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TOPICS OF AN OLD-TIMER

Lord Elgin's Appointment as Governor-General of Canada—Was well received by the People at Large—The Draper-Vigor Administration Falls, and Baldwin and Lafontaine are Called Upon to Form a Cabinet—The French for the First Time Received Full Recognition—An Example is Set to All Other British Colonies—The Rebellion Losses in Parliament.

I remember well the announcement of Lord Elgin's appointment to the Governor-Generalship of Canada and the diverse feelings it created. He had been a member of the British parliament and was known to be a Conservative in politics. His appointment, however, was made by a Liberal Government, with Lord John Russell at its head, and it was thought from that he would pursue a policy in accord with the advocates of responsible government in Canada. There was another circumstance, however, that the Liberal press drew hopeful omens from. The new governor, who had been a widower, had recently married Lady Mary Louisa Lambton, daughter of the Earl of Durham, who had a few years before drawn up that celebrated report which favored the attitude of Baldwin and Lafontaine in the government of the Province of Canada, and who was held in great esteem by the Reformers. The Conservatives did not have a bad opinion of him. He was an aristocrat, belonging to a high order of nobility, and it was capable of belief that he would be agreeable to the superlatives of a colonial province. The Scotch were pleased because he was a Bruce and the Irish were pleased that he was not a scion of any of those families that had oppressed their native land. Indeed the Bruces always stood well in the graces of the Irish people. They and the Irish had been allies of old and the last King crowned in Ireland was a Bruce. No governor that ever came to Canada had been more fully discussed and on the whole, more favorably considered.

Lord Elgin, accompanied by his wife and brother, Sir Frederick Bruce, arrived in Montreal at the end of January, 1847, and received a very cordial reception. Montreal was then the seat of government for the united provinces and the Draper Tory administration was still in power with some changes from its original construction, but still possessed of the same inherent weaknesses.

In answering an address presented to him in Montreal, he gave the first intimation of his policy. "I am sensible," he said, "that I shall best maintain the prerogative of the Crown and most effectually carry out the instructions with which Her Majesty has honored me, by manifesting a due regard for the wishes and feelings of the people and by seeking the advice and assistance of those who enjoy their confidence." He recognized the fact that the crucial weakness in the political situation was that a Conservative Government meant a government of Upper Canadians which was intolerable to the French, and a radical government of French, which was no less hateful to the British.

Lord Elgin possessed very graceful manners as well as a charming address, and Lady Elgin was very gracious to those that called upon her or that she had occasion to meet. They made a tour of the province that summer and fall and received royal receptions everywhere. I will remember seeing the vice-regal turnout in Hamilton in the Fall of 1847, when they opened the Provincial Fair in that city that year. I do

not remember the exact date, but it was the wettest days I ever experienced. The crowd that met them along the streets was immense and never bore nor since did I see so many umbrellas in use. I will remember Lord Elgin's round, cheerful face, as his cortege proceeded along James street, southward to the Gore, and his head bowing continuously to the right and to the left, while the cheers of the multitude were loud and hearty. There is no doubt but what Lord Elgin received a right, royal reception that day in the "Ambitious City," and that the people were well pleased with their new governor, notwithstanding the very unfavorable condition of the elements. I think the vice-regal party put up on that occasion at Young's Hotel, on the northeast corner of James and Main streets.

Lord Elgin was a man of rare tact and skill and those qualities were greatly needed in a population so diverse and so exacting. By no word did he give unnecessary offence. He came to reconcile differences, not to widen breaches; to establish the equality of all classes before the law, not to allow any class to feel that it was inferior; and to establish a sway that was mild and just. He did not want to see a British party nor a French party in the province, but two parties into which French Canadians and British Canadians would be equally split under the mild sway of a truly constitutional government.

1847 was the year of the great Irish immigration to Canada and of the terrible work of the ship fever along the St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario, and in this the new governor was given something horrible to contemplate. The British Government had done nothing, nor given a thought to mitigating the horrors of that awful pestilence. The poor people were allowed to flee from their native land without any direction or regulations whatever. They were allowed to embark in rotten hulks and crowd each other in thousands without regard to proper provisions, medicines, or sanitary regulations, and without any means to support themselves when they reached our shores. They were thrown on the charity of a people who were not prepared for so terrible a visitation, carrying pestilence and death in their tracks and spreading contagion broadcast.

