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TOPICS OF AN OLD-TIMER

Lord Elgin's Toronto Residence was Elmsley Villa—Erastus Wiman's Interview with Lady Thurlow—No Portraits or Statues of the Men that Surrounded Lord Elgin in Canada now at the Parliament House—Robert Baldwin's Forbears—The Family Left Ireland after the Rebellion of '98—Robert Baldwin's Great Career as the Foremost Canadian Statesman—Father of Responsible Government in the British Colonies—Friend of the French Canadians.

In my last article I stated that Lord Elgin's permanent residence in Toronto was at Elmsley House, corner of King and Simcoe streets. This was an error; I should have said at Elmsley Villa, in the northern part of the city, a little west of Yonge street. This reminds me of an anecdote told by the late Erastus Wiman, in which the location of this residence is involved. Before Mr. Wiman's business took him to New York he and I were intimate friends, and I have pleasure in repeating this story of his own telling in his book "Chances of Success."

Having had occasion in his New York business to visit London, England, on some financial or industrial enterprise, he had to call upon Lord Thurlow, a magnate of that great metropolis. Lord Thurlow invited him to his house to dinner and introduced him to his wife, Lady Thurlow. "Mr. Wiman," the good lady said, "I think I have a right to claim kin with you; I understand you are a Canadian and I am a Canadian too."

"Yes, lady Thurlow," said he, and I am curious to know what Canadian family you belong to."

With a laugh she answered: "I am the youngest daughter of Lord Elgin and was born in Elmsley Villa in Toronto."

"That being the case," the visitor remarked, "I heard your first cry. It was a New Year's morning, after a heavy snow storm, and I was then a newsboy, collecting my New Year's tribute, and I called on your father, Lord Elgin, who was on my list. I got stuck in a snow bank in front of the house and a footman invited me into the big hallway and set me down in front of a big stove to thaw myself out. While sitting there and waiting to see your father, Lord Elgin, a doctor that I knew came running down stairs and exclaimed, 'Thank God it's all over now, and just then I heard a little baby's cry, which no doubt was yours.' He saw Lord Elgin, who put a gold piece in his palm and encouraged him on his way. So Mr. Wiman had good cause to remember Elmsley Villa for the little cry he heard and the gold piece he received.

I have been looking at the portraits hung up in the halls of the Parliament House and the statues in front of the same, and have not seen any of Lord Elgin, nor any of the statesmen by whom he was surrounded, when he was the Governor-General of British North America, and have felt grieved at this omission. There is none of Robert Baldwin, the father of Responsible Government, who was born here, grew up and came to maturity in the midst of Toronto people. I know well the spot where he was born, as I resided alongside of it for years. It is at the foot of Frederick street, on what is now Front street, but which was then known as Palace street. The date of his birth was May 12, 1804. The house was his grandfather's—a Mr. Wilcox. This gentleman was a native of Cork, Ireland, who in 1799 conceived the project of founding a settlement, like Col. Talbot of Malahide, in Canada. He was promised a tract of land on condition that he should settle it with emigrants. When he arrived in the country with a body of immigrants, he found that the Order-in-Council authorizing such projects had been rescinded. Some of the emigrants returned to Ireland, their passage back being paid by Mr. Wilcox. Others settled in the United States, but Mr. Wilcox and a few followers came on to Upper Canada and received allotments of land.

Among those was Mr. William Warren Baldwin, father of the future great Canadian statesman, and who married a daughter of this Mr. Wilcox, by whom he had five sons, only two of whom survived him, Robert and William Augustus.

