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TOPICS OF AN OLD-TIMER

Back to Hamilton Again—A Bundle of Interesting old Newspapers and Local Documents Loaned by Mrs. Bird—An Old Assessment Roll—Many Names of Old Timers upon it—A Scandalous Administration of Justice in the Forties—A Convert for a Purpose—Old Papers—The New York Globe and Emerald of 1825—Catholic Emancipation—Catholic Register of Philadelphia, date of 1838—The New World of New York, for 1842—Dublin Freeman's Journal for 1896, containing a Report of the Irish Race Convention of that Year—Many Canadians Present—Old Hamilton Elections—"Charley" Magill and "Paddy" McKinstry, both Irish, Rivals for Mural Honors—"Terry Branigan's Chronicles."

I have been favored by Mrs. Chas. J. Bird of Hamilton, with the perusal of a bundle of papers and documents which to me would be very interesting had I time to give them that attention which their contents merit. Mrs. Bird is a Hamilton-born lady of much intelligence and hospitality. I have an excellent recollection of her father, Mr. John Brick, who was in early days an assessor of that city; also, her uncle, Mr. Timothy Brick, whose election as town councillor in 1844 I well remember, and the lively contest his candidacy caused, his opponent being Mr. Daniel Kelly, an extensive carriage manufacturer of that time. Mrs. Bird, before her marriage, was well known as Susan Brick, and was one of the belles of Hamilton, beautiful, bright and witty. The Hamilton Bricks formed a large family. They were of good Kerry stock and were allied with the Ponsonbys. Her father's name is given as John Brick, and she is a daughter of the late Dr. Bird of Lindsay, and I am happy to say they get along well together. They have an only child, Charles, a fine young man, who devotes his spare hours to the cause of union labor and is honored in labor circles. Mrs. Bird has a splendid memory and there are a few events in the life of the city of Hamilton that she cannot recall, and 'Old-Timer' is happy to count her and her good husband among his Hamilton friends.

Among the documents that Mrs. Bird has been kind enough to give me is the loan of a Hamilton assessment roll of some year of the early forties. It is minus the cover and one or two of the front pages, so that I am at a loss for the year for which the roll was made out, but think it was 1843 or 1844. I well remember at least one-half of the names of the tax-payers therein mentioned.

The first name written down in this assessment roll is that of Mr. "G. P. Bull," which, it given in full, would be George Perkins Bull. Mr. Bull was a printer and publisher, and edited the Tory newspaper organ, "The Gazette." This Mr. Bull was an Irishman and an Orangeman and was the father of a large and interesting family. Before going to Hamilton he was the owner of a printing office in Toronto, located on King street east. But that was a way back in the thirties. I remember the motto of the Gazette. It was "Fear God, honor the King and meddle not with those who are given to change." It is more than a generation since the Gazette ceased to exist.

The next name is that of Mrs. Thomas Wilson, afterwards Mrs. Thomas Beatty, of whom I have recently made some mention. Her location was the southeast corner of John and Main streets, where she kept a hotel. Mrs. Wilson was an Irish Catholic.

John Smith figures third on the list, on King street east, but I do not remember this particular John Smith. Alexander Bunker comes next. He was a "Yankee" and a grocer, whose place of business was on the south side of King street, near John. He was a genial fellow, but beside Mr. David B. Galbraith, I sur-

mise there are but very few others, if any, who have any recollection of him. Henry Crawford comes next on the King street list, but I have lost my recollection of him. I remember Joseph Mills, though, who was a hatter in Hamilton before Giassco or Bastedo came. George Mortimer I have but a slight recollection of. D. B. Galbraith still survives, is a large property owner, and I believe owned the ground on which the Waldorf Hotel stands. He is now close to ninety years of age. He had a brother in business with him in the grocery line, whose name I think was T. W. Galbraith. The Galbraiths were grocers. James Myers, I remember. Henry Magill, I think, was a brother of "Charley," afterwards mayor and member of parliament and of Irish nativity. David Boyle, better known as "Davey" Boyle, was an Irishman and a blacksmith of some intelligence who used to have some "say" in things. Thomas Blair, I remember, but can't tell anything about him now, only that he was respectable and had cows. Charles Willott has escaped my memory, but Andrew McLroy has not. He was one of Hamilton's early active men. He was a contractor and large property owner. He was Irish and a member of the old town board, and when the "burg" was organized into a city he became one of the first mayors, and if I am not mistaken, was afterwards one of the city's parliamentary members. Conrad Dewey was an American. The Deweps lived on King street east, and included daughters who carried on dressmaking. Stewart McDonnell was connected with the stage coaches. The foregoing all resided on King street east. The assessment roll is entered by wards and these are included in the 4th ward. King street seems to have been a boundary line for all the wards, of which there were four.

