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VOL. XIII., No. 34

TORONTO, THURSDAY, AUGUST 24, 1905

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## TOPICS OF AN OLD-TIMER

**Death of Charles Durand, a Patriarch of Ninety-five years, with whom I was long acquainted—Born near Hamilton and Educated at Dundas—Studied Law in Hamilton and Admitted to the Bar in Toronto—Of French Huguenot Descent—A Patriot in '37 and Imprisoned and Exiled for being Friendly to McKenzie—His Interesting Volume of Reminiscences—His Denunciations of the "Family Compact"**

I desire in this week's issue to pay a tribute to the memory of an old acquaintance who died in this city on Wednesday, Aug. 16, at the advanced age of 95 years. I mean the late Charles Durand, whom I had known personally for more than fifty years and by reputation longer.

I had heard "Charley" Durand talked about long before I knew who he was. He was a man who had figured when I was a boy, and in the same locality. He was born near Hamilton and it was there I learned the rudiments of the "art preservative." I first saw him in a local printing office as I had seen George Brown, and heard him display his volubility. He saw perilous times and suffered imprisonment and banishment for bearing a manly part, although he declared to the last that he had taken no part in fomenting the rebellion of 1837, and was therefore wrongly arrested and falsely imprisoned.

I believe Mr. Durand was the last of the men of '37. Like others, he has left a volume of memoirs. I remember when I was in a Buffalo printing office in 1849, seeing there heaps of unbound books written by persons engaged in the Canadian outbreak of the previous decade, detailing their grievances and sufferings under the so-called Family Compact, and I supposed had not been taken off the printers' hands after being printed, and it was evident that many persons had crossed the borders after the ill-starred enterprise of William Lyon McKenzie. Some put the figure as high as 25,000.

The late Mr. Durand was a lawyer by profession, a publisher from taste, a temperance advocate from a sense of duty, and a lover of liberty from sentiment. He was a man to make sacrifices for his principles. But I do not think he was altogether free from prejudices and a share of crankiness. He published a volume of reminiscences a few years ago which is very interesting to a man like myself, who knew so many of the persons mentioned, the locations described, and the circumstances narrated. I do not think that Mr. Durand cared anything for the Irish and positively disliked the Catholics, although he is not so pronounced in his hostility to the latter as he is to the Church of England people; to the late Bishop Strachan and his followers, whom he seemed to hate with a deadly design, I suppose mostly because the members of the Family Compact largely belonged to that Church. In his memoirs he says when in exile in Chicago in 1840 and later, the Irish there were very numerous and befriended him and wanted to support him in a law office; but he declined their services. I do not notice a sympathetic word from him in their favor in the whole of his big and otherwise very interesting book. As a literary undertaking, however, it is exceedingly inartistic, a jumble of statements without regulation or order; a mixture of family incidents, speculative theology, natural history, migrations, misfortunes and farming, as well as politics, temperance and "poetry."

Mr. Durand's father was of Welsh birth, but like General Roberts, the commander of the British army, is of French descent from the Huguenots, who were banished from France in the sixteenth century, and spread everywhere, including Ireland and

America, and whose descendants have made and are making a big race mark wherever they are found. A literary United States Senator has asserted that French blood has done more for America than any other, without making any particular references.

