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VOL. XII., No. 8

### Chronicles of An Old-Timer

Alexander McCarthy and Other Associates of the Olden Time—Some of Our Athletic Exercises and Those Who Participated in Them—The First Mall Conductors of Toronto—Allusion to Eugene O'Keefe and Other Successful Men of the Time—Death of Erastus Wiman, a Life-Long Friend—Origin of the Clear Grit Party and Name—Wiman's Career—His Interview with Lady Thurlow in London.

Chicago, Feb. 20, 1904.  
Editor Register:  
A paragraph in your last issue informs me that a gentleman from Chicago named McCarthy has returned to your city, who was the son of Alexander McCarthy, a former government official. I never met the gentleman here, although I would like to have done so, because I knew not only his father, but also his mother, and before they were married as well as after. Some of the other people coming here from other towns are shy of seeking out old family acquaintances or those whose names may have been familiar to them at home. I would have liked very much to have known the gentleman here.

Alexander McCarthy was a man with whom I was familiar in my younger days and for whom I had a good deal of respect. He was a well-educated man, tall, athletic and well poised. I think he was the first secretary of the Catholic Institute organized in 1851, and performed the duties of his office in a satisfactory manner. He was at that time doing a small mercantile business on King street east, but subsequently secured the position of mail conductor on the Northern Railroad, between Toronto and Collingwood, and I believe received promotion from time to time. He was a member of the Young Men's St. Patrick's Society and used to be a leader in our athletic games. We used to have football, hurling and handball matches. The elder McCarthy was the champion handball player of Canada. He was very agile and quick, and possessing a long reach, seldom missed a stroke, and was a ready with the "kithough" as wit the right hand.

This reminds me of the game of football we once had in Queen's Park with members of the St. George's Society, when Michael Murphy was captain of the St. Patrick's boys and James Hodgson was captain of the St. George's boys. It was a well-contested match, the St. Patrick's boys, however, winning. The Irish boys were more supple, being more slender and agile, and keeping their wind better. Mr. Hodgson was not satisfied with the result and wanted another match, but it never came off. The greatest match the Young Men's St. Patrick's Society ever had was a hurling match with an Irish club of Buffalo on the Canadian side of Niagara Falls. We had an excursion to the Falls that day and had a good crowd along. A good many were present from Buffalo, too. I think it was a draw game, or our boys quit, dissatisfied with the methods of the Buffalo men, who were heavy, powerful men, that descended to roughness. Your correspondent did not see that match played, having arrived on the ground too late, but Mr. Eugene O'Keefe, who was one of the managers on the Toronto side declared to me it was too rough a game for civilized people to practice. Of course that depended altogether on how men handled their "comans" and used their feet and observed the rules of the game. It continues to be yet played in Ireland, and I cannot but think it the most manly game ever played. I remember once seeing a large ball driven out of sight in the air, and to see the players watching that ball to come down, with their hurleys all in poise, was a spectacle to behold.

Among the other men I knew to secure positions of mail conductors on that Northern Railroad were William Mitchell and Patrick Hynes. I think both had been at one time or another aspirants for the city council. Mr. Hynes was elected for St. Patrick's Ward, but I forget whether it was as

alderman or councillor, in both classes being then chosen, the difference being that an alderman was a magistrate while a councillor was not. Mr. Mitchell was something of a leader in his day, but was rather impractical in his methods. His wife was a Miss Lalor, whose family resided on Spadina avenue, and was a sister of Dr. Lalor, one of our young professional men, who died before his time.

One of our prominent young men of Catholic Institute and Young Men's St. Patrick's Society days was Mr. Eugene O'Keefe, your successful millionaire brewer of to-day. Mr. O'Keefe had a number of commendable qualities. He was a musician and vocalist and one of the best singers in St. Michael's choir. He was a gentleman of good taste in many things, attentive to the affairs of his Church, a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and by the young ladies considered "a good catch." With Mr. O'Keefe Old Timer's relations for a while were very intimate and he conceived a great respect for him. Before going into the brewing business he was interested in hotel-keeping and banking, and was a clerk for some years in the institution that he is now president of, and this reminds me that I remember the day Col. James Mason, the present manager of the institution, stepped into his shoes as clerk of the Toronto Savings Bank. Both men have been successful in the affairs of life and it is pleasant to reflect that some members of the group of young men to which I belonged a generation ago are yet in the land of the living and wearing the tokens of a prosperous career.

