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TOPICS OF AN OLD-TIMER

Old-Timer Receives a "Jolt" and Defends Himself—A Brief Outline of an Active Career—Proposes to Lecture—"Personal Recollections of Thomas D'Arcy McGee, Irish Patriot, American Editor, and Canadian Statesman," His Subject.

Old-Timer has received a "jolt" and now faces a shower of poisoned arrows sent from a totally unexpected quarter, which in justice to himself and his friends he is bound to ward off. The Hamilton Times is the assailant. A kind friend has sent me a marked copy of that paper containing the unkind assault, which is partly as follows:

"Has a bad memory. Old-Timer is far off in some statements. Like some other old-timers who write from very defective memories about former days in Hamilton, William Halley, who is leading the Catholic Register every week with a letter, is shockingly astray in what he presents as facts." I do not mind honest criticism for the purpose of eliciting the truth, but the wholesale and untrue charges like the foregoing are not to be meekly borne. A quotation has been made to justify the attack and comment on, but it is too trivial to be taken up. There is an animus in the criticism that is far from being fair or candid and that is what hurts. It is impossible for any one to write reminiscences without committing some errors. No form of writing is more vulnerable. But I don't that I am "far off" in my statements. Although I am several years beyond the allotted span of three score and ten, nothing has happened to impair my mind. If I were a habitual drinker, a user of tobacco or drugs, or had suffered an accident of any kind to my head, there might be some reason to fling those accusations at me. I am happy to say that I have preserved my mental faculties through all these years and they are as clear and comprehensive to-day as they ever were.

I am not a believer in Dr. Osler's theory that a man's faculties begin to wane at the age of forty, and for myself I can claim that like old wine, they improve with age.

What I am writing about are men and occurrences of sixty years ago. Now, who in the "Times" office is old enough, is mentally sound enough, observant enough and conscientiously bound enough, to criticise my statements involved in those years? No one, I am sure. Consequently the allegations used against me are, to say the least, unkind and the attack must have other motives than a desire for accuracy.

When I visited Hamilton a short time ago I called at the "Times" office to renew an acquaintance made more than fifty years ago, and anticipated a pleasant visit. I met new faces to be sure, but on making myself known I thought I would meet the old cordiality. The editor of the "Times" then told me he had thought of republishing my contributions to the "Register" about Hamilton, but that another paper (the Herald) had got ahead of him and he therefore let them drop. It is therefore clear to me that this attack is the consequence of newspaper rivalry—a disparagement of the wares of the other fellow—and I am the victim.

The remark—"Like some other old-timers,"—used in the above quotation from the "Times," has, I presume, reference to the Hamilton "Spectator," which maintains a writer of reminiscences, and the "Herald," using mine, leaves the "Times" without any such contributor, and therefore adopts the policy of disparagement to sustain itself. I do not think the writer for the "Spectator" has to depend on a very defective memory for his statements, because he has the bound back volumes of that paper to fall back on where he may be in doubt as to dates, names and performances.

Therefore the "Times" is wrong again and more malicious than correct.

Now, I am about to occupy some space concerning myself. I want to show my Hamilton readers why I am competent to write Hamilton reminiscences, and why Hamilton newspaper men ought to be kind to me and overlook my defects, if I show any.

It is sixty-five years since I first saw Hamilton, and was immediately bound there as an apprentice to the printing trade. All of my contemporaries of that period, with one single exception, are dead and passed away. I always spoke kindly of them and had a keen sense of pride in some of them. There were giants among them, but there were some pigmies too. I helped to launch the oldest paper in Hamilton to-day—the Spectator. I printed and circulated the prospectus of that paper and did a number of first things for it.

