

## THOMAS D'ARCY MCGEE.

The Register's Suggestion Approved.—Interviews With Prominent Citizens.

The suggestion contained in The CATHOLIC REGISTER of last week, that among the monuments of men who have played a part in the making of the history of Canada which adorn the City of Toronto, there should be erected one to the memory of Thomas D'Arcy McGee, is one that has met with the hearty approval of men who rank among Toronto's leading citizens. Naturally it has been taken up with enthusiasm by those to whom the memory of the Irish-Canadian politician-litérateur is endeared by the sacred ties of faith and nationality.

A representative of the REGISTER interviewed the gentlemen whose names appear below. These gentlemen, it will be seen, are not only at the head of the list of Irishmen and Catholics, but are leaders in every movement which has for its object the public good.

Said Mr. S. H. Blake: "Yes, I heartily endorse the sentiment contained in the REGISTER's article. I shall be glad, indeed, to do my part towards the accomplishment of anything which will worthily commemorate the name of such a man. I need not say that I have a great respect for the memory of Thomas D'Arcy McGee. One must have respect for a man of his wonderful talents—a man who, while never forgetting the land of his birth, devoted himself unselfishly to the service of the country of his adoption. His memory is further endeared to us by the untimely fate with which he met. It is well that his career should be kept before the people by some fitting tribute. Every Irishman worthy of the name, I believe, will hear with joy the proposal."

Mr. Eugene O'Keefe is equally pronounced. "I think it most fitting indeed," he said, "that a suitable monument should be erected to the memory of Thomas D'Arcy McGee. He was a great man—but why need I go into history, which is known to every Irish school-boy and to every Canadian who is interested in the achievements of the great men of the Dominion. He adopted Canada as his home, and he proved himself to be truly loyal to the land whose cause he espoused. Yes, some fitting monument should be erected to his memory. And every Irishman throughout Canada should, and would contribute his mite toward its erection. The monument should come as the gift not of the wealthy but of all classes. Every Irishman in Canada should be in the position of saying 'I have given my share to keep green the memory of one of my countrymen whose deeds deserve the recognition of all who can value sacrifice, patriotism, and statesmanship.' There may be some who will point to the errors of poor McGee. From faults, perhaps, he was not free. He was human, but his greatness will outlive his faults. Probably I feel a stronger personal interest in McGee than most men. I knew him well. I remember his last speech. It was that of a patriot. It was inspired. It was a speech which had as its dominant notes peace and conciliation. It was the fitting termination of a career, so suddenly and so tragically brought to a close. By all means let the name of McGee be honored in marble."

And here are the words of Mr. C. J. McCabe, Barrister, and President of the I.O.B.A. "The idea contained in the REGISTER's article is an excellent one. In the first place the kind of monuments spoken of are calculated to make all Canadians, and especially Irish-Canadians emulate the character and accomplishments of men like Thomas D'Arcy McGee. I think indeed, it is due the Irish element of the Dominion that one of their countrymen should be honored in stone or

marble. Apart, however, from the political or national aspect of the case, I am of opinion, that the project, if carried out, would have a good effect on Canadian art. McGee needs no monument of stone or marble, which attest the feebleness of mortal hand, to keep green his memory. He will live in the affections of his countrymen. But it is well that the coming generation should have some perpetual reminder of the deeds of one who has so well deserved the honor and reverence in which his name is held by those who are acquainted with his public acts."

Mr. Matthew O'Connor shares the views of each of the gentlemen quoted. "By all means," said he, "let steps be taken to give the idea suggested by the REGISTER definite shape. The project is one in which all Canadians, but especially Irish Canadians, should be proud to take a part. There are a sufficient number of prominent, liberal Irishmen in the Dominion to raise sufficient funds to erect to the memory of D'Arcy McGee a monument, which would not only fittingly attest their love of the memory of the man, but would be an ornament to the city of Toronto. For the matter of that all Canadians should be glad to contribute to the construction of such a memorial. McGee served Canada faithfully and well, and like Sir Chas. Gavan Duffy and other moulders of Irish thought in the stormy days of '48, he showed that while compelled to flee from his own country, he could fill with honor and distinction the highest post which could be conferred on him in a land governed in accordance with ideas of liberty and justice."

Col. Mason, Manager of the Home Savings Co., also heartily approved of the idea. "Every Canadian should be proud," he said, "to share in the work of suitably commemorating the memory of a man who has done so much for their country. Of course the movement should not be confined to any one city. All Canada owes a debt to Thomas D'Arcy McGee. It is true that just at this moment it might be rather difficult to raise sufficient money to erect a suitable monument to his memory, but in such matters Canadians and Irishmen are alike ready to make a sacrifice. The length of time which has been taken in erecting the statue of Sir John Macdonald has been pointed to by some as evidencing a want of enthusiasm on the part of the people over the accomplishments of our leading men. In my opinion the difficulty arose from the fact that the maximum amount was limited; and since the rule on the point has been changed the sum contributed has begun to show not only a visible, but a marked increase. Perhaps this may be useful as a hint to be considered by those who will take the preliminary steps toward the carrying out of the idea suggested by the REGISTER."

Hon. Edward Blake, M. P., when asked for his opinion, would not depart from the rule which he has followed for thirty years in the matter of giving his views for publication. Nevertheless, he incidentally expressed his hearty approval of the proposal to publicly honor the memory of a man to whom Canadians in general and Irish Canadians in particular owe a debt of gratitude. He also asserted his desire to do all he could to help to bring the project to a successful conclusion by any means in his power.

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