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VOL. XIII., No. 23

TORONTO, THURSDAY, JUNE 8, 1905

PRICE FIVE CENTS

TOPICS OF AN OLD-TIMER

Personal Recollections of the Late Hon. William Macdougall—One of the Fathers of Confederation—Farmer, Journalist, and Politician—A Radical Reformer—His opposition to Separate Schools and his abuse of the Catholics, their Bishops and Priests in the "Globe" Newspaper—A Good Speaker, but an Indiscreet and Vindictive Writer—A Lazy man and a Fatalist—Wanting in Personal Magnetism and a poor Campaigner—Hence the nick-name of "Wandering Willie."

I notice by the newspapers that Hon. William Macdougall is dead. He expired at Ottawa city on the 29th of last month, at the advanced age of 83 years. He was one of the fathers of confederation and his is what principally entitled him to distinction. Besides, he was a farmer, journalist, lawyer and politician. He was born in the County of York, but whether in the City of Toronto or the adjacent country his newspaper biographers do not state, and I do not know. The year of his birth was 1822, and his father was John Macdougall, a Scotch Highlander and a United Empire Loyalist, who served in the British Commissariat during the revolutionary war in America. Mr. Macdougall was a graduate of Victoria College, Cobourg. He was admitted to the Upper Canada Bar in 1847, and in 1861 was appointed a Queen's Counsel by the Marquis of Lorne. The only case, however, that I ever knew him to be engaged in was in defence of himself in a libel suit brought against him by Robert Smiley, proprietor and editor of the Hamilton Spectator, whom he had characterized as a "rowdy" in his paper, The North American.

His vocation, however, was the press, and he was a writer for the Examiner, founded by Francis Hincks and published then by James Lesslie. The Examiner was radical in its proclivities and that seemed to suit the subject of my sketch. Two other Toronto men who acquired fame as journalists were associated with Mr. Macdougall in editing and writing for The Examiner, one of whom is yet alive and filling an official position in Toronto. Those were Daniel Morrison and Charles Lindsay. Needless to say that The Examiner was brim full of talent in those days—the forties—and was esteemed and influential.

Mr. Macdougall was a farmer in the forties. His farm was out Yonge street several miles, at what is now Bedford Park, and opposite the farm of another well known newspaper man of former days—Mr. A. H. St. Germain—who is yet alive and active, although well advanced in years. It has been stated in one of the newspaper biographies of Mr. Macdougall that his first journalistic venture was the "North American," established in 1850, ignoring his connection with the Examiner. Farming, not politics, took his attention in a journalistic sense, first having started The Canada Farmer, which was printed in pamphlet form, in 1847, keeping up his work on The Examiner in the meantime. The routine work on The Farmer, however, was largely performed by his relative, Erastus Wiman, then an active youth budding into manhood, and who afterwards performed similar service on The North American.

I remember well the first time I saw William Macdougall. It was in the latter end of 1849, after Hugh B. Wilson from Hamilton, had commenced the publication of his Tory annexation paper, The Canadian Independent, in Toronto. I was in the post office one day—the old post office before that massive structure on Toronto street was built. It was a small, wooden building located on the north side of Wellington street, between what was subsequently known as Leader lane and Church street. A man named Charles Berczy was the postmaster, and a genteel little Irishman named Christopher Walsh attended the delivery wicket.

It appears to have been an English mail day. While I was there a tall, fair complexioned, clean shaven and thin featured young man entered and looked into a letter box. There appeared to be nothing in it for him, and he was going out when the clerk asked him if he did not want any English mail. I never forgot his answer. "No," said he. "The Canadian mail is good enough for me," and away he went.

"Kindly tell me who that gentleman is?" I said to the clerk. That is Mr. William Macdougall of The Examiner, he replied. I never forgot the gentleman after that, and was sure then that there were some radicals in Toronto, notwithstanding its turbulent loyalty and conservatism—and it pleased me.

There was in Toronto at the northwest corner of King and Church streets in 1849, a four-story brick building, the very corner where the street railroad building is now. On the ground floor of this building was a merchant tailor's store. To the rear of this with entrance on Church street, were a couple of law offices, occupied by Cameron & McMichael and another lawyer whose name I do not now remember. The third story was occupied by the office of The Canada Farmer, a monthly publication owned and edited by Mr. Macdougall. The fourth story was occupied by the printing office and editorial department of The Independent, already mentioned. Soon there came another publication called The Canadian Baptist, owned and edited by Mr. David Buchan, and I think occupied after a short time the office of The Independent, which soon ceased publication. The Canadian Baptist had been published in London, but Mr. Buchan, its owner, having received from Lord Elgin the appointment of Bursar of Toronto University, he removed the office hither.

