

them realize that here in America those aims and aspirations needed nothing but application to ensure their fulfilment.

II.

I now come to the period when Mr. McGee was invited by that important section of the Canadian population which was of Irish extraction to make Canada his home. They doubtless felt at the time the need of a master mind such as his, and to their call he responded with acquiescence, removing his family to Montreal in 1857.

It could hardly be expected that one whose mind had been so wholly absorbed by the exciting scenes which immediately surrounded him, should have had opportunity, much less leisure, to acquaint himself with the circumstances amidst which he found himself on arrival. In matters political, I conceive that such a thing as intuition is a myth, and the most perceptive intellect can trust only to experience in dealing with questions of history and popular habits. But experience can only come with time, and lessons must be learned and experiments made, though the path be thorny and the footsteps at first faltering and uncertain. One thing, however, smooths the road and lightens the burden—the high purpose and noble resolve. And so it was in McGee's case.

To what could he trust for a livelihood, to all intents a stranger, with a family depending upon him, but to his pen, and shortly a paper, *The New Era*, appears at Montreal. The name was significant. It meant that McGee had returned to live under the flag beneath which he had been born; that he recognised that, whatever the wrongs of his people in Ireland, in Canada they had nothing to complain of; that here they had free institutions, just land laws, the practice of their religion, and that, in view of all this, he was willing—not to think no more of those whose lot was different—but as a Canadian first and above all, to strive for the good of his adopted country, and the welfare of the people among whom he dwelt,—living honestly, loyally, faithfully. Let me quote his own words:

In a speech in Montreal, in 1861, he says—"I know, and you know, that I can never for a moment cease to regard with an affection that amounts almost to idolatry, the land where I spent my best, my first years; where I obtained the partner of my life, and where my first-born saw the light. I cannot but regard that land even with increased love, because she has not been prosperous. Yet I hold we have no right to intrude our Irish patriotism on this soil; for our first duty is to the land where we live and have fixed our homes, and where, while we live, we must find the true sphere of our duties. While always ready, therefore, to say the right word, and do the right act for the land of my forefathers, I am bound above all to the land where I reside."

And in another place—"All we need, mixed up and divided as we naturally are, is, in my humble opinion, the cultivation of a tolerant