While a good deal is known of Robert Baldwin in Canada, but little is known of his father, who appears to have been a man of versatility and talent. He was at once a doctor, lawyer and a teacher, and practised all three professions in the early days of his residence in York. He was a Protestant in religion, but a man of enlightened liberality and had a due share of sympathy for his suffering Catholic fellow countrymen. He came to Canada in 1788, the year after the disastrous rebellion of '98, with his father and family. His father (Robert Baldwin's grandfather) was Robert Baldwin of Knockmore in the Parish of Carlingford, near Cork city. Dr. William Warren Baldwin was his eldest son, who had already been practising medicine a year or two at home. He had a younger son named John Pured Baldwin, who at the time of his emigration was quite young. It would not be improper to designate this Robert Baldwin (the grandfather of the Canadian statesman) as Robert, the Immigrant. He settled on a farm in the Township of Clarke. There he remained until the time of the war of 1812, when he came to Toronto, then York, the capital of Upper Canada, with his family. His son, William Warren, had preceded him, however, and was here practising his profession. The old gentleman's death, however, took place in the year 1816. In addition to medicine, the son took up the study of law and after a time was admitted to practice, and soon became distinguished among lawyers, for he was for many years treasurer of the Law Society of Upper Canada. The Hon. Peter Russell, who had been prominent in public affairs and had filled offices of trust, including the administration of the government, was his cousin. This gentleman came to the province as secretary to Sir Henry Clinton, William Warren, when practising both law and medicine, undertook the keeping of a small select school and some persons who afterwards became distinguished were his scholars, including Chief Justice MacLean. And, indeed, it may be added, he too, was prominent in public affairs and in opposition to the Family Compact. At that time, as is well known to every student of Canadian politics, both Upper and Lower Canada were under the control of a haughty oligarchy, and it was in the Cork blood to be on the opposite side of such pretensions. Dr. Baldwin had an enlightened grasp on the principles of popular government, and these he bequeathed to his son Robert. And it must not be forgotten that in those days in Canada acts of tyranny were common and glaring.

Robert Baldwin, the statesman, was called to the bar of Upper Canada, in 1825, and practised law with his father, under the name of Baldwin & Son. They afterward associated with them Robert Baldwin Sullivan, a cousin of the Hon. Robert, Robert Baldwin married a sister of Sullivan, by whom he had two sons and two daughters. One of the daughters became the wife of John Ross of Belleville, afterwards the Hon. John Ross, who was prominent in his day. One of the sons chose the sea for a profession. But there were many Baldwins and it would take several columns to describe them all. But I may mention that Col. Baldwin of the Gore of Toronto, although a native of Cork County, Ireland, was no relative, and was a Roman Catholic in religion.

In the year 1824 the Hon. Robert Baldwin entered politics by becoming a candidate for the Parliament of Upper Canada and the County of York, with James E. Small, when both were beaten by two famous men, William Lyon Mackenzie and Jesse Ketchum, the latter an American and locally famous. In the following year a vacancy occurred in York City on the count of the resignation of Hon. John Beverley Robinson to become Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench. On this occasion his opponent was Mr. Small, who had been his colleague the year before. Party lines, evidently, had not assumed form and consistency at this time among politicians. Mr. Baldwin was elected, but had to be re-elected on account of an informality in the writ. The next year the death of His Majesty George IV. occurred and there was a dissolution of the House of Assembly. At the election which followed Mr. Baldwin was defeated by the late Sheriff W. B. Jarvis, who was one of the Family Compact. He did not seek to re-enter parliament until the union of the provinces. He labored, however, to make the Executive dependent on the will of the people, when such an advocacy was considered revolutionary.

In the year 1835 Mr. Baldwin visited Europe, taking in the continent

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as well as the British Isles. While in England he carried on a correspondence with Lord Glenelg, the Colonial Secretary, but was denied an interview with that gentleman, who ought to have been glad to meet him. But such was official autocracy in those days. On his return to Canada he found Sir Francis Bond Head, the vain little coxcomb, Governor, at war with the popular assembly. Head was no politician, much less a statesman. However, he made overtures to Mr. Baldwin to become one of his advisers. The latter said he would accept on certain conditions; but those conditions were not accepted by the Lieutenant-Governor. Baldwin had no confidence in the men he was expected to associate with. They were Peter Robinson, Commissioner of Crown Lands, G. H. Monkland, Inspector-General, and Joseph Wells, Bursar of King's College. Mr. Baldwin desired a complete change of administration, and wanted as colleagues Dr. Rolph, Mr. Midwell, Mr. Dunn and his father, Dr. Baldwin. After further negotiations the Lieutenant-Governor accepted as members of the Executive Council with Mr. Baldwin, Messrs. Rolph and Dunn. These gentlemen gave the Governor to understand that they desired to be consulted on all appointments and on all public affairs. But Sir Francis continued to make appointments on his own responsibility only, and these were censured by the Assembly. The duties of the Council were restricted to land matters and they were kept in ignorance of administrative acts for which the public held them responsible. The whole council, including the three old members, remonstrated against this. The Governor would not yield, and the resignation of the whole Council followed. This breach extended to the House of Assembly, which was recently elected and contained a majority of Reformers.