The Baldwin-Lafontaine administration was in power then and had recently removed the seat of government from Montreal to Toronto. The radical element of the reform city was dissatisfied and disgruntled. The tri-weekly Globe was the mouthpiece of the administration and it did not please the malcontents. Neither did The Examiner altogether please them; as I suppose the gentlemen who wrote its articles were not permitted to express themselves as they wished; and the North American was started in 1850, with Mr. Macdougall at its helm, to express and advocate their views. The Clergy Reserves was the rock on which the party had split. The question had long been a bone of contention. Mr. Baldwin, the leader of the administration, was a leading churchman and he was moderate in his views. He was in favor of commuting with the clergy but the radicals, led by Mr. Malcolm Cameron, were not. There was an Anti-Clergy Reserves Association formed that used to meet in Temperance hall on Temperance street, and sometimes the discussions were more violent than temperate. Among the members were George Brown, Hon. Malcolm Cameron, Michael Hamilton Foley, James Lesslie, Alexander Cameron, William Macdougall, Chas. Clarke, David Reesor, Amelius Irving, etc. The association had not yet committed itself and a day was appointed for a debate which was to decide its course of action.

Mr. Brown was the administration leader of the association and the administration was in favor of a moderate course. Malcolm Cameron, M. P., for Kent and Lambton, was leader of the extremists. Now there was about to be born the Clear-Grit party. Mr. Brown was early on the scene and scanned the members as they entered. "The Clear Grits," said he to an associate, "I notice, are mustering strongly here to-day." They did muster strongly enough to carry their point and Mr. Brown was disappointed, but to him was unintentionally given the naming of the new party, whose purpose he disapproved of, although he subsequently became its leader himself. The columns of The Globe after that for a time teemed with denunciations of the "Clear Grits." There were "foolish Clear Grits," "indignant Clear Grits," and all that. The chief offenders appeared to be Malcolm Cameron, Michael Hamilton Foley and William Macdougall, the leaders of the new party.

Then Mr. Brown entertained parliamentary aspirations and announced himself a candidate for the united counties of Kent and Lambton. This was coined a new name that stuck for a long time. It was "Coo'n" Cameron. Kent and Lambton were Mr. Cameron's own constituency. Writing to an associate he said regarding Mr. Brown's candidacy, "Let him come on; we'll give him a coon hunt down the Wabash," using an American saying.

The foundation of the new party opened the sluices of factious feeling that had long been seeking an outlet. The old reform party under

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Baldwin, Hincks and Lafontaine, was deemed too conservative, too slow, too guarded. Canada was groaning under many grievances still, although much relief had been given. The Rebellion Losses, the Seigneurie Tenure, Educational Bills, law reform, land reform, etc., had been enacted.

The programme of the "North American" was somewhat similar to that of the late chartist party in Great Britain—the abolition of property qualification for members of parliament, a household suffrage, vote by ballot, an elective Upper House, representation by population, commercial autonomy, the consolidation of law and equity courts, the application of the clergy reserve lands to educational purposes, lowering the rate of legal interest, the abolition of the law of primogeniture, a decimal currency, biennial parliaments, and a lot of other measures called for by the backward conditions then prevailing, and all of which in the course of progressive legislation have since become laws. The circulation of the North American was not large, as it had out but one canvasser, one John Dixon, an Irish Catholic, in the field, and he thoroughly worked up some of the western counties, such as Oxford, Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk. And there soon sprung up a number of local journals in sympathy with the new movement, that claimed the patronage of the reformers of their localities.

I am in some doubt as to Mr. Macdougall being entitled to be classed as a great journalist. He was a strong and vigorous writer, but he was not a great editor. There is a great difference here. He was a great political fighter to be sure, but the abuse he indulged in was not prudent nor necessary. It was he who first set afloat the charge of being an absconder against the father of George Brown, a charge that was used so unfairly afterwards against the Brown family; and how George Brown could afterwards associate with him in journalism and politics is more than I could understand. He had the reputation of being lazy and slothful, frequently putting off until to-morrow what should be done today. When he was afterwards on The Globe Mr. Gordon Brown once admitted to me that he had failings, "but there is one thing," said he, "that I must say for him; what ever he takes up he follows it to completion."