Lord Elgin did not fail to point out to the Colonial Secretary the severe strain that this unwholesome exodus made not only upon charity, but upon the very loyalty of the people to a government which had shown such culpable negligence since the outbreaks of the famine and the exodus from the plague-stricken island. He expressed the emphatic opinion that all things considered a great deal of forbearance had been shown by the colonists under the severe trial of that day. He gave full expression to the general feeling that Great Britain must make good to the province the expenses entailed upon it by this visitation for which so little regard for consequences had been shown by those in power at home. He did full justice to the men and women who showed so extraordinary a spirit of self-sacrifice, a positive heroism, during this terrible crisis. "Nothing," he wrote, "can exceed the devotion of the nuns and priests of the Roman Catholic Church, and of the conduct of the clergy and many of the laity of other denominations. Many lives had been sacrificed in attending on the sick and administering to their temporal and spiritual needs." The Mayor of Montreal, a Mr. Mills, a very estimable man, who did much for the immigrants, and to whose firmness and philanthropy it was chiefly owing that the immigrants shed were not tossed into the river, by the people of the city during the summer. He had fallen a victim to his great zeal on behalf of the poor, plague-stricken strangers, having died of ship fever caught at the sheds. Among other victims, he pointed out, were Bishop Power, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Toronto; Vicar-General Hudon, of the same church; Rev. Father Roy, cure of Charlesbourg; and Mr. Chadderton, a Protestant clergyman. Thirteen Catholic priests, if not more, had died from their devotion to the unhappy people thus suddenly thrown upon Christian charity.

When the season of navigation was nearly closed, a ship arrived with a large number of people from the

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Irish estates of one of Her Majesty's ministers, Lord Palmerston. The natural result of this incident was to increase the feeling of indignation already aroused by the criminal apathy of the British Government during this national calamity.

Happily Lord Elgin's appeals to the colonial secretary had effect, and the province was reimbursed eventually for the heavy expenses incurred by it in its effort to fight disease, misery and death. English statesmen, after those frightful experiences, recognized the necessity for enforcing strict regulations for the protection of emigrants crossing the ocean, against the greed of shipowners. The sad story of 1847-48 fortunately cannot now be repeated in times when nations have awakened to their responsibilities towards the poor and distressed who are forced to leave their old homes for this new country which offers them well-paid work, political freedom and national protection. By the laws of the State of New York the shipowners carrying emigrants were bound to enter into bonds which were forfeited when any of these emigrants became chargeable on the public, but no such law existed in Great Britain or Canada at that time.

In the months of April and May, 1847, the tottering Tory minority made desperate efforts to strengthen itself, but it could obtain no accessions from the French side of the House. Parliament was opened at Montreal on the 2nd of June by Lord Elgin. He announced among other things that the Imperial Government was prepared to surrender the control of the post office department to the provincial authorities. The Government had shown its weakness by various defeats in the House. Parliament was dissolved on the 10th of December, and a new election ordered in January, 1848. The Baldwinites swept everything before them. Hinks was returned for Oxford, Baldwin for the fourth riding of York; William Hume Blake for the third riding of York; Lafontaine and Holmes for Montreal, but Dominick Daly was not missed; he was elected for Megantic County in Lower Canada, which was ever faithful to him.

The new parliament met on the 25th of February, 1848. Immediately after the division on the address on March 14th, the Conservative Government tendered its resignation and Baldwin and Lafontaine were entrusted with the formation of a new administration, which was constituted as follows: Baldwin, Attorney-General West; Lafontaine, Attorney-General East; Blake, Sol.-Gen. West; Aylwin, Sol.-Gen. East; Sullivan, Provincial Secretary; Hinks, Inspector-General; James Lesslie, President of Council; Caron, Speaker of the Legislative Council; James Harvey Price, Com. Crown Lands; Vigor, Receiver General; Tache, Chief Com. Public Works; Malcolm Cameron, Asst. Com. Public Works. Morin was chosen speaker of the House. This was probably the strongest administration ever formed in Canada before Dominion days. The Irish element consisted of four members; the French were four members, with the Speaker, which made five; the Scotch numbered two, and the English-Aylwin and Price—two. As to the nationality of the two latter, I am only making a guess. Aylwin, I am aware, attracted a great deal of attention, and so far as my memory goes he was a spectacular personality. But he did not remain long in politics and was, I suppose, shelved by a judgeship.

