

PUBLISHED TO-DAY

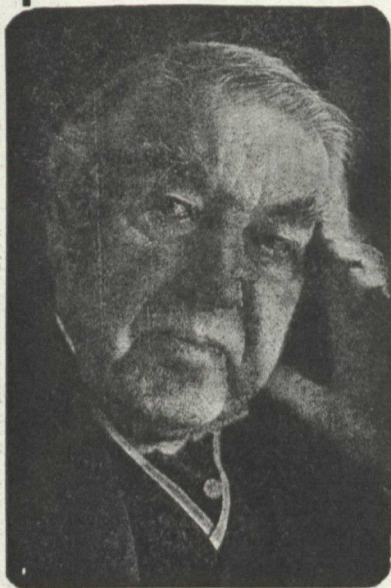
We publish to-day from the pen of Canada's Grand Old Man his personal recollections of "Political" Canada for the past Sixty years. Sir Charles is the last surviving member of the Fathers of Confederation, and was an intimate friend and colleague of Sir John A. Macdonald. The construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, as well as Confederation, are events inseparably connected with the political life of the distinguished author.

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noyance. "Nearly two o'clock! Can't be the case at the hospital, they would have telephoned."

He went to the front door and opened it, there being no one up but himself.

A white faced boy stood on the top step, his hand on the bell, which he was about to peal again.

"What is the matter?" asked the doctor sharply.

"A woman dyin' sir—in Portman Square. Please come at once," panted the boy, "there's a keb bin sent to fetch yer—an' would yer 'urry, please sir?"

He glanced over the boy's shoulders, the cab looked like a private one, the driver's face turned anxiously towards the open door.

"What is the woman's name? Who is she? What is the matter with her?" asked the doctor hurriedly.

"I dunno, sir—she be mortal bad—for mussey's sake 'urry sir," urged the boy, darting down the steps and holding open the cab door.

THE doctor made a rapid mental calculation. An hour before the drug he had just taken became potent enough to overpower him! He must get to Portman Square and back before then. He would just be able to do it—but it was unfortunate—perfect quiet was essential to test the efficacy of the new anodyne.

Snatching a hat from the hall stand, he felt for his latch-key, then, closed the door quietly behind him, ran down the steps and sprang into the cab; the boy slammed the door, climbed on to the box and the driver whipped the horse to a gallop, its clattering hoofs echoing through the deserted streets.

The theatres had long before poured out their animated throngs, cafes and hotel restaurants were closed, the last trains had gone to the suburbs, the last 'buses to the stables, the street cleaners had drenched the streets, which were still wet. London was strangely still at that early hour. The horse clattered along, kept to the gallop by the urging whip.

They swung into Portman Square. The great silent houses looked down on them unwinkingly, not a light in any window.

The driver drew up with a sudden jerk which threw his horse on to its haunches. The boy sprang down and opened the cab door. At the same moment, the front door of the house before which they had stopped opened cautiously and a woman peered out. She held a candle, which she shaded with her hand.

The doctor was out of the cab and half-way up the steps, when he stopped, suddenly suspicious.

"Hello! What's this? The house is empty!"

He ran his quick eyes up the front of the big house, noting the shuttered windows, the white lettered board projecting over the portico above the front door, with its message:

"TO BE LET OR SOLD."

Bills were pasted on to the dining-room windows. A street lamp cast its light upon these signs of a dismantled home.

He hesitated and drew back.

The cabman, dismounting, had thrown the reins to the boy.

"Look after the hoss, Bill," he enjoined, as he followed the doctor up the wide stone steps.

"It's all right, sir," he said encouragingly. "Me an' my missus is caretakers 'ere, sir. The party wot's took bad owns the 'ouse, an' wantin' to sell it, she comes over from France this mornin'—mortal sick she were, wi' crossin' we thinks, an' 'opin' it 'uld pass orf, which it got worse."

The man spoke gruffly and almost pushed the doctor into the wide empty hall, shutting the door as they entered.

The woman with the guttering candle looked at him with scared eyes from under a mass of black unkempt hair. She moved forward, and the doctor with knit brows, followed her along the wide tessellated hall.

They passed into a spacious lounge, where a handful of fire glowed in a broad, rusty grate. A little smoking oil lamp, cast a flickering light upon the empty lounge, revealing a camp bedstead hastily put up. On the hard

mattress lay a young woman of such startling and unearthly beauty, that the doctor uttered a smothered exclamation of surprise.

The waxen face was still, the long eye-lashes did not flicker as they lay on the white cheeks. He approached, believing for the moment that he was looking on the face of a corpse. Then he bent over the bed, his keen eyes fixed upon the woman.

As he looked, the heavy white lids slowly lifted, and, as if his intent gaze had drawn them to him, great purple eyes were raised and looked sombrely into his. For the space of a dozen heart-beats they so regarded each other—then the white lips moved, but no sound came from them. To the astonished man they seemed to be framing a question, but he could not catch its meaning.

The woman who had brought him in set the candle down and moved into the shadow.

Lifting the coverlet, the doctor laid his fingers on the delicate wrist and felt for the pulse, now, save for a faint flutter, almost undiscernible.

Turning to the shrinking woman in the shadow, he spoke in low, stern tones.

"What is the meaning of all this? Why wasn't a doctor called in before?"

The woman began to sniff and whimper audibly.

"Shut up, 'Liza," said the cabman's gruff voice. He stood at the entrance of the great empty lounge, where he had followed the doctor.

"Look, 'ere, guv'nor," he began in a bullying manner; "we fetched you 'ere to do summat for that there young 'ooman, not to ax a lot o' questions we ain't a-goin' to h'answer." His tone was insolent.

"I can do nothing now," said the doctor, angrily suspicious. "The woman should be in a good hospital, she is in a most critical condition. I doubt if she will live till morning. My opinion is," here he looked fixedly at the cowering woman, "that a murderous, unlawful thing, has taken place. This is a case for investigation," he added significantly, as he turned to leave the lounge.

"Ho!—is—it?" muttered the cabman defiantly, as he followed the doctor down the dark hall.

"And the police," added the doctor imprudently, exasperated at the man's tone.

"The perlice—is it—now?" growled the man angrily.

The doctor was about to turn round to him, when a crashing blow descended upon him from behind.

He fell, and striking his head heavily upon the tessellated floor, lay there, prone and unconscious!

CHAPTER III.

P. C. Jones Makes a Discovery.

POLICE CONSTABLE JONES set down his bull's-eye lantern to clap his long arms violently across his chest. He had been tramping to and fro on his lonely beat, and the air was decidedly raw and nippy this April morning in the small hours before the dawn.

A young constable, recently married, Jones was on night duty, the law's appointed guardian of the sleeping residents of Barnes. Without admitting by any means that he was nervous, he frankly owned to himself that some little company besides his own would be welcome. It seemed somewhat hard to him that other men were snug and warm in their beds, while he had to tramp up and down, through the lonely hours for their protection.

This thought, conjoined with some anxiety for his young wife, whom he pictured fretting at his absence, made him feel irritable, as evinced by the energy with which he stamped his chilled feet to encourage the circulation.

With his head on one side he stopped to count while a neighbouring clock struck four. Thank goodness, in another hour he would be relieved.

The night was paling into a glimmering semi-darkness, in which the various objects about him loomed out with weird indefiniteness that added an eerie feeling to his lonely vigil. It was the time when spirits that had