When in 1854 the Hincks-McNab coalition government was formed, after Mr. Baldwin's retirement from political life, Mr. Brown abandoned the government of that day and became the leader of the Clear Grits, great changes took place in the reform press. The Examiner was "gathered in" by The Globe, and in 1857 The North American went the same way. The Mirror continuing in its old course. In the meantime (1855) a new addition was made to The Toronto press, when the Daily Leader made its appearance, supporting the coalition. With the North American went to The Globe The Canada Farmer. Mr. Macdougall became chief editorial writer, and Mr. Wiman as city reporter. "McKenzie's Message" too, had made its appearance and had encroached somewhat on The North American's field, and notwithstanding their former animosities, Mr. Macdougall and Mr. Brown found it expedient to "pool their issues." Violent as had been The Globe's diatribes against its opponents before that, they had become doubly violent now. The separate school question was under consideration and any public man in any way favoring separate schools was pounced upon and in some instances hounded to his political grave. Mr. Macdougall "outraged Herod" in this kind of journalism in The Globe. He concocted complimentary epithets and raked up private and family matters. In this kind of assault the late Mayor Powes was an especial sufferer. The nickname of "Dogans" was flung at the Catholics day by day. The Lower Canada supporters of separate schools in the legislature were daily denounced as "Moutons," and no one was safe from undesired assault.

There was a time when Mr. Brown found it convenient to clear himself of those diatribes against the Catholics. It was when he was a candidate for parliament for Toronto against Hon. John Hillyard Cameron,

who at that time was Grand Master of the Orangemen of Canada. At one of his meetings in St. Lawrence ward in his speech he made a bid for Catholic support. A man in the audience said to him: "Mr. Brown, if you are so anxious for Catholic support why did you abuse Catholics in your paper as you did?" "I never did it," was Mr. Brown's reply. "William Macdougall did that." But he failed to state that he had hired him for the purpose.

The appearance of D'Arcy McGee on the political scene in 1857 created a change in this condition of affairs and caused Brown, Macdougall and their followers to change their tactics of ruthless assaults on the hierarchy and clergy of the Catholic church. He met them half way and agreed to support representation by population if they would leave the separate schools and their advocates alone; and to this they agreed. Mr. Macdougall found a parliamentary seat for North Oxford and Mr. McGee for Montreal. Mr. Macdougall was a good speaker. He was clear, consecutive and convincing. But he was without wit or humor. Both these men made speeches in the House the same night. McGee's speech was his maiden effort as a member of parliament. It was not only the talk of the town, but the talk of the province next day. It coursed with wit, overflowed with humor, cut keen, with satire and overwhelmed with invective. "Two speeches were made in the House last night," remarked the "Colonist" newspaper next morning. "One was able, eloquent and remarkable, and was made by the new member for Montreal West, Mr. McGee. The other was an ordinary effort and was made by Mr. Macdougall, the member for North Oxford. They formed quite a contrast." But Macdougall was not to be despised as I continued to be one of the best speakers in parliament for several sessions and did a great deal to advance the cause of confederation when that matter came up. While he could present the merits of a cause equal to anybody he had no magnetism, no personal attraction, no elements of cohesion. And all through his political life he was a wanderer. His usefulness as a party man was marred by his vindictiveness and he never rose to the dignity of leadership from a want of consistency of conduct while he was always true to his radical principles, but was capable of abandoning them or letting them rest when expediency suggested that course.