When the union of the provinces took place in 1841 and Mr. Baldwin was in the Cabinet headed by Mr. Draper, and Lord Sydenham was Governor-General, the first Parliament was held in Kingston. Soon after the meeting of that parliament Mr. Baldwin tendered his resignation, for which act he was severely criticized by some of his Conservative colleagues. In his speech of justification he said: "He had accepted office after the Government began to be administered by the present Governor-General. The views which were entertained on the subject of Responsible Government by the Governor-General—views already expressed in Lord Durham's report—those views were not practical application from the time of his taking office up to the commencement of the present session. Having accepted office he had formed no coalition with the gentlemen who then composed the Council of His Excellency. He had always acted with a party which was entirely opposed to them. The Union of the Provinces having been declared, he was called on to take his seat in the executive cabinet. He then reiterated to those gentlemen his original opinions, and that he had not changed the position which he held in respect to them. At that time there was no parliament of Canada which might give expression to the confidence of the people; but when the result of the late election became known, when it was ascertained of what materials the House of Assembly was composed, it then became his duty to inform the head of the government that the administration would not possess the confidence of the House of Assembly, and to tender the resignation of his office, having first, as according to the duties of his office, he was bound to do, offered his advice to His Excellency that the administration of the country should be reconstructed. This advice was not adopted. His resignation followed and was accepted. A speaker had been proposed whose opinions with respect to the government were denounced, because he had no confidence in the administration. But the administration did not dare propose another. Some might look upon this as a trifling matter, but he considered it very grave."

The composition of the Legislature at this time was largely Liberal, even Toronto having returned two Reform members in the persons of John Henry Dunn, a prominent supporter of Mr. Baldwin, and Isaac Buchanan,

then known as "the prince of merchants." Mr. Baldwin himself had been elected for two constituencies, Hastings and North York; selecting, however, to sit for the latter.

Now, he evidently thought, was the time to strike for the formation of a cabinet devoted to the principles of Responsible Government. He wanted several members of the present administration removed and their places filled by Lower Canadians, whose province was not then represented. A great public meeting was convened in Elliott's Hotel, Toronto, to sustain Mr. Baldwin's position. The chairman of the meeting was Captain Eccles, father of the late Henry Eccles, Q.C., and a series of resolutions was prepared by a committee of which James Beatty, Mr. McLellan, a well-known Reform lawyer, Martin J. O'Beirne, Charles Dunleavy, publisher of the "Mirror," and James Lesslie, publisher of the "Examiner," were members.

On the 3rd of September, 1841, Mr. Baldwin moved and passed a series of resolutions emphatically affirming the principles of Responsible Government. Lord Sydenham died on the 7th of September, 1841, by a fall from his horse. He was a born statesman.

A Tory Imperial Government, with Sir Robert Peel at its head, sent out Sir Charles Bagot as his successor. The coalition was yet in office in Canada, and among the members of the administration was Robert Baldwin-Sullivan, who was Commissioner of Crown Lands. In June, 1842, Mr. Hincks joined the administration as Inspector-General. Several appointments calculated to conciliate the French, were also made. The next parliament met on the 8th of September, 1842. A debate took place which resulted in the Reformers coming into power with Mr. Baldwin at their head. This was the famous Baldwin-LaFontaine Government described in a previous paper. It was Baldwin's hour of triumph. The advice he had given twelve months before as to the necessity for conciliating the French-Canadians, and of conducting the affairs of the country in accordance with constitutional principles, was acknowledged to be not only sound, but imperative, by those very persons who had bitterly opposed them.

LaFontaine said: "How could I accept office (which had been offered him) from the Draper Administration while the member (Baldwin) who stood forward in defense of Lower Canada was excluded from the government?" The attempt to draw away his Lower Canadian supporters had failed, and there was not a single Lower Canadian in the Executive Council at that time.

The subsequent career of Mr. Baldwin, his contention with Sir Charles Metcalfe, and his success with Lord Elgin, has been already described.

