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TOPICS OF AN OLD-TIMER

A Couple of the Most Remarkable Speeches Ever Made in a Canadian Parliament—That of William Hume Blake in Defence of the Rebellion Losses Bill in 1848; and of Thomas D'Arcy McGee's Maiden Effort in 1858—Irish Eloquence Always Effective.

Some memoranda in my possession direct my attention to an episode in Canadian history that is very interesting, but I desire to draw attention to it now, more especially because of an extemporaneous speech made by Hon. William Hume Blake, Solicitor-General West in the second Baldwin-Lafontaine administration, and father of the Hon. Edward Blake. The time was the session of 1848, and the subject the Rebellion Losses Bill. The Tories under the leadership of William Henry Draper, an able man, had just gone out of power, having been badly defeated at the elections held in the early part of that year, when in a House of 84 members the "Reformers," as the Liberals were then called, had a majority of 36. As in the previous Baldwin-Lafontaine administration, the Irish element was strong both in numbers and ability, and included besides Baldwin, Hincks, Sullivan, Killaly and Drummond. Baldwin represented one of the ridings of York; so did Blake; Hincks represented North Oxford, Sullivan was in the Upper House, Killaly represented London, and Drummond, an Irish Catholic, represented one of the divisions of Montreal, and as a member of the administration, filled the position of Attorney-General East.

In the first session of the Union Parliament held in Kingston, compensation was voted to the loyalists of Upper Canada, for losses sustained on account of the rebellion of 1837, whose property had been wantonly destroyed during the outbreak. A claim was then raised on behalf of persons similarly situated in Lower Canada. The Conservatives, under Draper, in the previous house, had agreed to pay a small amount of rebellion losses as a sequence of a report made by commissioners appointed to enquire into the subject.

Lord Elgin was appointed Governor-General of Canada in 1847, and the Reformers being in power in 1848, the Baldwin-Lafontaine administration brought down a measure to indemnify all those who were sufferers without taking any part in the outbreak, and were to be compensated for actual losses. The Tory party then, with Sir Allan McNab of Hamilton at their head, raised the cry of "No compensation to rebels!" The Knight led the attack and his invective was unsparring and indiscriminate. He did not wonder that a premium was put upon rebellion, now that rebels were to be rewarded for their own uprising. For, he said, the Government itself was a rebel Government and the party by which it was maintained in power was a phalanx of rebels. His lieutenants were as unsparring and fierce in their attacks; but the Government boldly took their position. Sir Allan reiterated that the whole French-Canadian people were traitors and aliens. It was then that Mr. Blake sprang to his feet and said:

"He would remind them that there was such a thing as rebellion against the constitution as well as rebellion against the Crown. A man could be a traitor against his country's rights as well as a traitor to the power of the Crown. He instanced Philip of Spain and James II. where there was a struggle between

political freedom and royal tyranny. These royal tyrants found loyal men to do their bidding, not only in the army, but on the bench of justice. There was one such loyal servant, he who shone above all the rest, the exorable Judge Jeffreys, who sent among the many other victims before their Maker, the mild, amiable, and great Lord Russell. Another victim of these loyal servants was Algernon Sidney, whose offence was his loyalty to the people's rights and the constitution. He had no sympathy with the spurious loyalty of the honorable gentleman opposite, which, while it trampled on the people, was the slave of the Court; a loyalty which from the dawn of the history of the world down to the present day, had lashed humanity into rebellion. He would not go to ancient history, but he would tell the honorable gentleman opposite of one great exhibition of this loyalty; on one occasion the people of a distant Roman province contemplated the perpetration of the foulest crime that the pages of history records—a crime from which nature in compassion hid her face, and over which she strove to draw a veil; but the heathen Roman lawyer could not be induced by perjurer witnesses to place the great founder of our religion upon the cross. "I find no fault in Him," he said. But these provincials, after endeavoring by every other means to effect their purpose, had recourse to this spurious loyalty. "If thou lettest this man go thou art not Caesar's friend." Mark the loyalty; could they not see every feature of it; could they not trace it in this act; aye, and overcome by that mawkish, spurious loyalty, the heathen Roman governor gave his sanction to a deed whose foul and impure stain centuries of national humiliation and suffering have been unable to efface. This spurious, slavish loyalty was not British stuff; this spurious, bullying, loyalty never grew in his native land. British loyalty wrung on the field of Runnymede from the tyrant king the great charter of English liberty. Aye, the barons of England, with arms in their hands, demanded and won the great charter of their rights. British loyalty during a period of three centuries, wrung from tyrant kings thirty different recognitions of that great charter. Aye, and at the glorious era of the Revolution, when the loyal Jeffreys was ready, in his extreme loyalty to hand over England's freedom and rights into the hands of tyrants, the people of England established the constitution which has maintained England till this day, a great, free and powerful nation."