On Main street in the fourth ward I find the name of Thomas McIntosh. This man was the father of Thomas McIntosh, the well-known printer of "Banner" days. He lived immediately north of Buchanan, Harris & Co's big wholesale store, and was a weaver by trade. Mrs. Price's name is inserted in the Main street list. I think she was the woman who kept one of the first Hamilton hotels, a cottage-shaped house, behind the square at King and Wellington streets. "Widow Springer," I presume, was the relict of one of the owners of farms on which the city is now spread out. The Methodist "New Connexion" church on Main street comes in here. Ezekiel McCann was an Irishman who owned considerable property on Main and Tyburn streets and an old tenement house that was owned by him stands on the south side of Tyburn street yet. Tyburn street got that name because that street ran behind the jail and a man named Crowley was once hanged there, and Tyburn street in London was a place of execution, and who has not read of the "Tyburn hurdles"? The name of the street, however, in recent years, has been changed to Jackson street, in favor of Hamilton's early business man, Edward Jackson. The "Wesleyan Methodist" church was on the same street. Different kinds of Methodist churches were numerous in those days. There has been a union of some of the branches since. Thomas Atkinson was a butcher, occupying a stall in the old town hall building. Daniel Kelly's carriage factory was on the north side of Main street, a little east of John street. David White was an Irishman and a court-crier, a tall man of imposing appearance.

Catherine street was the home of some of Hamilton's men of importance in those days; for instance, Dr. O'Reilly, on the corner of Catherine and King, a popular physician, and father of the Dr. O'Reilly who was lately superintendent of the Toronto General Hospital. Major Bowen is down for Catherine street, although he owned a farm on the eastern line of the town. He was an unenviable notoriety as a stipendiary magistrate in the forties. Associated with him was another magistrate named Captain Roxberry. Both were ex-military men, and they ran a "justice shop" together on the west side of John street south, near the Court House Square, for all that was in it. It was the greatest travesty on justice ever known, and the poor people of Corktown were the greatest sufferers, as litigation was greatly encouraged among them. The litigation mill was kept running night and day and these men were growing very rich. At last the government "got on" to their scandalous proceedings and closed them up. All kinds of cases were trumped up, and fines and costs were imposed on the most trifling pretenses. The aftermath to

the Catholic Register of Philadelphia, a few copies of which are among the number, bears date of 1838, and the most important matter they contain is a report of the celebrated religious discussion between Rev. Mr. Gregg, a Protestant minister, and Father Tom Maguire, a Catholic priest, which is reported in full and is very interesting to controversialists.

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A copy of the Dublin Freeman's Journal, dated September 5, 1896, contains a verbatim report of the great Irish Race Convention held in Dublin, Ireland, that month and year. A number of Canadians are given prominence in this report, which includes the names of Archbishop Walsh, Rev. Dr. Frank Ryan, Mr. Jas. J. Foy of Toronto; John McKeown of Hamilton; the Hon. John Costigan, M.P.; and Chevalier J. Heney of Ottawa; Rev. Dean Harris of St. Catharines, and a number of other Canadian names.

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This is also interesting. The choice of a successor to these men was left by the Government to Vicar-General McDonnell, who trusted to his judgment. One reason for this was the disposition of members of his flock, to air their troubles in court. Residing in the next house to the Vicar was another ex-military man, one Captain Armstrong, who purposely ingratiated himself into the good graces of the dear old priest. He had a large family and was very poor. He was aware that whosoever the Vicar recommended to the Government would receive the appointment, and to make sure of the plum for himself, Armstrong and his whole family became Catholics. When Bowen and Roxberry were removed for the position recommended Armstrong for the position and he got it. He held his court in the old engine house on King William street. He was hardly warm in his seat, however, when he recanted and attended Catholic worship no more. This is one of the religious scandals belonging to Hamilton that is remembered to this day. The pretended conversion of Armstrong was of course for a purpose.

I want to go through this assessment roll because there are many old names yet to be mentioned and commented on, but I have no more space for this matter in this issue.

Among the newspapers lent me by Mrs. Bird are the "Globe and Emerald" of New York, bearing the date of 1825. This is rare and interesting. It was a weekly journal devoted to literature, politics and the arts. It is largely taken up with the discussion of Catholic Emancipation, and Irish grievances generally. Notable is the reply of Lord Brougham to the Duke of York on the emancipation question, which emancipation did not take place until four years later. The principal American sympathizer with Ireland in those days was John Tyler, who became president of the United States. One of the features is a long, loving letter of Bishop England of Charleston, S.C., addressed to Daniel O'Connell. "The Globe and Emerald" is the oldest Irish-American paper that I have any knowledge of.

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GROWTH OF THE C.O.F.

In view of the many members of the Catholic Order of Foresters in Canada, the following account from the New York World of the growth and present standing of the Order in the United States, will doubtless prove interesting:

The history of the Catholic Order of Foresters since it was organized on May 12, 1883, is a source of pardonable pride to every man identified with the society. It was no easy matter to interest people in a Catholic beneficiary society twenty-two years ago. The fraternal system was at that time an unknown quantity. There was little encouragement held out to Catholics in the early eighties to become members, while they were absolutely forbidden to affiliate with certain organizations which had properly been placed under the ban of the Church.