His father was named James D. Durand, and was a reformer and inclined to participate in public affairs like his son, and as the latter was known by the diminutive "Charley," so was the father known by the diminutive "Jimmy," and before the forties was much talked about as he was a prominent member of the Upper Canada Parliament, representing the counties of Wentworth and Halton, lying on the south and north sides of Burlington Bay and including Hamilton. The father's family, after coming to Canada, first settled in the Bay of Quinte district, then went to near Dundas for a while, then Norfolk county, and afterwards Ancaster and Hamilton. The subject of this sketch was born on a farm belonging to a man named Mills, near Dundas, where he first went to school. The details of Mr. Durand's earlier life as told in this book, read like romance to me. How many now know that Dundas and Ancaster are older places than Hamilton, and that they had newspapers when Hamilton had none; yet this is the fact. One of the first poems written in Upper Canada was entitled "Hamilton," the author of which was an Irishman named Stevenson. I remember reading a copy of it some sixty years ago, and it contained many local bits, one of which described how some parties tried "by hook or by crook" to get the gold located in Flamboro West. This, of course, had reference to the Crooks family, that was so influential in that part of the country in those days. Mr. Durand's father first bought the farm that gave Hamilton its name and on which the town was started, and afterwards sold it to George Hamilton. If he had retained it the "Ambitious City" might now be named Durand! I knew a number of the Hamiltons—George, Peter, Josey and others. They were a Scotch family that settled early in the Niagara District. Most of the earliest settlers of Hamilton were, however, Pennsylvania Dutch farmers, who left streaks of settlements in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois in those days, as well as Upper Canada. I remember many of their names: Aikmans, Hesses, Spahns, Rymals, etc. Nearly all the farmers on the "Mountain" at first were Pennsylvania Dutch, who stopped there on the way of the immigration to Waterloo county.

One of the earliest families in Hamilton mentioned by Mr. Durand in his book was the Mills family. There were three brothers of them that I knew, and one named "Mike" that had died. Mr. Durand's father occupied a large farm that had belonged to a Mills that left the province and went to the States at the breaking out of the war of 1812. The brother of the Hon. Samuel Mills named "Mike" was suspected of being a rebel sympathizer, although Mr. Durand says they were all loyal. Samuel Mills was a large property owner, but did not command much respect, although Mr. Hinks made a Legislative Councillor of him, and made his brother John Collector of Customs at the port of Hamilton. Samuel Mills was a very small man in more ways than one and was a very exacting landlord. I believe he was murdered by a butcher in a fit of anger over house rent.

The most important Catholic family in Toronto and the County of Essex in early days was the Faby family. I knew some members of it. I believe the late Capt. McNamara, a Waterloo soldier, who resided in Toronto, was married to a Faby. Mr. Durand describes the sad death of a member of this family in Dundas by suicide in the year 1832, as follows:

Writing of the lawyers that he knew in Chicago in the early forties, he speaks of "an Irishman named Ryan, who was noisy but smart." Yes, he was more than smart, he was brilliant. He was the publisher of the first newspaper called "The Tribune" and died a few years ago at Madison, Wisconsin, then for many years Chief Justice of the State of Wisconsin.

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"In Dundas there was no cemetery before 1835. Old Mr. Leslie's body was buried on the hill overlooking the town to the south as you go to Hamilton, and other bodies were buried before that. One I will name. It was a poor, unfortunate young man named Baby, belonging to a very respectable French family of Amherstburg, who for some cause which I do not know, foolishly committed suicide by taking laudanum, when I as a law student was boarding at the old wooden hotel of George Carey of Hamilton. His sad death had a very depressing effect upon me and others. He appeared to be a very fine young man, of noble physique and in the prime days of life. Drs. Rolph of Dundas and Merrick of Hamilton were called in to render any assistance."

Elsewhere he alludes to the late ex-sheriff of the Gore district, Allan McDonnell, as follows: "Ex-Sheriff Angus (Allan) McDonnell, formerly of Hamilton, in early times there, took up the cause of the Indians and remonstrated with the Canadian Government. We moderns are not more careful of the dust of our dead than the ancient Israelites or the Greeks, Romans or Egyptians were. In the lake regions of the country north of Lakes Huron and Superior I recollect that about thirty years ago the Indians there were about to go to war over their ancestors' graves, which were being desecrated as they alleged." I remember well when Mr. McDonnell was Sheriff at Hamilton and afterwards when he used to make excursions to the northern regions of Canada about Lake Superior, especially Bruce Mines. Angus McDonnell was residing in Hamilton at the same time, but it was Allan who was the sheriff. I think either the Babys or the McDonnells were the first Catholic family to reside in Toronto.