It seems to me that the Governor and his new cabinet soon came to understand each other and worked in harmony. He was a great man and members of his cabinet were great men, broad-minded men, and such characters soon learn to appreciate each other and their motives. This was the Governor and the Government that made responsible govern-

ment a fact in Canada and led the way for a similar condition in all the other colonies of Her Majesty's dominions.

A few days after the change of ministry news reached Canada of the revolution in Paris by which Louis Philippe was deposed. Lord Elgin had to congratulate himself that he had committed the charge of Canadian affairs to those who were supported by the large majority of the people of Canada.

When the Draper-Vigor Tory ministry first showed a disposition to take up the claims of the losers in Lower Canada during the rebellion by compensating them in the same manner that losers had been compensated in Upper Canada, they had doubtless been influenced not solely by the conviction that they had been called upon to perform an act of justice, but mainly by a desire to strengthen themselves in the French province. They did nothing more than to make provision for the payment of £9,000, which represented claims fully investigated and recognized as justifiable before the union of the provinces and left the general matter of indemnity for future consideration. One thing was quite certain; that ministry, weak as it was, Tory and ultra-Tory as it claimed to be, had recognized by the appointment of a commission, the justice of granting compensation to the sufferers in Lower Canada, on the principles which had governed the settlement of claims from Upper Canada.

The session of 1848 was not far advanced when Mr. Lafontaine brought forward a series of resolutions on which were subsequently based a bill, which set forth in the preamble that "in order to redeem the pledge given to the sufferers of such losses, it is necessary and just that the particulars of such losses not yet paid and satisfied should form the subject of more minute enquiry under legislative authority and that the same so far only as they may have arisen from the total, partial, unjust, unnecessary or wanton destruction of dwellings, building property and effects, should be paid and satisfied." The act provided that no indemnity should be paid to persons who had been convicted of treason during the rebellion, or who having been taken into custody, had submitted to Her Majesty's will and been transported to Bermuda." Five commissioners were to be appointed to carry out the provisions of the act, which also provided the sum of \$400,000 for the payment of legal claims.

The proposition was violently attacked by Sir Allan MacNab and Mr. Henry Sherwood, who insulted the French Canadians, calling them aliens and rebels.

The second reading was on the 13th of February. A strong debate extending over several sittings, followed. Mr. Blake spoke with great force and warmth, as did others, and the second reading was carried by a large majority. On this occasion the Tory minority showed their disposition towards the new governor-general by attacking him in a most discourteous manner and called upon him to dissolve a parliament elected only a year before.

There was missed from the debate on this important occasion the voice of Sullivan, who had accepted a seat on the bench, but why a man like him, possessed of such power of mind and capacity for public affairs, should have withdrawn from the arena of politics in a field where there was so much to be done and a great reputation to be made, was a mystery to many.

This was the year of revolutions in Europe and the Irish population of America was in an excited condition. The indifference of the British Government to the condition of the people of Ireland, who had only the previous year suffered such terrible losses by famine and disease, the

ENCYCLICAL OF PIUS X.

Venerable Brothers, Health and Apostolic Blessing.

The firm resolution we made at the outset of our Pontificate to consecrate to the work of restoring all things in Christ whatever strength the Lord in His goodness has pleased to grant us, awakens in our heart a great confidence in the powerful grace of God, without which it is not given to us here below to undertake anything great or fruitful for the salvation of souls. At the same time we feel more than ever the urgent need, in this noble enterprise, of your united and constant aid, Venerable Brothers, who have been called to a share in Our pastoral office; as also the need of the aid of each of the clergy and of the faithful entrusted to your care. For all of us in the Church of God have been called to form that one body whose head is Christ—that body which, as the Apostle Paul teaches (Eph. iv, 18) "is compacted and fully joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in Charity." In this edifying of the body of Christ (Eph. iv, 13), our first duty is to teach and point out the right method to be followed, to propose the means for doing this and to admonish and exhort paternally.

At the same time it is the duty of our dearly beloved children, scattered throughout the world, to receive our words and make them efficacious, first, in their own persons, and then afterwards to aid in making them efficacious among others, each one doing this according to the grace received from God, and in a manner befitting his station in life and the social duties he has to perform. All this according to the zeal that inflames his heart.