Non-Catholics were organized for family protection and the insurance paid to the dependents of deceased members was recognized as one of the most valuable and lasting benefits. Inducement was held out to the public to become members of these societies and gradually they developed strength and prestige. At first, however, they met with poor success in the matter of interesting Catholics. The first Catholic fraternal insurance society of any note was organized about the year 1873. Others followed, but their growth was slow. Fraternal insurance began to be seriously discussed, and on May 24, 1883, the Catholic Order of Foresters of Illinois was organized in Chicago, its cradle being rocked in Holy Family parish.

MR. JOHN F. SCANLAN, HIGH CHIEF RANGER

Meaning of the Word "Chaufeur"

"Every time I pick up a newspaper," said Colonel Rensen Montague, "I see something about a chauffeur. A chauffeur has run his car at the rate of ninety miles an hour. A chauffeur nearly ran over Kaiser Wilhelm. A chauffeur has been fined for overspeeding, and so on. Now, I will wager a large 10-cent Flor de Swegas cigar that not one person in a thousand who reads those articles or the man that writes them knows the real meaning of the word chauffeur. It is an old provincial French word and was originally applied to robbers who went about the country carrying 'furn' trunks and torturing farmers to tell where they had hidden their money. It was used as a derisive application by the French to the drivers of the first smoke-wagons and now it has come into general use. The French also use it to designate a fireman or stoker and in English chemistry it denotes a small stove for melting metals. It is entirely out of place when used for the driver of a motor car and he should be called a motorist or something like that."—Brooklyn Eagle.

Little Louise MacPherson, whose mother, Mrs. McPherson, formerly conducted St. Mary's choir, Toronto, has developed into a pianist of the highest class. The little girl—only 13 years old—gave a recital in Butte, Mont., last week, which has attracted much attention from musical critics in the west.

The Toronto house to house visitation, arranged by the Ontario Sabbath School Association, is to be made on Wednesday, November 29. A strong executive committee has been formed, representative of Catholic and Protestant churches, including Rev. Father Minehan, and there is therefore to be concerted action in carrying out the plan. The help of 800 visitors and supervisors will be required, the entire work to be done on the one day.

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PLAN OF ASSESSMENT

Mr. Schubert stepped aside in 1894, and the writer was chosen to succeed him, no change having since been made in the position of High Chief Ranger. At that time the total membership of the order was 26,579.

The agitation to change the plan of assessment brought forth fruit in 1895 at the convention held at Ottawa, Canada. It was a hard and hotly contested battle, but the old level rate plan was forced to give way to the demand for a more progressive method, and a graded system of assessment was adopted. The great trouble here was that the new rate was much too low. It was, nevertheless, a step not only in advance, but in the right direction. It is always a very difficult matter to convince the rank and file of the membership of any society of the necessity of adopting a rate high enough to cover the cost of insurance, and our experience has proved no exception to the general rule.

When our order was established upwards of twenty-two years ago we had nothing to guide us in the matter of rates. Every move made was a guess. We not only did the best we could, but the best we knew how. Now we have more than a score of years of experience behind us and in the language of a distinguished American statesman, "We are confronted by a condition, not a theory." Our present rates are not sufficient. That being the case, it is only common justice to all the young and old—that our system be properly readjusted as soon as possible. If the National Fraternal Congress table of rates be accepted as satisfactory, no man, be his age what it may, will be called upon to pay more or less than the cost of his insurance. That he has paid less in the past is no excuse why he should now hesitate to pay his just proportion for the future. But therein lies the trouble. He is so accustomed to paying bargain counter prices for his insurance that he insists every day should be a "bargain Friday."

PROF. J. P. LAUTH SUCCEEDS MR. SCANLAN.

In 1888 Mr. Scanlan retired from the post of chief executive, being succeeded by Professor J. P. Lauth, who was then, even as he is now, in the prime of vigorous manhood. Under his guidance the order prospered. The society had now assumed a cosmopolitan caste, including in its membership Irish, German and French Catholics, Polish, Bohemian and Italian Catholics had become members in the meantime and ultimate success was already an assured fact. Mr. Patrick J. Cahill, at the present time Clerk of the Probate Court of Cook County, took up the reins laid down by Prof. Lauth in 1890, and under his regime prosperity also reigned. New courts were constantly added to established courts. If there ever existed a doubt that the order would not succeed it was dispelled by this time. Desirable men became members, all claims were met promptly, and the benefits resulting from membership were manifest on all sides.

MR. JOHN C. SCHUBERT CHOSEN.

Conventions were held annually and each court was represented by one delegate. The order had meanwhile spread to Canada. In 1892, at the Montreal convention, Mr. John C. Schubert was chosen High Chief Ranger, and one year later was re-elected at Chicago. Owing to the rapid growth of the order, it was decided in 1894, at the St. Paul convention, to create state and provincial jurisdictions, and thereafter the method of representation was changed, the state and provincial conventions electing delegates on an aggregate membership basis instead of each court having direct representation as formerly. This proved very successful. With an increasing membership, the conventions were becoming unwieldy under the original system. The new method provided for one delegate for each 500 members in the jurisdiction. The net result was an immense saving in money in the matter of conventions alone.

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