One of the very curious circumstances that is suggested to me by an item in this book, has reference to Maiden township. It remarks: "There is an Indian reserve of a large kind kept up by the Huron Indians. The report was signed by William Caldwell, J. P., chairman." I am wondering if this was the celebrated "Billy" Caldwell, Indian Chief, who cut afterwards a very conspicuous figure in the early history of Chicago. The United States Government gave him the control of the Indians in that locality and they were very obedient to him. His father was an Irish officer and his mother an Indian woman, and he was educated in a Jesuit college in Detroit. The United States Government secured his services for Chicago and he was made the first Justice of the Peace for Northern Illinois, in the early thirties. When the Indians were moved across the Missouri he went with them, and when he died was buried at Council Bluffs. He was a very remarkable character. I know that he was from Essex County in Canada.

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## ENGLAND'S PREMIER

**And His Former Close Connection With the Irish National Party—Justin McCarthy's Splendid Picture of the British Premier**

(Concluded from last week.)

Balfour is a man of many and varied tastes and pursuits. He is an advocate of athleticism and is especially distinguished for his devotion to the game of golf. He obtained at one time a certain reputation in London society because of the interest he took in some peculiar phases of fanciful intellectual inventiveness. He was for a while a leading member, if not the actual inventor, of a certain order of psychical research whose members were described as The Souls. More than one a list of the day made picturesque use of this singular order and enlivened the pages of fiction by fancy portraits of its leading members. Such facts as these did much to prevent Balfour from being associated in the public mind with only the rivalries of political parties and the incidents of parliamentary warfare. One sometimes came into social circles where Balfour was regarded chiefly as a man of literary tastes and somewhat eccentric intellectual developments. All this cast a peculiar reflection over his career as a politician and filled many observers with the idea that he was only playing at parliamentary life, and that his other occupations were the genuine realities for him. Even to this day there are some who persist in believing that Balfour, despite his prolonged and unvarying attention to his parliamentary duties, has never given his heart to the prosaic and practical work of administrative office and the business of maintaining his political party. Yet it has always had to be acknowledged that no man attended more carefully and more closely to such work when he had to do it, and that the most devoted worshipper of political success could not have been more regular and constant in his attention to the business of the House of Commons. People said that he was lazy by nature, that he loved long hours of sleep and of general rest, and that he detested the methodical and mechanical routine of official work. But I have not known any Minister of State who was more easy of approach and more ready to enter into the driest details of departmental business than Arthur Balfour. I may say, too, that whenever appeal was made to him to forward any good work or to do any act of kindness, he was always to be found at his post and was ever ready to lend a helping hand if he could.

