

ARCHIBALD MacMURCHY, M.A., LL.D.

THE passing of Dr. MacMurchy in April last removed from our midst one who for half a century was among the most conspicuous figures in Canadian secondary education, who during that period was a devoted friend of the University of Toronto and intimately associated therewith, and who by reason of his distinguished services in his profession deserves a more extended notice than the pages of the MONTHLY permit.

Dr. MacMurchy was born at Clachan in Kintyre, Argyleshire, in 1832—of the clan Macdonald. Gaelic was his native language; and though he left Scotland when a young boy, he continued in early manhood to think in Gaelic—curiously shown by his using that language if he spoke in sleep. Though he was an accomplished Gaelic scholar, one would hardly say that his accent in later life exhibited traces of his early tongue. When Mr. Dickson Patterson was painting Mr. MacMurchy's portrait, the conversation fell on the Doctor's recently developed devotion to golf; and knowing well our friend's character, Mr. Patterson wickedly inquired how the Doctor expressed himself if a bad stroke were made. "Well," replied the subtle Highlander, "you know I always have the Gaelic to fall back on." It met the demands of the emotions without the employment of objectionable language.

Mr. MacMurchy came to Canada in 1840, when his grandfather and eleven sons emigrated from Scotland.