There were two other young men of the fifties and sixties that I desire to remind old Torontonians of and who are worthy of at least a passing notice. These were Patrick J. Kavanaugh and James Tracy. The former was an orator, the latter a young man possessed of all the virtues. The former came first to notice at the time of the young fellows' St. Patrick's day celebration in 1851, or thereabout. The writer was on the committee to hunt up speaking talent, and discovered Mr. Kavanaugh, then twenty-four or twenty-five years of age. He was a hardy son of toil, being an axe-maker by trade. He made us a speech that electrified the audience and was henceforth a favorite. He was not a random talker, but studied his subject, his language and his delivery carefully, and was at that time the best speaker among us. He married a Miss Lennon, a sister of Dr. Lennon and a very beautiful young woman, but I believe that was the limit of his ambition. When last I knew of him he was a Toronto policeman.

James Tracy was a man of Websterian mould. He was large, muscular, erect, and swart, with a large head, black hair, and beaming black eyes. He did not have much to say, but what was wise or pleasant. He was as sensitive as a woman and as chaste as an anchorite. I loved his company, and being near neighbors at one time, we were often together. Sometimes I had little domestic battles to fight in old societies and who was never without his support. The most notable of these little battles was in the Catholic Institute one night when I was on the programme for an essay on "The Catholic Chapter in the History of America." Mr. Donley, the publisher of the "Mirror" newspaper, and myself had a falling out. He was offended because I had become agent for D'Arcy McGee's paper, "The American Celt," and had secured the subscription of nearly every prominent Catholic in Toronto to it. He brought a band of supporters to the meeting, headed by a man named Frank Sullivan, to pass a resolution against my being heard, but what the pretext was I now forget. James Tracy got up and said that was the most unheard of proceeding he ever knew. D. K. Feehan, James Hallinan and others, participated in the discussion and the occasion was a complete triumph for "Old Timer," all due to James Tracy. The last time that I was out with him was a memorable one. It was on a visit to the Parliament House on Front street, one evening when the House was in session. We were walking up and down the sidewalk in front of the building, eagerly discussing our own little affairs, when suddenly a great noise came from within, and hastened thither to see what was up. The members of the Assembly, or rather, perhaps, the Committee on the public accounts, were gathered in the south-east corner of the chamber, and appeared to be very excited. "Bill" Powell, nicknamed "The Beauty of Carlton," had the floor, and was being rated by Geo. Brown and the Brow family in the most scandalous manner and when he got through was succeeded by John A. Macdonald, the

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premier, in the same manner. Both were tipsy. Mr. Brown repelled in the most feeling manner I ever heard and made a most decided impression. This was a great but disgraceful scene and stirred the country. George Shepard was then editor and proprietor of the "Daily Colonist." Hitherto his paper had been supporting the administration, but next morning it came out with a different flag at its masthead, and under the editorial heading appeared that celebrated article which is sometimes heard of yet. "Whither are we Drifting?" There were very few visitors in the house that night and Mr. Tracy and myself were almost the only spectators looking on. We had no great love for Mr. Brown, especially at that time, but we could not help the moistening of our eyes as his words touched our hearts. Mr. Tracy did not live long after that. He died young. He was a brother of Mr. Connor Tracy of Hamilton, a well known merchant of that city and a brother-in-law of Mr. Mathew O'Connor of your city, one of the old stand-bys that belonged to that active group of young men of the tall, erect frame and blonde beard, and more humble days. I leave you as samples of the aspiring men of our stock when difficulties were greater and prejudices stronger, such men as Eugene O'Keefe, James Mason and Lawrence Hayden, the man of the tall, erect frame and blonde beard, is not yet in the land of the living? But there are others that will be attended to later on when they come within the ken of other recollections.