I remember one instance of this kind which I have no hesitation in mentioning, although I am quite sure Mr. Balfour had little inclination for its obtaining publicity. Not very many years ago it was brought to my knowledge that an English literary woman who had won much and deserved distinction as a novel-writer, had been for some time sinking into ill health, had been therefore prevented from going on with her work, and had in the mean time been perplexed by worldly difficulties and embarrassments which interfered sadly with her prospects and made her a subject of well-merited sympathy. Some friends of the authoress were naturally anxious, if possible, to give her a helping hand, and the idea occurred to them that she would be a most fitting recipient of assistance to be bestowed by a department of the State. One of her friends, himself a distinguished novelist, who happened to be a friend of mine, spoke to me with this object, assuming that, as an old parliamentary hand, I knew more than most writers of books would be likely to know about the manner in which such help might be obtained. There is in England a fund—a very small fund, truly—at the disposal of the Government for the help of deserving authors who happen to be in distress. This fund is at the disposal of the First Lord of the Treasury, the office which was then, as now, held by Arthur Balfour. I was still at that time a member of the House of Commons, and my friend suggested that, as I knew something about the whole business, I might be a suitable person to represent the case to the first Lord of the Treasury and make appeal for his assistance. My friend's belief was that the application might come with more effect from one who had been for a long time a member of Parliament, whose name would therefore be known to the First Lord of the Treasury, than from a literary man who had nothing to do with parliamentary life. Nothing could give me greater pleasure than to become the medium through which the appeal might be brought under notice of the First Lord, but I felt some difficulty and doubt because of the conditions of the time. England was then in the most distracting period of the South African war. We were hearing every day of fresh mishaps and disasters in the campaign. Arthur Balfour was leader of the House of Commons, and had to deal every day with questions, with demands for explanation, with arguments and debate turning on the events of the war. It seemed to me to be rather a venturesome enterprise to attempt to gain the attention of a minister thus perplexingly occupied for a matter of merely private and individual concern. I feared that an overworked statesman might feel naturally inclined to remit the subject to the care of some mere official, and that time might thus be lost and the needed helping hand be long delayed. I undertook the task, however, and I wrote to Mr. Balfour at once. I received the very next day a reply written in Balfour's own hand, expressing his cordial willingness to consider the subject, his sympathy with the purpose of the appeal, and his hope that some help might be given to the distressed novelist. Mr. Balfour promptly took the matter in hand, and the result was that a grant was made from the State fund to secure the novelist against any actual distress. Now, I do not want to make too much of this act of ready kindness done by Mr. Balfour. The appeal was made for a most deserving object; the fund from which help was to be given was entirely at Mr. Balfour's disposal; and it is probable that any other First Lord in the same circumstances would have come to the same decision, but how easy it would have been for Mr. Balfour to put the whole matter into the hands of some subordinate and not to add a new trouble to his own intensely busy life at such an exciting crisis by entering into the close consideration of a mere question of state beneficence I certainly should not have been surprised if I had not received an answer to my letter for several days after I had sent it, and if even then it had come from some subordinate in the Government department. But in the midst of all his incessant and distracting occupations at a most exciting period of public business Mr. Balfour found time to consider the question himself, to reply with his own hand, and to see that the desired help was promptly accorded. I must say that I think this short passage of personal history speaks highly for the kindly nature and the sympathetic promptitude of Arthur Balfour.

For a long time there had been much speculation in these countries concerning the probable successor to Lord Salisbury, whenever Lord Salisbury should make up his mind to resign the position of Prime Minister. We all knew that resignation was sure to come soon, although very few of us had any idea that it was likely to come quite so soon. The general opinion was that the country would not be expected, for some time at least, to put up again with a Prime Minister in the House of Lords. If, therefore, the new Prime Minister were to be found in the House of Commons, there seemed to be only a choice between two men, Arthur Balfour and Joseph Chamberlain. It would be hard to find two men in the House of Commons more unlike each other in characteristic qualities and in training than these two. They are both endowed with remarkable capacity for political life and for parliamentary debate, "but there," as Byron says concerning two of whom one was a Joseph, "I doubt all likeness ends between the pair." Balfour is an aristocrat of aristocrats; Chamberlain is essentially a man of the British middle class—even what is generally called the lower middle class. Balfour has gone through all the regular course of university education; Chamberlain was for a short time at University College School in London, a popular institution of modern origin which does most valuable educational work, but is not largely patronized by the classes who claim aristocratic position. Balfour is a constant reader and a student of many literatures and languages; "Mr. Chamberlain," according to a leading article in a London daily newspaper, "to put it mildly, is not a bookworm." Balfour loves open-air sports and is a votary of athletics; Chamberlain never takes any exercise, even walking exercise, when he can possibly avoid the trouble. The arts, Chamberlain has never, so far as I know, given the slightest indication of interest in any artistic subject. Balfour is by nature a modest and retiring man; Chamberlain is always "Pushful Joe." The stamp and character of a successful municipal politician are always evident in

(Concluded on page 5.)

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