

A VALUABLE LIFE SACRIFICED TO OVERWORK.

A review of the career of the late William Alexander Foster, Q.C., appeared in the *Ottawa Citizen* of November 6th instant. It was done with a loving hand, and by one who is well informed, evidently. We call attention to the view urged by the writer, that with reasonable care and regard to the rules of health Mr. Foster might have been alive to-day. We quote: "Another professional man has fallen a victim to overwork, in the person of the eminent barrister whose name heads this article, and whose sudden death, towards the close of last week, before he had reached his 49th year, has occasioned more than ordinary regret throughout the province. As solicitor to the liquidators in the settlement of the affairs of the unfortunate Central Bank, the late Mr. Foster had for some considerable time devoted himself with extraordinary zeal and uncommon ability to the disentangling of the financial labyrinth before him. It was truly a herculean task, the performance of which taxed the physical and mental energies of the lamented gentleman to the very utmost. It is stated that he gave not only his days but his nights also to the exacting and fatiguing labour, taking no rest or recreation—all this continuing day after day and month after month for upwards of a year. No one of ordinary fibre could long endure so severe a strain, and, as could easily have been foreseen, Mr. Foster's physical powers at length gave way. * * * Rarely have we been called upon to chronicle a display of devotion entirely unselfish at the shrine of duty. The sudden and untimely removal of one of Mr. Foster's prominence and usefulness, both as a professional man and private citizen, and the causes which have contributed to that unfortunate event, incul-

cate a lesson which our professional and public men would do well to ponder and take to heart. There is too much work and too little play in this restless and pushing generation.

"The late Mr. Foster, in addition to a distinguished place at the bar, had won a high position as a literary man. While yet a student at the University of Toronto (of whose Senate he in after years became a member), he, together with the late Thomas Moss, subsequently Chief Justice of Ontario, W. J. Rat-tray, author of the '*Scot in Canada*,' and others, contributed largely to a humorous weekly called the '*Grumbler*,' published in Toronto by Erastus Wiman, the now famous capitalist of New York. At a later period he was a contributor to the editorial columns of the *Toronto Leader*, the *Hamilton Spectator*, and the *Toronto Telegraph*. He was also for a considerable period chief editor of *THE MONETARY TIMES*. When the project for a Confederation of the B. N. A. Provinces came before the people, Mr. Foster wrote an exceedingly able paper on the subject for the *Westminster Review*, and subsequently contributed a second article on Confederation and Reciprocity to the same periodical. In both articles he warmly supported the scheme of union, as submitted to Parliament by Sir John Macdonald. He also favoured a renewal of the old Reciprocity Treaty, negotiated by Lord Elgin. Other contributions from his pen on Canadian affairs appeared in the *London Spectator*, the *London Athenaeum*, and the *London Times*, and for some years he was the Canadian correspondent of the latter paper. If we mistake not, he also wrote occasionally

for *Current Events* and the *Canadian Monthly*. His contributions to periodical and newspaper literature covered a wide range of subjects, chiefly, however, relating to domestic politics and questions of Imperial Colonial policy. Like Thomas D'Arcy McGee and other great minds, he was a sincere believer in the future destiny of Canada as a distinct nationality, and lost no opportunity of preaching this doctrine in season and out of season. This belief—it might almost be called a religion with him—found notable and eloquent utterance in his well-known essay entitled, '*Canada First*, or a New Nationality,' which was published in pamphlet form shortly after the Red River insurrection of 1869, a work much admired by the young Ontarians of the day for its lofty tone and patriotic sentiment. The publication of this essay led to the formation of what was known as the '*Canada First*' party, of which Mr. Foster was the acknowledged leader, and among whose members were many young Canadians who have since attained distinction in their respective walks of life, Wm. H. Howland, late Mayor of Toronto; George T. Denison, now Police Magistrate of Toronto; Joseph Easton Macdougall, now Judge of York; Charles Mair, the author of '*Tecumseh*;' John Schultz, now Lieut.-Governor of Manitoba; Robert Grant Haliburton, the scientist and litterateur; Wm. B. McMurich, late Mayor of Toronto; and Hugh Scott, underwriter; being of the number. * * * Had he been spared to his country a few years longer, we think there cannot be any doubt of Mr. Foster's succeeding to higher rewards in a profession of which he was for many years so distinguished an ornament. Mr. Foster was emphatically a man of the militant type in the best sense of that qualification, a soldier of what he conceived to be the Right. It is rarely indeed that we can look back on a record so symmetrical in all its relations—so flawless and unimpeachable.—MUFTI."

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FIRE RECORD.

ONTARIO.—Shelburne, Oct. 25.—Watson Bros.' foundry burnt. The loss is estimated at \$5,000; insured for \$2,500.—Forest, 27.—Barns of R. Douglass, Plympton, struck by lightning and burned. Loss about \$2,500; insured in East Lambton Mutual for \$1,000.—Prescott, 28.—J. P. Wiser & Son's distillery destroyed by fire; insured.—Chatsworth, 29.—The Chatsworth public school-house destroyed by fire. Loss about \$5,000; insured in the Sydenham Mutual for \$3,000.—Wardsville, 31.—The large frame foundry of H. Henderson totally destroyed by fire. Loss \$11,000; no insurance; with the Marshall House, occupied by J. Wilson. J. Wilson's loss is \$300. A. M. Smith, of London, owner of the hotel, loses about \$1,000.

OTHER PROVINCES.—Montreal, Oct. 26.—Fire occurred in the building occupied by Robert Mitchell & Co., brass foundry, and others. Robert Mitchell & Co. lose \$2,000; Ewing & Co., coffee and spice mills, \$1,000; C. A. Spinwall, blacksmith, \$300; a laundry, \$1,000; and the building \$2,000; covered by insurance.—St. John, N.B., 31.—James Fairfield's new wood houses burned down; loss \$1,200, no insurance. Hillsboro, Nov. 1.—Wm. Steeves barn and contents burned, loss \$800.

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