I have a strong desire here to touch on the career of another Torontonian who was not of our fold, but who was for fifty-four years one of my personal friends. He died the other day in New York in poverty, as I am likely to die myself, and I have therefore the greater respect to the memory of Erastus Wiman. He certainly experienced the ups and downs of life. From a printer boy in Toronto he arose to be the adviser and confidant of the great money-changer and capitalist of New York, his history is well-known to me. I first made his acquaintance in the year 1849, in a four-story building on the north-east corner of King and Church streets, where there was a congregation of printing offices and lawyers' offices. Wiman was then in the service of William McDougall, who was his first cousin. McDougall was then publishing the "Canadian Agriculturist," and about that time started "The North American," the original "clear-grit" newspaper in opposition to the "Globe," which was the Baldwin-Lafontaine ministerial organ at that time. Hugh B. Wilson of Hamilton, whose father had been a speaker of the Upper Canada Assembly before the union of the provinces, had just started his Tory annexation newspaper, "The Independent," and that was what brought Old Timer to Toronto. We often met and formed a friendship, that is Wiman and myself. When Robert Baldwin retired from public life in 1844 a coalition government was formed and Brown went into opposition, and became the leader of the "clear Grits." It was Wiman that told me how that name the Canadian politics came to be coined. They had an anti-Clergy Reserves political society in those days that used to meet in Old Temperance hall on Temperance street. That was before "the split" but "the split" was then upon its way. The question was whether or no the Clergy Reserves question should be made a ministerial issue. I left an open question, for you know the Reformers were then in power under Robert Baldwin and Louis H. Lafontaine. The radicals headed by Malcolm Cameron and Michael Hamilton Foley, insisted it should be made a ministerial question and one to be tried in a trial of strength. The momentous time had arrived and George Brown, looking around, remarked, "Ah, I see the clear Grits

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"When you were born I was a Toronto newsboy and used to leave the paper regularly at your father's house. One New Year's morning, I think it was in 1848, I called around the paper as usual, but that night there was a great fall of snow and I got stuck in a snow-drift opposite Elmsley Villa, from which I was extricated by a bury footman, taken into a hall and set in front of a big stove to thaw out. While sitting there I saw a doctor come down stairs, who exclaimed, 'Thank God it is all over now,' and then I heard a little infant's cry which must have been yours. Lord Elgin gave me a gold sovereign for my New Year's gift."

### Mr. Monk's Letter of Resignation

Montreal, Feb. 19.—Mr. F. D. Monk has asked that upon the opening of Parliament on March 10th he be assigned to the seat occupied by the late Mr. Cargill, instead of the one he has occupied as one of the leaders of the Opposition. The following letter, handed by Mr. Monk to Mr. R. B. Borden, was made public to-night:

"My Dear Mr. Borden.—The news that another session of Parliament is to take place, and that the general elections are indefinitely postponed, permits me to do something that I have forborne for some time, because I thought, like many others, that the electoral campaign was to begin immediately. Since 1900 I have done my best to fulfill my duties as chief of our party in this province, and I have nothing but praise for the courtesies and considerations that have been extended to me by the people of the Province of Quebec; but there are in our party here certain elements which clearly are not in sympathy with me, but which are hostile to me. The task of directing the Opposition at the present hour in Quebec is a very difficult one, the success of which depends on complete unanimity. In the circumstances I have come to the conclusion that it is better for me to accept only the duties of an ordinary member of Parliament, and I ask you, as chief of the Opposition, to assist me in my determination. I feel that I can make myself more useful in the ranks of the party, I shall continue to apply myself to the defence of the interests of my electors, who have so generously supported me in the past, and who are entitled to all my consideration. Yours most devotedly,  
(Signed) F. D. MONK."

### President Loudon and Irish Canadians

To the Editor of The Catholic Register:—Will you allow me a few lines in the next issue of your journal in order to direct the absurd charge that on the occasion of Mr. Yeats' lecture a week ago I, an Irish Canadian, gave a "rough thrust" to my fellow countrymen by hinting "that the Irish in America—indeed Canada—have become indifferent to religion and nationality." Nothing could be further from the truth than such a charge. The facts are as follows: In introducing Mr. Yeats I remarked that he, unlike the great Irish orators of other days, drew his inspiration from the old legends in which the chief actors were kings and queens, saints and demons, giants, ghosts and fairies. The saints referred to were of course as mythical as the fairies. Saint Kevin, who, as Mr. Yeats tells us, "made King O'Toole's old goose as good as new," was the greatest of them. In asserting, as I did, that the Irish Canadian had grown skeptical about these legendary beings, there could be no reflection either on his religion or his nationality—the only "thrust" implied was that the powers of his imagination had deteriorated, and required regeneration. There was another "thrust" however, which might well have made but did not, and that was that most of the representative Irish of Toronto were "conspicuous by their absence" from Mr. Yeats' lecture. Yours faithfully,  
J. LOUDON.  
Feb. 22, 1904.