Here we wish to call attention only to those manifold works of zeal for the good of the Church, of society, and of individuals, usually classified under the name of the Catholic Social Movement. These works by the grace of God are flourishing in all places and abound in our own Italy. You, Venerable Brothers, will readily understand how dear they must be to us and how ardently we desire to see them strengthened and developed. On several occasions we have in personal conversation spoken to many of you about these works as well as to their principal promoters in Italy, when they have in person offered us the testimony of their devotedness and filial affection. In addition to this we have published, or caused to be published, by our authority, various decrees with which you are familiar. It is true that some of these decrees, owing to circumstances causing us much pain, dwell with the removal of obstacles in the way of the more rapid progress of the Catholic Social Movement, condemning at the same time certain undisciplined tendencies which were creeping in, to the great injury of the common cause. In the meantime we were eagerly awaiting the opportunity of addressing to all a word of fatherly comfort and exhortation, in order that the good work of building up might be continued and broadened on a foundation as free

manner in which one hundred thousand of them had been allowed to be thrown on Canadian shores, fanned, uncares for and reeking with the deadly ship fever, justified those of them in America in seeking a change of political conditions for their unfortunate native land. Great meetings were held in the United States for this purpose, but the Irish of Canada remained quiescent. There was one meeting held in Montreal of a revolutionary tendency, but it resulted in no violence nor attempted violence.

It was also the year of the discovery of gold in California. The revolution in France produced great changes in the political conditions of the world; the discovery of gold effected great changes in commercial and monetary conditions; while Canada was working out the problem of responsible government.

WILLIAM HALLEY.
(To be Continued.)

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from impediments as we could make it. It gives us great pleasure to be able to do this by this letter of ours, written for the consolation of all, as we are assured that our words will be received and obeyed by all in a spirit of docility.

The field opened up to the Catholic Social Movement is a vast one. There is absolutely nothing pertaining directly or indirectly to the Church's divine mission that is excluded from it. One can easily see the necessity for the co-operation of individuals in this great work for the sanctification of our souls as well as for the diffusion and the ever-increasing extension of the kingdom of God in individuals, in the family, and in society, each striving to procure, according to the measure of his capacity, the good of his neighbor by the propagation of revealed truth, by the exercise of Christian virtue, by works of charity and mercy, spiritual as well as corporal. This is that "walking worthy of God" to which St. Paul exhorts us, "in all things pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Coloss. 1, 10).

In addition to these benefits there are many others pertaining to the natural order which are not directly bound up with the mission of the Church, but which flow from that mission as a natural consequence.

Such is the light of Catholic revelation that it sheds itself brilliantly on every science; such the force of the maxims of the gospel that the precepts of the natural law are more firmly rooted and grow in strength; such, in fine, is the efficacy of the truth and the moral doctrine taught by Jesus Christ, that the material well being of the individual, of the family, and of human society is providentially supported and promoted.

The Church, even while preaching Jesus Christ crucified, a stumbling block and a folly in the eyes of the world, has become the chief inspiration and support of civilization, and has diffused it wherever her apostles have preached, preserving and perfecting all that was good in the ancient pagan civilizations, rescuing from barbarism and moulding in the forms of civil society the primitive people who flocked for refuge to her maternal bosom, and giving to the whole structure of society, gradually indeed but securely and with ever growing impetus, that marked impress which it possesses even still.

The civilization of the world is Christian civilization. The more distinctively Christian it continues to be, the more real and lasting and fruitful will it be. The farther it removes itself from the Christian idea, the greater will be its decline to the immense injury of social welfare. Hence, from the very nature of things, the Church became in fact the guardian and defender of Christian civilization. In bygone ages this fact was recognized and admitted, and it still forms the enduring basis of civil legislation.

On this fact were based the relations between the Church and the different States, the public recognition of the authority of the Church in all matters that in any way relate to conscience, the subordination of all the laws of the gospel, the concord of the two powers, Church and State, in procuring the temporal welfare of the people in such a way that their eternal welfare should not be interfered with.

There is no need for us to tell you, Venerable Brothers, what prosperity and welfare, what peace and concord, what respectful subjection to authority and what excellent government would be obtained and maintained in the world were it possible to realize to the full the perfect ideal of Christian civilization. But, given the continual strife of the flesh against the spirit, of darkness against light, of Satan against God, this perfect ideal is not to be hoped for, at least in full measure. Hence continuous assaults are made upon the

(Continued on page eight.)

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