The Hon. Louis Drummond, who was an Irish Roman Catholic, was a good speaker, but I have now neither recollections nor knowledge of any great efforts of his while in parliament. I am inclined to think that his attention was largely given to Seigneurial Tenure abolition legislation. I will, if possible, find some remarkable utterance of his while, in parliament, for he certainly was a man of ability."

The speech, however, that made the greatest sensation at the time of its delivery, was that of Thos. D'Arcy McGee in his first utterance in the Canadian parliament, held in Toronto in the winter of 1857-8. He had been in no hurry to be heard. The debate was on the address, and the conduct of the Macdonald-Cartier Government in conducting the election of members for that parliament was open to criticism. There was a full house and full galleries. The Hon. William Cayley, the Finance Minister, it was said, had gone through the County of Huron, for which county he was the administration candidate, distributing bibles among the Orange lodges, with the expectation of securing the votes of Orangemen but was defeated. McGee took this up and denounced the honorable gentleman. A new and strange voice was heard. There was laughter; there were cheers. There was exultation; there was chagrin. The friends of the orator were delighted; his allies were in ecstasies. A mark had been made.

"The honorable gentleman," he said, "had gone forth like a missionary of old, with staff in hand and sandle shod, to distribute the redeeming gospel among the heathens of Huron; but while they accepted the

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gospel they rejected the apostle."

Sir John A. Macdonald, the leader of the administration, with due parliamentary courtesy, crossed the arena and complimented the new member on his maiden effort; all of the leaders did the same thing, but there was one man to whom it was a matter of peculiar gratification—a small, red-headed Scotchman, for whom in bygone days a reward had been offered for his apprehension as a rebel to the crown of Great Britain. He had raised the standard of rebellion in Canada the very same year that Queen Victoria had ascended the throne of Great Britain and suffered exile for it. It was William Lyon Mackenzie, who then also had a seat in the provincial parliament. He was a man of considerable humor and was somewhat demonstrative. He made three springs from his seat to where McGee stood receiving the congratulations of members, and with outstretched hand exclaimed: "Put it there, my brother rebel; I knew it was in you." Louis Joseph Papineau, the rebel leader in Lower Canada in 1837, was there also, but he was not so demonstrative as his Celtic colleague. An old newspaper man said to the writer of this many years afterwards, "I heard that speech and I could not help exclaiming: 'Oh, what a voice, what a voice. I never before heard anything like it.'"

The speech took about an hour in the delivery. William Macdougall, who was one of the best speakers in the House and who was worth listening to, spoke after McGee, but he received no attention. "Two speeches were made in the House last night," said the Daily Colonist newspaper next morning, "one by the new member for Montreal, T. D. McGee, which was extraordinary for the manner of its delivery, its wit, its sarcasm, and literary quality, and electrified all listeners, the other was by William Macdougall, which was without any of those qualities and was hardly noticed coming as it did after so brilliant an effort as that which preceded it."

Archbishop Ireland and the Negro

The following is from an address delivered by Archbishop Ireland before an audience of ten thousand people. "The Negro we have and must keep. Let it never be forgotten that the Negro did not come hither of his own accord. Our own forefathers constrained him to emigrate from his African haunts to be their servant, their slave. Let it not be forgotten that the long servitude to which they had subjected him prevented him from growing in civilization, and aimed rather at reducing him to the low stages of animal life than uplifting him to the higher regions of spiritual thought and activity. Whatever difficulties there are in the Negro problem, we must say in all humility that they are of our own making. This is sufficient reason why we should bring to the solution of the problem good will and patience. The progress made by the negroes since their emancipation forty years ago is the happiest of omens and indicates that worthy of our confidence and esteem. Let us be just to the Negro, according to him willingly the rights which the law guarantees to him, opening to him the avenues of industry and thrift, affording him all due facilities of education and self-uplift; let the Negro, on his part, make allowance for the conditions of the

present, unavoidable legacies of the past, and trust in the future, meanwhile so upbuilding himself in self-control, in culture of mind and heart, in social independence that his fellow citizens must hold him in esteem—and the problem will have lost the asperities now seemingly in the way of a final solution. "Human society, under every form of government, is entering on a period of intense unrest in its search for solutions to those economic problems which are called forth by the material spread of education and the material industrial progress of modern times. The liberty of discussion which our institutions allow, and the fact that the populations of the world are parts of our own, warn us that the agitation of these problems will be especially acute in these United States."