The Baldwin family was a numerous one and members of it have been prominent in various avocations of life. There was William Warren Baldwin, father of our great statesman, who was as liberal in his political views as his son; there was Admiral Baldwin, brother of the foregoing, who came to Canada in 1817; Captain Henry Baldwin of the merchant service, who came later; Rev. Arthur Henry Baldwin, who was born in Toronto, but was no connection of the Robert Baldwin family; and there was Col. Baldwin of the Gore, who was a native of Cork and a Catholic, but no relation to the subject of this sketch.

Who the Baldwins are that now lead a quiet life among us and who are related to this great Irish-Canadian family, I may mention in a future article.

In my next I shall describe the career of Robert Baldwin Sullivan, cousin of Robert Baldwin, and at one time very conspicuous in Canadian affairs.

WILLIAM HALLEY.

Bishop of St. Hyacinthe

Montreal, July 31.—Monsieur Bernard, Vicar-General and Administrator of the diocese, has been appointed Bishop of St. Hyacinthe in succession to the late Bishop Decelles.

POWER OF THE PRESS

By Rev. Father Sykes, S. J., in Canadian Messenger for August

It was Edmund Burke who, more than a hundred years ago, called the Press in England the Fourth Estate of the realm, adding that it was the most powerful of them all. What would he have said, I wonder, if he had lived in the opening days of the present century, and been a witness of the gigantic and ubiquitous importance to which the modern Press has attained, eclipsing with its fiercer light those inferior orbs, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and the Commons, and causing them to "pale their uneffectual fire?" Generally speaking, it may be said that a country is blessed or cursed with a Press which it deserves to have; and if a civilized country loves order, moderation, liberty, as opposed to license, justice and decency, its journals, which are a reflex of the prevailing public tone and sentiment, will be the organs that will voice the common feelings and virtues of the people. Even in the best-ordered communities there will be, of course, journals and newspapers which do not reach so high a level, as well as disreputable prints which disgrace a respectable profession and calling, but these will not be representative of the true spirit and the better-class elements of the community; and they will have to hide themselves away from the full light of day, as guilty men steal out only after dusk, and the night birds love the shelter of the darkness.

One of the most useful and valuable functions of an honest public press is the exposure of abuses. There is no doubt that even the fear of exposure by the newspapers often acts as a wholesome deterrent to people who might otherwise be indifferent to conscience or justice. It is precisely here, to my mind, and not alone in the purveying of news to their readers, which is generally regarded as the most important function of the daily newspapers, that the existence of our journals is justified. Abuses, systems, conduct, which are worthy of reprobation, and which might otherwise continue to flourish, can be dragged to the light of day, without trenching on the reticences of private life, can be pilloried and driven out of existence. But this presupposes a healthy public opinion, a love of justice, freedom from corruption and other suitable conditions in the community concerned. The public Press in England has often rendered invaluable service to the welfare and interests of the country it represents; by fearlessly fulfilling this part of its duty and by circulating a sound and healthy public opinion on many important matters, and has thus earned the undying gratitude of those who really love the land of which they are citizens.

It is the object of this paper to say and to maintain that Catholics as Catholics underrate the immense power for good or evil of the public Press. Will any one assert that the disgraceful proceedings now enacting in France would have been possible if the Catholics of that country had at their back a powerful, popular and a thoroughly representative Press? The same thing is true of other countries in which measures inimical to the Church's interests have been passed, though the majority of the population is Catholic. There the Press is either in the hands of the anti-religious minority or under the management of those who are at least indifferent to the interests of the Church and of Catholicism. It may be urged that if Catholics, in the instances referred to, had a strong public sentiment behind them, they would find it easy to obtain effective representation of their interests and principles in the great and influential organs of public opinion. But I do not think that their failure to secure such backing and support in the public press is owing to the weakness of their cause. It is rather owing to their policy of laissez faire, to apathy, to timidity, to a want of energy, of enthusiasm for their cause, and especially to a lack of appreciation of the great forces, intellectual and political as well as social, which are moving the world, and to a lack of union for effective purposes. No doubt there would have to be wise and wide-minded management in the conduct of their journals, but I feel sure that ability, enthusiasm, intellectual force, liberal-mindedness and a bold prudence would secure for a Catholic in a Catholic country a newspaper Press which would effectively advocate their policy and principles, and find support amongst a large and important section of the community. By this means they would raise up for themselves a strong wall of defence, which could strand them in great times of difficulty, when they would not be left as they are at the present moment—"naked to their enemies."

