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that out of respect to the memory of Hon. Edward Blake, Privy Councillor and former Prime Minister of the Province of Ontario, this House do now adjourn."

### Mr. Rowell Speaks.

In seconding the motion, Mr. N. W. Rowell, who comes in the long succession of Liberal leaders, sketched briefly Mr. Blake's Parliamentary career. "In thinking over to-day what was the outstanding characteristic of his public service and the contribution he has made to the public life of this country, I venture to suggest that on the whole the characteristics mentioned by the Prime Minister, and also his trust in the people and his desire to see the voice of the people adequately expressed and carried into effect, these may be said to be the determining characteristics of his public policy."

### Mr. Blake's Work.

Mr. Blake's work in the Legislature, Mr. Rowell pointed out, had succeeded in asserting the right of the Assembly to control public expenditure, as opposed to the policy of voting large sums to the Executive Council for railway aid. He also asserted the right of the Province to control its own affairs within the limits of the jurisdiction granted under the British North America act. While he was Minister of Justice he secured the revision of the instructions to the Governor-General, so as to make the Governor-General the mouthpiece of his Canadian advisers in respect to all matters purely relating to Canadian affairs, rather than the mouthpiece of the Colonial Office. He also asserted the right of the Dominion to make its own commercial treaties, a right which is now being recognized. He went to the old country as the avowed advocate of home rule for Ireland, and outlined a policy for separate Parliaments for England, Ireland and Scotland, and the real solution of the home rule problem for Ireland would be found in that form.

Some people thought that Mr. Blake did not accomplish very much. Perhaps few men in public life had ever put fewer acts on the statute books, but the measures which Mr. Blake advocated were being adopted to-day.

"Above all things we are indebted to him for the purity of his life and for his strict adherence to public duty, and for the efforts he put forward on all occasions to maintain a high ideal in public life, and perhaps this is the best contribution that any man can make to the public life of any country. But great as he was in public life, he was still greater at the Bar, both in Canada and in England."

### Ampler Vindication.

After quoting from Mr. J. S. Willison's work on Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Liberal party, in which it is said of Mr. Blake: "The truth is that on almost every great question of public policy time has justified his position. On land policy and railway policy he saw beyond his time, and the future holds for him a still ampler vindication," Mr. Rowell said, in conclusion.

### A Great Leader.

"A great leader has passed away. We all mourn his loss. We admire his transcendent abilities, but we can-