A Grave Decision From Rome at Hand

We quote this announcement from the recent Rome correspondence of the London Tablet: "Some weeks ago your correspondent announced that an important decision affecting Biblical Criticism might be expected in the near future. He is now able to add that the matter is being very carefully studied by the proper authorities in Rome but the subject has grown so complex, so extended and so serious, that it is possible that the decision may not be given so soon as was at first anticipated. Nor will it be concerned solely with the Scriptures. There is, unfortunately, only too much evidence to show the existence of gross and fundamental errors affecting the very nature of faith, revelation, and dogma. Many Bishops have implored the Holy See to provide a remedy for the disease, pointing out that unless something is done, the consequences will be very serious. Some part of the harm is being wrought by the writings of laymen. Hence the Roman authorities have instituted an examination of books, magazine, and newspaper articles, letters, etc., which have been published in recent years, and which reflect the prevailing tendencies of thought. It is more than likely that the forthcoming decision will take the form of a new syllabus of errors, affecting the moral career and the Divinity of Our Lord, the foundation of the Church, the development and nature of dogma, the relations between faith and science. Among the works under examination are those of a number of authors well known in France, Italy and England."

Another Marriage Question

The Provincial Secretary's Department has recently received several letters from issuers of marriage licenses who ask whether licenses should be issued for a man to marry his "brother's wife," for so the statute defining marriages which are prohibited on the grounds of consanguinity reads. The department's answer in every case is the same, and it is to the effect that under the statutes of Ontario a man cannot lawfully marry his brother's widow or his brother's divorced wife. Most of the inquiries ask the question apparently in behalf of parties who want to marry brothers' widows. It is said that several such marriages have lately taken place in the province.

There are two European associations of scientists organized for the Solar Commission, established in 1903, devoting its researches to the purpose of studying the sun. One is effect of the sun on the weather and climatic changes of the earth. The other is the Solar Union, formed in 1904, which is endeavoring to ascertain more than is now known about the sun itself.

THE KING OF SPAIN AND THE POPE

Letter from Alfonso to His Holiness—Loving and Paternal Reply—Princess Ena a Catholic from Understanding and Will.

(Special correspondence of the Catholic Times.)

When the young King of Spain resolved to ask for the hand of Princess Ena he wrote an autograph letter to the Holy Father informing him of his intention, and his Holiness sent an autograph reply. Both letters have just been published (the Holy Father's is an authorized translation) by "El Universo" of Madrid. King Alfonso wrote: "Holy Father,—The time having arrived at which from motives which cannot escape your Holiness's exalted wisdom, I must think of choosing a wife, my heart has felt an irresistible inclination towards a young Princess of royal lineage who, from her attractive natural gifts and the personal virtues by which she is adorned, will, I believe, be a faithful companion to me in life and in every way worthy to share with me the throne that my illustrious and eminent predecessors have occupied.

The excellent lady to whom I refer is her Royal Highness the Princess Victoria Eugenia of Battenberg, daughter of Prince Henry and of her Royal Highness the Princess Beatrice, and granddaughter of the late Queen Victoria I. of England, Empress of India. Born outside the Catholic fold, she could not be instructed in the mysteries and the precepts of the true faith, but very soon her conversion will be a fact, and very soon our holy Mother the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church will count another daughter amongst her children. A faithful and loving daughter, because it is not her affection for me, much less violent compulsion or a reason of State, that causes her to abandon error; she is led chiefly by a sure instinct springing from the heart and decided strength of will to give effect to such a happy decision. For this important act preparation is being made by my promised bride, whose entrance into the bosom of the Church is formally and of necessity to precede the solemn and official suit for her hand.

To bring the projected union to pass I can count upon the good-will of my august and beloved mother the Queen, Dona Maria Christina of Austria, whose vigilance and good example I owe the happiness of being in works, words and wishes as Catholic as a King of Catholic Spain should be; I can also count upon the explicit approval of the noble mother of my fiancée and I likewise can count upon the adhesion of my people who see in their future Queen a pledge of peace and prosperity for time to come. All that is wanting to us now is your Holiness's blessing, which is the blessing of God, a blessing for our good intentions; a blessing for me who solicit it with all the fervor of a Christian soul that looks to its salvation in all the vicissitudes of life.