I printed the prospectus of the first papers in Guelph—the Advertiser and the Herald. I did the same thing personally for the St. Catharines Constitutionalist. When I removed to Toronto, in 1849 it was to work for a Hamilton man, Mr. Hugh B. Wilson. I got on in Toronto. I soon secured the foremanship of the "Mirror," an old newspaper. My next advance was to the city editorship of "The Colonist," then Toronto's only daily newspaper. I was next offered in 1855, the agency for the Montreal Type Foundry in Hamilton. The "Spectator" and the "Banner" were the only political papers then in Hamilton, both daily. I was next promoted to the Toronto branch of the Montreal Type Foundry. This position brought me in contact with most of the printers and publishers of Upper Canada and I formed many warm friendships among them. They liked my method of doing business. In the meantime the Hamilton "Banner" went out of existence and the "Times" sprang up in its stead. Major Thomas Gray, a Roman Catholic gentleman of public spirit, was the founder of the "Times." It changed hands until the paper came into the possession of Mr. C. E. Stewart, an Irish gentleman from Brantford. One of his editors was Mr. Christopher Tyler from Toronto, a gentleman that I was well acquainted with. Mr. Stewart had every confidence in me and often consulted me about his business affairs. When I returned to Hamilton, the Smileys were all dead and the business of the Spectator was in the hands of Messrs. Gillespie & Robertson, and my place of business was in the north end of the ground floor of their building, on a corner of Main and Hugison streets. We got on well together. Mr. Gillespie was an old acquaintance, Mr. Robertson a new one. In Toronto I got on well until the year 1868, when I secured the agency for the Scotch type foundry of Miller & Richard of Edinburgh, and was doing fine. I established a branch of my business in Buffalo and presumed to look for the patronage of the public printing office in Washington, but in this I failed, although the superintendent, Col. A. M. Clapp, was my friend. By this time the profit of my Toronto business was worth \$10,000 a year. Among my Toronto enterprises up to this time were two publications, one humorous and the other literary. I was not loth to burden myself with many undertakings and I was for a time the editorial writer for the "Irish Canadian," a service voluntarily performed. I had to relinquish this because of the objectionable character of some of the matter the directors insisted on inserting. By their course they got themselves into trouble and many others besides. But Mr. Boyle was always my friend.

I should mention here before I go any further that two former Hamilton men were largely instrumental in bringing the late brilliant statement, Thomas D'Arcy McGee, to Canada. Those two were the late Sir Frank Smith and myself. I devoted myself largely to the service of that gentleman. I assisted in establishing a paper in Toronto in his interest—the Canadian Freeman—and brought the late James G. Moynan here to conduct it. I spent a great deal of time in promoting the Canadian immigration movement inaugurated by Mr. McGee. I was elected a director of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute and inaugurated the winter series of soirees, that were carried on in its hall for years. At those entertainments I was always the presiding officer. I had acquired, too, considerable prominence in the Irish community of Toronto at their assemblies and meetings. I was at one time influential enough to determine who should be mayor of the city, and that was a good Irish Methodist, the late John George Bowes.

In 1867 my business ambition rose high and I leased the block of buildings on the south-east corner of King and Bay streets. There I accumulated every facility got the service of my customers, the printers and publishers of Canada. In 1868 I established a branch of my business in Buffalo, N.Y. In 1869 I planned to go to Europe to secure new facilities, such as the Marinon, fast printing machine of Paris; a type casting machine from London for my Buffalo branch, and the Otto gas engine from Germany, and many other things. I was away six months, and in the meantime men were at work planning my undoing. When I returned my Buffalo business was a ruin. My principal and most profitable Toronto agency was by treachery taken from me. I got discouraged and having a longing look towards the "glorious climate of California," determined to abandon Canada and go there. I never contracted any bad habits injurious to business, so no one can attribute such habits as the cause of my downfall. I was engaged in many business enterprises in California, where I had several publications, including a daily newspaper in the state capital. While in San Francisco I organized a Canadian Society. When in Sacramento I was head of a new party there designed to reform conditions in the state. I had occasion to go to Chicago on business and determined in 1878 to make it my future home. There I experienced the ups and downs of life. The very first night I spent there I addressed an assemblage of 20,000 people. I organized the Knights of Labor there and for a time was at the head of that labor organization. I soon had a newspaper at my command that reached every part of the United States. In 1883 I was waited upon by a deputation to head a movement for the reform of the Town of Lake's government. In this district was situated the Union Stock Yards and I and my friends had the powerful opposition of the railroad, packing-house and stock yards corporations; but we succeeded in electing our men and reforming the administrative condition of the town, the wealthiest in the United States. I then started a series of

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suburban newspapers with some success and some of them are in existence yet and doing well. But with all this effort and enterprise I accumulated no wealth.

