

The Fathers of Confederation

ONLY two of the Fathers of Confederation remain to tell the story of the famous Quebec Conference of 1864. One by one this little group of thirty-three has passed away honoured and respected even if there were no other great deed to make the life of each memorable. Most

of them lived to see Confederation a reality, and many of them to see it work out the salvation of five previously unimportant communities. Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and later, British Columbia and Prince Edward Island.

The Quebec conference was the logical outcome of events, but they were stormy events for the statesmen and history makers of that time. Crisis had succeeded crisis in the government of the Province of Canada and ministers were maintained in power by the narrowest margins. Votes of want of confidence were of frequent occurrence and often successful, so that governments came into being like mushrooms in a night, only to perish as swiftly as they rose. Within little more than two years, no less than four different ministries had been condemned. Public affairs were at a dead-lock and frequent dissolutions and elections had only served to aggravate the factional spirit.

Far-seeing statesmen saw that this condition of affairs could not much longer prevail, and, while many had been looking forward to Confederation as a possible solution of the problem, it was Hon. George Brown who gave the matter the first substantial impetus. Mr. Brown had been chairman, early in 1864, of a parliamentary committee appointed to consider the best method of relieving the critical situation which faced the government, and his committee had reported "in favour of changes in the direction of a federative system." He had also expressed the opinion that advantage should be taken of the crisis then existing to settle "forever the constitutional difficulties between Upper and Lower Canada," and he had even expressed his willingness to co-operate "with the existing or any other administration" which would promptly and firmly deal with the question.

The result was, as all readers of Canadian history are aware, the formation of a coalition government of George Brown and John A. Macdonald, which, while it startled the country, was generally approved.

Meantime, in the East, Confederation was also in the air, but it was restricted to a federation of the three maritime provinces. A conference with the object of bringing this about was held at Charlottetown, P.E.I., in September, 1864. To this conference the Canadian coalition government was not invited to send representatives, but eight of the Ministers were sent, nevertheless, and attended the sessions, though they had no official standing. Their arguments in favour of a wider confederation to include the Canadas, as well as the Maritime Provinces, so impressed the delegates that the conference was adjourned to meet at Quebec shortly afterwards.

This conference at Quebec, which began on Oct. 10th, and continued until the 28th of the month, was the historic gathering which succeeded in transferring Confederation from a more or less abstract principle into the domain of practical politics, by the adoption of a series of resolutions which formed the basis of the Imperial legislation of a later date.

The members of the Coalition government at the Quebec conference were:—From Lower Canada—Hon. Sir E. P. Tache, Hon. G. E. Cartier, Hon. A. T. Galt, Hon. J. C. Chapais, Hon. T. D. McGee and Hon. H. L. Langevin. From Upper Canada—Hon. J. A. Macdonald, Hon. Alexander Campbell, Hon. Oliver Mowat, Hon.



Senator A. A. Macdonald.



Sir Charles Tupper, Bart.

THE TWO SURVIVING FATHERS OF CONFEDERATION.

W. McDougall, Hon. Geo. Brown and Hon. James Cockburn.

Nova Scotia was represented by—Hon. Chas. Tupper, Hon. William A. Henry, Hon. Jon. McCully, Hon. Robert B. Dickey, M.L.C. and Hon. A. George Archibald, M.P.P.

The representatives from New Brunswick

were:—Hon. Samuel Leonard Tilley, Hon. John M. Johnson, Hon. Wm. H. Steeves, M.L.C., Hon. Edward Barron Chandler, M.L.C., Hon. Peter Mitchell, M.L.C., Hon. John Hamilton Gray, M.P.P., and Hon. Chas. Fisher, M.P.P.

From Prince Edward Island there were:—Hon. John Hamilton Gray, Hon. Edward Palmer, Hon. William H. Pope, Hon. A. A. Macdonald, M.L.C., Hon. Edward Whelan, M.L.C., Hon. George Coles, M.P.P., and Hon. T. H. Haviland, M.P.P.

Newfoundland sent Hon. F. D. Carter and Hon. John Ambrose Shea.

These are the Fathers of Confederation, and must not be confounded with the Members of the first Dominion Cabinet, some of whom were not Fathers of Confederation.

British Gossip

MR. RICHARD CROKER, whose "Orby" won the Derby, is not a popular character, either in England or America. He was born in Ireland in 1843 and the family emigrated to New York while Richard was a small boy. His childhood was passed in a rough district but he soon showed the qualities of leadership which afterwards made him "Boss" of Tammany Hall. His political career in New York is well-known and is frequently used to point a moral. Some years ago he bought a handsome house near Dublin where he now lives in seclusion and pays little attention to Society, which is probably prepared to smile on the ex-Tammany captain who has accumulated an abundance of worldly goods.

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The pageant business seems to have been overworked in England during the last two months. The Lady Godiva controversy made the Coventry affair decidedly undignified. Tennyson's poem is much better treatment for such a romance than an attempt to place a mediaeval episode in a spectacular modern parade.

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This is assuredly an age of fresh air funds. There is no city more in need of such philanthropy than London, and all classes outside the slums seem to be alive to their menace to social well-being. It is not often that a soldier expresses himself regarding urban philanthropy but Sir Ian Hamilton has drawn attention to a comparatively unnoticed aspect of the slum problem.

The Scottish general says: "As a soldier I feel special sympathy with the idea of this fund, for I am sure that the man who would stand up unflinchingly to modern shrapnel fire, retaining all his eagerness for the impending tussle with bullet and bayonet, must have breathed some fresh air in his childhood and must have seen something better worth dying for than a London slum."

How a slum-dweller can grow up with any respect for himself or pride in his country is difficult to understand. There can be no truer patriotism than the effort to bring sunshine and health to those who live in the shadow of physical and moral death. In spite of the fact that Miss Corelli has written some verses in its behalf, the fresh air fund continues to increase.