Deign, then, your Holiness, to grant it to me, confident that I shall receive it as a gift that comes from Heaven for the happiness of whoever shall always try, as I shall, to be worthy of it.

I am, Holy Father, your humble and devoted son, ALFONSO.
The Holy Father's reply was as follows:

Beloved Son,—Your Majesty's confidential letter, which has been delivered to me to-day by your kind-hearted ambassador, written to inform me of your approaching marriage with Princess Eugenia of Battenberg, and so nobly reflecting the Catholic and filially devoted sentiments of your Majesty towards the Apostolic See, has afforded me special comfort and joy.

Although of those sentiments, deeply rooted in your Majesty's heart, I have already had many and abundant proofs, I rejoice at this new testimony given in extraordinary circumstances. To see that your Majesty freely opens your soul to me as a son to a father is a still greater consolation, and I, who have always felt for your Majesty a great and entirely paternal affection, am pleased to be able to assure you that I am ever and on all occasions ready to help and favor you in all the vicissitudes of life.

With extreme gratification, then, do I observe that your Majesty, being about to contract matrimony, has understood the gravity and importance of so vital an act, upon which your happiness will depend, and which will be closely associated with the welfare of the Spanish nation. As your Majesty has not chosen a Princess born and educated in the Catholic Faith, undoubtedly the conversion of your future consort to the Catholic religion assumes a high degree of importance which cannot be ignored and which your Majesty's letter shows that you rightly appreciate.

Your Majesty intimates to me that the Princess Victoria Eugenia of Battenberg is about to embrace the true Faith, moved thereto not by exceptional circumstances but by a proper understanding and a firm will, assuring me that the conversion will be an accomplished fact before the request for marriage is officially made. All this inspires the hope that your Majesty's choice will be, bountifully blessed by God and that it will meet with the hearty approval of your Majesty's Catholic subjects whose dearest religious sentiments will be satisfied as well as the fervor of the Catholics of the world, entirely in accord with the special interests of the Catholic King.

I am delighted to learn that the august Queen Mother is pleased with your Majesty's choice, this being a sign that the approaching marriage will be most acceptable to the maternal heart of the devoted lady who can justly congratulate herself on having given a truly Catholic Sovereign to Spain and who by her wisdom in governing and so many notable examples has performed a highly beneficial work for the nation and the Church, meriting thereby the genial admiration of Europe.

Meanwhile I offer up fervent prayers for your Majesty's marriage, upon which I invoke the special favour and protection of the Lord, trusting that the day of your Majesty's marriage will be not only a day of happiness and joy for your faithful subjects, but the sure prelude to a long series of years of domestic and national prosperity.

Finally, from the bottom of my heart I bless the good intentions of the young Princess, and I beseech the Lord that He grant her in abundance the lights and graces necessary to enable her to share worthily with your Majesty the ancient and glorious throne of St. Ferdinand.

At the same time I renew to your Majesty the expression of my special benevolence, and send you affectionately my paternal benediction, with the wish that it may bring every kind of prosperity, and seasonably conduce to perseverance in the holy dispositions by which your Majesty is sincerely animated.

From the Vatican on the 22nd February, 1906. PIUS X, POPE.

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament

We are informed by cable received from Rome that the title "Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament" has been officially approved by Pope Pius X.

The Rev. Pere Eymard, founder of the Order of the Blessed Sacrament, is the author of this new title. The saintly father meant to add a new jewel to the royal crown of Our Blessed Mother. He preached for a whole month of May on the bonds which unite the Blessed Virgin to the Holy Eucharist, and wrote down his doctrine on this subject in a book that was translated into English three years ago. The bulk of the volume is made of thirty-one meditations, one for each day of the month. An appendix of eight chapters gives the theological foundations for the devotion to Mary under this special title. They may be summarized in two main points: 1. The power of Mary over all the graces of redemption, including those that proceed from, or are centered in the Holy Eucharist. 2. Mary's life after the Ascension, which lasted twenty-four years according to the reckoning made by Suarez. Her attendance at Mass, her communions and her adorations set her as the most perfect model of the Eucharistic devotion.—Emmanuel.

The treasury department of the republic of Mexico announces that their exports for the past financial year amount to \$99,926,557, and their imports to \$67,153,845, showing an increase over the previous fiscal year of \$22,762,508.



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