

REMINISCENCES POLITICAL AND OTHERWISE

BY HON. JUSTICE LONGLEY

IV.

IN 1885 I was in Toronto finishing my law studies, and I had then a supreme desire to meet Mr. Goldwin Smith. It was not until the last of my stay there that I did contrive to meet him at Mr. Howland's office and have an interview on the leading questions of the day. I was extremely charmed with his felicitous manner of discussing all questions. It was not, however, until I got into political life and in office that I really made his acquaintance thoroughly and entirely. I was going to make a tour at that time in 1888. I had met Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Sir Richard Cartwright and Mr. Peter Mitchel at Montreal and had a long interview with them in regard to the political affairs of the country, and also more particularly on the subject of Unrestricted Reciprocity with the United States. From this I passed on to Toronto and by a special invitation from Mr. Goldwin Smith I went to his house, the well known "Grange", and spent three days with him of the most delightful character. It is difficult now that he has passed away to give an accurate description of Mr. Goldwin Smith. He had an uncommon habit of saying what he thought, irrespective of the consequences which it involved, and thereby he deprived himself of the advantage of certain acquaintanceships in Toronto which could have

easily been his if he had exercised more discretion, but I suppose he did not care about that and therefore he made his pen and his tongue convey the thoughts of his mind irrespective of what this or that personage might think of him.

He was extremely devoted to the question of promoting the interests of the English speaking world by a union of Canadians with Americans in all matters which pertained to their material and political interests. He was thoroughly conscientious in this and did it quite as much in the interests of England as in the interests of Canada. He regarded England as a European power. He regarded Canada as part of the new world life, and therefore identified with the great English speaking nation to the south. Whether he was right or wrong about that is of no consequence now. It was his belief, his thorough and genuine belief and he was entitled to have that belief to the utmost. It was in connection with this matter which he particularly desired to see me on this occasion. He was writing a book on Canada and the Canadian Question and wished to have my views in regard to various matters he was then discussing. I am sorry to say I was not able to give him the views which he desired most. I was in favour of Unrestricted Reciprocity with the United States, but I was not prepared and did not think the people of Can-