At last a crisis came. A year ago my good wife and myself took sick at the same time—my wife while here on a visit to her daughter, and I in Chicago, when I had to take refuge in an hospital. I had received a partial paralytic stroke from the effects of which I have not yet fully recovered. My wife died and is buried in St. Michael's Cemetery with my mother and my little son, drowned in the Humber river on the Toronto public holiday of 1869. I am here now enjoying my old Canadian air and hoping for the full restoration of my impaired health, living with an only daughter and enjoying the companionship of a loving brother. I am now endeavoring to earn a precarious livelihood by writing reminiscences, etc., and preparing to take the lecture field while a Hamilton newspaper that I often helped, takes me to task and says I have lost my memory. This is not the only ingratitude that I am suffering. A Toronto publisher who has grown very rich in late years, and is giving away thousands of dollars for beneficent purposes, was owing me about \$10,000 when I left Canada, and refuses me a helping hand in the slightest degree. And this is the story of an Old-Timer, very romantic when told in detail, but here cut short. I have hopes yet that may be realized, if my memory becomes no worse and if my health does not utterly fail.

I purpose to enter the lecture field and take the lecture platform. I believe I have experience enough, reputation enough, and capacity enough, for this, while I am incapable of doing any serious or continuous labor on account of my physical condition, and there does not seem to be a sufficiency of platform talent in Canada at present.

The subject for my lectures this winter shall be "Personal Recollections of Thomas D'Arcy McGee, Irish patriot, American editor and Canadian statesman."

I had known of Mr. McGee since boyhood. I saw him on an emigrant ship peering to the west, like another Columbus; I met him in the neighboring republic, fighting the battle of life and yearning for an honorable fame; and I saw him in this Dominion, formulating its form of government and directing its destiny. I have written his life and propose to pronounce his eulogy.

An American journal remarking on my "Personal Recollections," says: "Thomas D'Arcy McGee is one of the most interesting characters in modern history. Brilliant, romantic, unfortunate in his life and death, the story of McGee has a charm far surpassing that of the most noted characters in fiction, but there is no fiction in Mr. Halley's portrayal. The author knew his hero well and tells his sad story with a fidelity that will be recognized for an honorable name and I saw him in this Dominion, and times in which they bore a part. Mr. Halley's 'Recollections' will have more than ordinary interest for Buffalonians, as they have a strong local flavor, McGee and others portrayed therein having spent more or less time in this city."

Arrangements are being made at the present time for this lecture in three different localities—two in Toronto and one in Hamilton. Remote localities will be visited if there be no unusual physical hardships to be endured. For terms, etc., address the lecturer, care of the "Catholic Register," Toronto.

WILLIAM HALLEY.

Young Priests Go to Rome to Study

Among the passengers on the Italian steamship Liguria, which left New York for Naples on Wednesday, Oct. 4, was the Rev. A. J. Hanley, of Kingston, Ont., who is en route to Rome, where he will take a course of studies in theology. Accompanying him and sharing his cabin is the Rev. N. Lerasque of Quebec, who goes to the Eternal City for the same purpose.

Many of Father Hanley's relatives and friends from Kingston, Belleville, Ont., and New York, were at the pier to bid him Godspeed on his ocean voyage.

THE COLUMBIAN CLUB

The first annual report of the Columbian Club, Montreal, has just reached the Catholic Register. The club was organized with the very laudable purpose of promoting the interests of Catholic students attending the city universities. Only a year in existence, its success is already fully guaranteed. Rooms with all modern appointments were fitted up and steadily patronized with ever increasing appreciation since September, 1904, social functions have been held and about eight hundred guests entertained. The membership counts about seventy students from the faculties of medicine, science, law and arts, and the treasurer's statement shows the receipts to have amounted to over two thousand dollars, while all expenses being paid, a respectable balance is still in hand. One feature is particularly noteworthy as showing the general interest of the people of Montreal in the success of their students and that is, that of the receipts over fifteen hundred were obtained by private subscription, the Seminary leading with a gift of four hundred dollars, and the other subscriptions varying from this amount to one dollar. Standing house and entertainment committees have been appointed and the board of trustees consists of the President, H. J. Chisholm, M.D., 1905, together with Hon. Judge Curran, Chas. F. Smith, F. J. Hackett, M.D., Rev. G. J. McShane, Martin Eagan and E. J. Mullally, M.D. Correspondence may be addressed to the Columbian Club, 2381 St. Catherine street, Montreal. The booklet containing the report is a very neat and artistic production. As a movement in the right direction the Catholic Register wishes the Columbian Club all success.

Schools and Masonic Ceremonies

To the Editor of the Catholic Register, Toronto:

Dear Sir.—Here is the milestone the unsectarian schools of Manitoba have reached, as witness the following report of laying the corner stone of the new public school in Melita, published in the Morning Telegram of Winnipeg Oct. 4, 1905:

CORNER STONE IS LAID AT MELITA.

