

Narcisse Constantin Faucher de Saint Maurice was born on the 24th of May, 1817 at Saint Michel de Bellechasse. His father was Major Charles Faucher de St. Maurice, and his mother was named Marie Genevieve Casanet. To Canadians those names are suggestive of merit, for each of the families in question has given to the church noble sons, to the magistracy, to science and to arms, worthy and distinguished ornaments, amongst whom may be especially named the late Reverend W. Casanet, grand vicar of the Archdiocese of Quebec, and founder of the university of Laval. The family of Faucher is ancient and honorable amongst the families of French-Canadian origin. Originally from Limousin, it can trace its line back to the Iron times of the 13th century, and several representatives of the name yet live in the district of Aunis and Saint Onge in France. The founder of the Canadian branch, Lenoard, came to New France on the 15th of October, 1669. He settled at Sainte Jeanne de Neuville, in the barony of Portneuf, and since that date his descendants have cultivated the soil, spreading their forces even to Acadia, where they yet live and prosper.

The nineteenth of his family, young Narcisse, at the age of seven years, accompanied his eldest brother, L'Abbé Edouard Faucher de Saint Maurice, on his voyage to Restigouche; to which place the intrepid priest had been named as missionary. The days spent in shooting river courses in a canoe, long nights passed on the shore beneath the starry firmament, interminable travels through the umbrageous forests, those "grand old woods" of Canada, so sung by Sangster, all combined to inspire a gentleness of spirit, a tenderness of manner, and a poetry of soul, which gave the subject of our sketch an endearing melancholy, a sweetness of conversation, highly prized by those within his circle. During the course of those travels young Faucher learned the language of the Abenakis, and his interesting reminiscences of that time have been partially preserved by his son, the author of a work entitled "De Tubord à Babord." One of those remembrances is strikingly told by the writer, and is of great historical value, as well as of family pride, for it connects the name of Faucher with the brave effort made to save the lives of the white colonists of Baie des Chaleurs by Père Edouard, before mentioned, the result of which restored peace amongst the Micmac Indians and laid the foundation of a just treatment of our dusky brethren by the Parliament of Lower Canada in 1824.

The young Faucher, after returning from Baie des Chaleurs, entered the seminary of Quebec, having for his class companions such gifted youths as Taschereau, now our beloved Archbishop, Langevin, now Bishop of Rimouski, the deceased Luc Letellier de St. Just, Chauveau, author, ex-premier, David Ross, formerly attorney-general, and amongst a host of others, the immortal priests, Belanger and Darveau.

In 1837 Mr. Faucher was admitted to the study of law, and in 1842 he received his diploma as advocate, upon which he began his professional life with the present Judge Tessier, professor of Laval. For many years he pursued an honorable and lucrative career at the bar, but a lively imagination induced him to abandon the profession for the more active life of speculation in timber and minerals.