

McConnell intimated to the War Office that it was dependent upon foreign countries for acetone, and that it should encourage the manufacture of acetone somewhere in the Empire, preferably in Canada—acetone being one of the principal ingredients of cordite, the high explosive. Getting Lord Strathcona to back up his proposition, young McConnell eventually succeeded where others had failed. Years intervened, however, before the importance of the achievement was recognized but when the Great War came it was a matter of pride for Canadians to realize that Canada was the one spot in the British Empire producing acetone direct from her hardwood forests. England could make acetone but had to depend upon Germany and foreign countries for the hardwood, so Canada was called upon to speed up production to the limit of its capacity and the facilities for production here proved invaluable in the international crisis.

It appears then that J. W. McConnell, right at the outset of his career, began to think in millions instead of in thousands or in hundreds. Many successful men have varied their recipes and have made their way slowly, starting with small transactions and gradually increasing. McConnell, however, with transactions of million dollar dimensions as his objective shot at the million mark at once and ignored the stepping stones. Perhaps, this is the real keynote to his business success.

To write of his minor constructive achievements would call for a good deal of space, so we jump from the street railway success to the year 1912 when McConnell persuaded the late Alfred Baumgarten to sell his most treasured possession—the St. Lawrence Sugar Refining Company at Montreal. A good many people felt concerned for McConnell over this transaction. It was their idea that he had paid a fancy price for the stock and would rue the day he ever embarked upon sugar. Furthermore, what did he know about sugar anyway!

As a matter of fact there came a day when perhaps he did regret. For every man who touched sugar in 1920, whether grower, refiner, speculator, wholesaler or retail grocer totally, completely and utterly misjudged the market. Raw sugar was selling at the unheard of price of twenty cents a pound, but high as it was it was going higher. There was a world scarcity. More than half the world was on sugar rations. Every man who dealt in sugar said that the rise had not even started. They predicted twenty-five cents, thirty cents, forty cents, forty-five cents, and one man who did nothing else but compute sugar conditions and who received a salary of \$60,000 a year for his expert advice said that sugar was going to fifty cents a pound. The man who predicted sugar's price decline simply did not exist.

Sugar instead of climbing to fifty cents a pound went to one and three-quarter cents a pound! And, when the debacle was over one economist estimated the world's losses in sugar at \$800,000,000.

But strange to say when his Montreal friends looked at J. W. McConnell to discern the mark of the disaster writ upon his face, the mark was somewhat difficult to find. He was smiling his usual happy, carefree smile.



—Alexandra Studios

Col. John A. Currie, Col. E. C. Bent, C.M.G., D.S.O., of Halifax, N.S., and Lieut.-Col. K. R. Marshall, C.M.G., D.S.O., A.D.C., on the occasion of the depositing of the historic colors of the 48th Highlanders in St. Andrew's church, Toronto. Col. Currie took the 48th to France; Col. Bent commanded the regiment for four years and brought it back to Canada; Lieut.-Col. Marshall is now O.C.

He rushed off to the golf links every sunshiny day and he kept on employing an army of men to reconstruct his charming country place at Dorval, Quebec. They were talking about him at a luncheon club in Montreal one day with one voice saying, "I heard that McConnell dropped all his money in that sugar smash." "That's true," replied a friend, "It's a pretty bad case. Except for a few million he has not got one cent to rub against another!"

That McConnell should have weathered the sugar tempest in the manner he did was a revelation to all. His reputation as a business man was enhanced tremendously. Just how he did it, probably no one but McConnell himself knows



Captain the Hon. Inigo Freeman-Thomas, son of Canada's Governor-General, who visited Ottawa and Toronto during his trip from London to New York at the latter part of May. He is expected in Ottawa during September with his wife

and he is not the sort of an individual to be telling.

Away from business, McConnell's friends find him a man thoroughly unspoiled by success and in the matter of giving, whether it be to McGill University, to hospitals or to charity organizations, he is not only one of the most open-handed givers in Montreal, but has been a tremendous worker for charity and is one of the most persuasive collectors the city has ever seen. The Hospital Drive has but served to emphasize this trait. It would perhaps be an exaggeration to claim that Mr. McConnell can go on a charity drive and extract money from a stone wall, but he has achieved some notable successes as a collector and is one of those geniuses who can get a man to sign a cheque for two hundred dollars when the so-called victim's previous limit had been fifty dollars. As to his own giving: when the final banquet was given in the ball room of the Mount Royal Hotel, the other night, to mark the closing of the hospital campaign Mr. McConnell in his capacity as chairman announced that a friend of his had given \$150,000, as a personal subscription. Immediately, E. W. Beatty, president of the C.P.R. suggested that Mr. McConnell give the lady's name! Everyone present knew that it was actually Mr. McConnell's way of announcing his own contribution. The audience cheered itself hoarse.

LIBERAL Prime Ministers have become a habit with Quebec. Snows of thirty winters have melted into spring since E. J. Flynn rose from being a Gaspé fisher boy to be Conservative Premier of French Canada, and now, after three decades of Liberal rule, Louis Alexandre Taschereau has been returned to his throne, more secure and more powerful than before. Party politics aside, it seems but in the nature of things that a man of Taschereau's origin, temperament and traditions should be Premier of Quebec. For in birth, training, outlook and habits this man personifies French Canada at its highest and its best. To understand Taschereau's ascendancy among his people it is necessary to know Quebec. Not the Quebec that one glimpses amid the modernity of Montreal, but the Quebec City of Quebec—capital of the habitants. Montreal is great in wealth, in trade and commerce, in great hostleries, fine mansions, imposing banks. It is a metropolitan city. But Quebec, Quebec with its past, its history, its medievalism and its traditions—it is the soul of French Canada. A great transcontinental railway goes to Quebec and great ships come to its docks. But these are not of the City. Modernity stands hesitant, hat in hand, at its ancient gates. Phantom walls still enclose its inner life. The clang of the street car seems like a vulgar intrusion upon its Old World repose.

It is in this atmosphere that Louis Alexandre Taschereau rules. Quebec's past, her history, her traditions, the ancient customs and faiths of her people—it is such things that he cherishes. He is, in a word, the Premier of the habitants. His relations to them are not those of a politician to his followers. They are his race, his people. He is their Grand Seigneur.

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