Masons Officiate at Founding of New School.

Melita, Man., Oct. 3.—(Special)—The ceremony of laying the corner stone of the new school here was performed to-day by J. A. Ovas, past grand master, assisted by other grand lodge officers and brethren. After the stone was well and truly laid, the grand master made a very appropriate and instructive address on the occasion which drew such a large crowd together, and beautifully illustrated the symbolic significance of the ceremony, which was the principal object in the life of every person who endeavored to leave some lasting monument of his being, of value to the world.

The choir, under the leadership of Miss Smith, received well deserved praise for the numerous selections. The trustee board presented the grand master with a silver trowel.

Done with the consent of the trustee board, as the after act of presenting the Grand Master Mason with a silver trowel goes to show, Well! What of this, say the bigots of the Rev. MacBeth and McMillan stripe. There is no religion in the act? There was only an address from the Grand Master Mason in which he elaborated on the principle object in life of every person being that of character building, and leaving some last monument of value to the world. People may conscientiously differ in what they consider of value to the world, but a Catholic is taught that his principle object in life is to serve God, to love and serve Him in this world, and that he must take more care of his soul than of

his body because in losing his soul he loses God and everlasting happiness. That is his faith. When will bigots recognize the Catholic position? For Catholics to be expected to trust the spiritual lives of their children to teachers of such schools is practically impossible. To force them as some do, is tyranny in the truest and broadest meaning of the word, a tyranny that glazes over the power in its hands that compels the Catholic ratepayers to pay taxes for the support of Godless schools, and at the same time has no compunction in handing over the ceremonies attending the laying of a corner stone, to the auspices of a secret society of Freemasons.

This is the crop growing from the feed trough of the disgustingly coarse caricatures on the Catholic hierarchy and the educational clause in the autonomy bill of the new provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, so predominant in the pages of the Toronto News, Winnipeg Telegram and Tribune.

Those who are engaged preaching and trumpeting so loudly the Provincial Rights cry in the West in order to influence the elections, do so to conceal their own practice of provincial wrongs. There have been many crimes committed in the name of liberty in the past, and Provincial Rights appear to be another good name to cajole and juggle with by certain politicians in Western Canada just now.

LUDWIG GELAS.

The Pope's Sister

An Italian paper reproduces from the "Volkszeitung" of Colona an interesting account of a visit paid to one of the Pope's sisters at Riese by a distinguished German clergyman in company with Monsignor Lohinger, rector of the national German Church of Santa Maria dell' Anima, in Rome.

"The holy cabman," says the author, "drove us directly to the Albergo delle Due Spade (the Inn of the Two Swords) telling us that it was the best in the village; but we made it a point to go there especially in order to greet the Pope's sister, proprietress of the inn. When we reached the door an elderly woman welcomed us; she was the sister of the Pope, and I recognized her at once from her resemblance to the Pope and his other sisters. She desired us to enter, and while she was preparing the table her second son took us to the house close by where we saw the room in which Pius X. was born. Some inscriptions cut in marble record the event. The rooms were just the same as people had seen them the day after the election of the Pope. While we were dining the mother was busy about the fireplace, which once she left to come to us and ask for news about the Pope. Little by little the whole family gathered around us. One of the daughters had in her arms a baby girl of her eldest brother, a nice-looking, gay, bright-eyed little creature. She was born eight days after the election of Pius X., therefore, she was christened Pius.

"I shall never forget the good physiognomy of the Pope's sister, a physiognomy exceedingly placid, sweet, venerable, modest; that never will fade away from my mind. These modest country people see in their rural simplicity an unavoidable thing, and do not aspire to anything else. This diadem of unknown poverty is for the sister of the Pope and for her ten children an ornament far more precious than all the princely crowns and titles of nobility which might have been conferred upon them."

Sir Henry Irving's Body

London, Oct. 15.—The body of Sir Henry Irving reached London at 3.20 o'clock this morning.

Flags were placed at half-mast on many of the theatres in London yesterday, and the afternoon and evening performances in the theatres throughout the country closed with the orchestras playing a dead march. At the Queen's Hall concert Chopin's Funeral March was played, the vast audience standing.

Messages of sympathy have been received from the King and Queen, President Roosevelt and Director Jules Claretie on behalf of Comedie Francaise.

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