### NORTH BRANT

#### Father T. L. Ferguson's First Mass.

(From a special correspondent.)  
Malcolm, Feb. 17.—The 20th of January past was a day long to be remembered by the Catholic congregation of North Brant. On that day Rev. Thomas L. Ferguson, son of Mr. Joseph Ferguson of this parish, and nephew of Rev. Fr. Ferguson of Sandwich College, celebrated his first Mass in the church of his native parish. The Rev. Father Kelly parish priest, preached an eloquent sermon on the duties and responsibilities of the priesthood. At the conclusion of the service a deputation from the congregation advanced to the altar railing, when Mr. D. Sullivan, of Malcolm, read the following address: "The Rev. Father—Our parish of North Brant has ever been singularly blessed by Divine Providence. Each one can look back with grateful heart upon countless blessings and favors which have flowed in upon us in a steady stream ever since the little log church arose in our midst and one of God's ministers was sent amongst us to teach us the way of life. But to-day we feel that we are favored in a very special way. After a due course of preparation a child of our parish stands in our midst invested in the sacred prerogatives of the priesthood. You have received, sir, the signal honor of being the first priest which this parish has produced; and we who have grown

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up side by side with you, who have been witnesses of your sociable qualities as well as your many virtues, I salute you to-day with mingled sentiments of joy and reverence. We rejoice that the Almighty has designed to bestow upon us one more mark of his favor, a brother paragon of election upon a brother parishioner, and at the same time joy is tempered with a feeling of deep reverence as we realize the high and holy dignity to which you have been raised. We extend to you, reverend father, the respectful congratulations of this parish, which has the happiness to number among its children a good and virtuous priest. We congratulate your good, pious and respected parents on this the happiest day of their lives, and we pray that God will bless you with health and length of days that you may work long and faithfully in his vineyard.

As we find it difficult to give proper expression to the sentiments of our hearts we would ask you to accept of something more substantial than mere words. We, therefore, beg leave to present you with this overcoat and gashlets, also this watch and purse as a token of our respect and esteem. Hoping, dear Father, to be remembered in your prayers, we are your obedient servants.  
Signed on behalf of the congregation, John V. Reilly, Daniel Sullivan, Peter McGarrity, Andrew O'Neill.

### OBITUARY

#### MOTHER FRANCIS.

Mother Francis, Superior of St. Joseph's Orphanage, Indian Mission, Fort William, died at St. Joseph's Hospital, Port Arthur, on Feb. 11th. Deceased had been ill only a few days with pneumonia, and her death came as a great shock to her many friends in both towns.

This good religious had a most beautiful death. After receiving Holy Viaticum she renewed her religious vows, and breathing forth fervent aspirations to her Heavenly Spouse, she passed away like one in a calm, sweet sleep.

The name of Mother Francis in the world was Miss Hanna Burke. She was born in Pickering fifty-six years ago. She joined the Community of St. Joseph in Toronto in 1873. She was one of the little band of missionary Sisters who came to Fort William in 1885.

Mother Francis was a most amiable person and was beloved by all who knew her. She was charity personified, and in her death the Indians especially will lose a good friend. Their genuine sorrow when kneeling by her coffin was very touching. The corpse of the deceased was taken from the hospital to the Indian Mission convent, thence to the church, where a Solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated by Rev. Father Lamarche, Superior of the Mission.

The procession from convent to church was solemn. The clergy preceded the coffin chanting the Miserere, then followed pall-bearers (six Sisters) and a number of Sisters carrying lighted tapers. The church was beautifully draped with black and white. The singing of the Mass by the priests and Indian choir was soul-stirring. A fine sermon was preached by Rev. Father Lamarche. In attendance at the funeral were the Jesuit Fathers Arpin, Neault, Dugas and Lafontaine, also the Jesuit Brothers. The mayor of Port Arthur and a number of other prominent citizens accompanied the remains to the vault at Port Arthur cemetery—R. I. R.

#### DEATH OF MRS. T. P. COFFEE.

Mrs. T. P. Coffee, wife of Mr. Coffee, Manager of the Trusts & Guarantee Company, died on Saturday morning at the family residence, 41 Maple avenue, Rosedale. Beside her husband, she has left an only child, an infant daughter. Mrs. Coffee was a daughter of the late Mr. B. B. Hughes, Toronto, and sister of Mr. Vincent Hughes, barrister, Montreal; Mrs. H. R. O'Reilly, Galt, and Miss Hughes, Toronto.

The funeral took place on Tuesday morning from the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, the Solemn Mass being attended by a large congregation of sorrowing friends.—R. I. P.

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