Of one thing I am persuaded, and that is, that we entirely underrate the power of the Press, and that Catholic interests in many lands are suffering thereby. It is all very well to say that we must trust to supernatural means and leave aside all carnal weapons. On the contrary, we are to make use of all natural means first, and surely the public Press is a thing at least indifferent in itself, and can be turned into an engine for effecting untold good; why should we not recognize facts? Is the cause of Christ, of His truth, of His Church, to be allowed to go by default? Is it not worth every effort and deserving of our warmest enthusiasm? Surely Catholic newspapers—not necessarily what we call religious journals, but journals conducted by loyal and intellectual Catholics, for the world at large as well as for Catholics themselves, would have a large field of endeavor and effective good before them, a career of precious usefulness! Would it not be their function in all things honest and honorable to compete

with secular journals, and with fairness and ability to explain, or if need be to defend Catholic faith and Catholic practices from ignorant or mendacious attack? How can Catholics be said to love the Church of which they are members (those of them who have the necessary equipment), if they will not step down into the arena and do their devoir for the noblest cause that can nerve the hand or the brain, or stir the devotion and enthusiasm of the heart of man? If we would move the world we must have our hand on the mighty lever which directs its motions, or else we must step aside and with added arms see it turn in the direction contrary to that in which we wish it to revolve.

I have heard the phrase "knights of the pen," and, in truth, I think it not so ill chosen, for the pen may be turned into a mighty chivalrous weapon, and literature and the Press may do what the knights of old performed—stay injustice, defeat oppression, protect weakness and virtue, and fight the manly battle for all good causes. And I would say to all those who can safely wield this cunning weapon of the pen—"Gird ye to the fight and quit ye like men!" Put your spear in rest and splinter a chivalrous lance in behalf of Christ and His sacred cause, His Church, His truth! No Pnymin or Saracen opposes you, but sin and vice and guilt and injustice and oppression shall go down before your onslaught, and shall bite the dust. Wield your pen in behalf of "whatsoever is true, whatsoever modest, whatsoever just, whatsoever holy, whatsoever lovely, whatsoever of good fame." Shall it be said that pens shall be more busy and more cunningly handled for the opposite cause than for the best and holiest? Absit. Shall it be spoken that vice can be tricked out in more attractive colors than simple virtue? Again, God forbid. Shall it be whispered that evil is more powerful than good, and that it is useless to combat it in the Press? Never! Are then the words of Lear, spoken in the excess of his bitterness, all truth?—

Plate sin with gold,
 And the strong lance of justice hurt-
 less breaks!
 Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw doth
 pierce it!

Rather I would believe that that represents a great truth which is recorded in immortal story by another great writer. Wilfrid of Ivanhoe, though weak with his wound and loss of blood, overthrew in the lists, in behalf of the defenceless maiden, Rebecca, the proud and sensual Templar in the fineness of his strength; and so it is decreed by Him, Who is greater than all evil and vice and sin, that the arm of virtue shall overcome the power of darkness. If the power of the Press is perverted to evil purposes, if books are written which undermine faith and virtue and morality, we must supply the antidote to the poison; we must show, especially to youth, that virtue is more lovely than vice, truth than falsehood. The devil should not be allowed to work his own sweet will even in books and pamphlets and newspapers; but we should endeavor by every means in our power to convert the Press from an engine of destruction into a mighty influence for good.

The Victims of Lake Aylmer

Sherbrooke, Que., July 26.—St. Michael's Cathedral was crowded to the doors yesterday morning at the requiem mass for the late Rev. Father Gignac, who, with four others was drowned at Lake Aylmer last week.

Thorough search has been continued diligently, but not one of the bodies has been recovered.

Mgr. Bruneau, of Nicolet, officiated at the mass. Among those present were Archbishop Bruchesi, Montreal; Mgr. Mathieu of Laval; Mgr. Bernard, of St. Hyacinthe; Mgr. Tanguay, Sherbrooke; Mgr. Ramsay, Magog; Rev. Father Roy, Montreal; Canon Cousineau, St. Hyacinthe, and a very large representation of the Roman Catholic clergy of the diocese.

Statue to Gen. Thomas Francis Meagher

In the presence of a great concourse of people from all parts of the State of Montana, a magnificent equestrian statue of Gen. Thomas Francis Meagher, was lately unveiled at Helena.

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