William Macdougall was one of the poorest political campaigners I ever knew. I once had occasion to know this. As a follower of the policy and personality of Mr. McGee, I abandoned my sentiment towards those leaders of the Reform party that had assailed my nationality and my creed and turned in to work for them. When Mr. Macdougall was a candidate for North Ontario—I think it was in 1867—I accompanied him through that riding to influence the Catholic vote in his favor. I rode with him alone. I found he was a good deal of a fatalist. On the first morning of the voting as we rode along I said to him: "Mr. Macdougall, I suppose you are feeling anxious as to how this election is to terminate." "Not in the least," he said: "I felt like I could lay down alongside that fence to sleep and not be disturbed." His opponent on that occasion was Matthew Crooks Cameron, a gentleman of great ability and considerable personal magnetism. But Macdougall took it easy. He was not averse, however, to corrupt practices and I was scandalized to observe this in him on that occasion. At a place called Atherly an old half-pay officer and a Tory, approached him and bargained to cast his own vote, that of his sons and others that he could influence, if Mr. Macdougall would procure an appointment for one of his sons. The candidate agreed to this in my presence without objection. This bargain somehow leaked out and when the old gentleman went up to vote he was immediately challenged and asked if he had not made such a bargain. I happened to be present at the voting booth at the time and was shocked to see the old gentleman swear his vote through, denying the charge and creating a terrible scandal in the community. My candidate went back to Beaverton and went early to bed that night, seemingly indifferent as to the result of the day's voting. A number of reformers, supporters of Mr. Macdougall, met together that evening, however, to receive the returns from the different townships and determine afterwards what should be done for the next day, as the statute provided for two days' voting at that time. It was about twelve o'clock when all the returns were received and it was found that Cameron was just one hundred votes ahead. A gentleman suggested that Mr. Macdougall should be seen and informed of the condition of affairs. I was one of the deputation of two to seek him at once, tell him of the majority against him and advise him to go early next morning into a certain township, move among the voters, and that he would thus secure a large number of votes that otherwise would be lost to him. We were then some fifteen miles distant from Squire Robinson's at Beaverton, where our candidate was taking his rest and feeling less disturbed evidently than any of his friends as to the result. A good, fast horse was secured and away myself and my companion went like the wind to convey our message. When we got to our destination we found it difficult to obtain an audience with our man. He did not even rise from his couch to greet us and ask "what news?" When we suggested to him that he should arise and go to the locality where it was supposed his presence would do some good, he simply yawned and said, "if they do not want to vote for me they can leave it alone." "I thought of the old charges of infidelity and laziness that I had heard brought against him, and concluded that that was the last time I would ever be caught in that kind of fix. The second day's voting simply increased the majority that was rolled up against him the first day. I notice that in The Globe's laudatory editorial on his death, he is credited with having been a member for North Ontario. That is not correct. Matthew Crooks Cameron was the man elected."

I had no intercourse with Mr. Macdougall after that. I wished him well for old acquaintance sake. But he seemed to me a man incapable of making or retaining friends. He had none of that suavity in mode that smoothens life and makes one's progress easy. He was sometimes gloomy and too often resentful. He would at times do ungracious things. For instance, when Mr. McGee failed on that celebrated lecture occasion in St. Lawrence Hall, on the "Middle Classes of England," he was the first person in the audience to rise and leave. Mr. McGee was not so far at "gone" as not to notice that, and remarked upon it to his friends, taking it as a decided discourtesy. But that is another story.

He got the name of "Wandering Willie" from his inability to keep his grip on a constituency that had once chosen him, and was under the necessity to seek new seats so often; and perhaps, somewhat, to his many allies.

I wish I had nothing to say of deceased but what would be to his credit. I wish it for old acquaintance sake; for our intercourse and our friendship; for his efforts in the cause of good government; for the gifts that God gave him; for the Celtic stock from which he sprung; and for his great aid in making "this Canada of ours."

WILLIAM HALLEY.

Archbishop Bruchesi's Tribute to the King

Montreal, May 26.—"To England, and particularly to our beloved Majesty, King Edward VII., we owe a lasting debt of gratitude for our enjoyment of British liberty under the Union Jack in this dear Canada of ours."

Rarely have the people of the parish of Ste. Anne de Bellevue listened with greater enthusiasm to a speaker as they did on Empire Day, when His Grace Archbishop Bruchesi, with burning eloquence addressed them as above on their duties to the State and to the King.

His Grace laid special stress on the generous broadmindedness of His Majesty and the great wisdom of his laws and government, to which was due the free and untrammelled right they enjoyed in the practice of their religion, and he forcefully impressed his hearers with His Majesty's attachment to the Dominion, which was a jewel in the crown he wore.

He concluded his address with urgent solicitations for the prayers of his people that His Majesty may be spared to continue for many years to come the glorious reign which he had so well begun, and, "following the advice of the Apostle St. Paul," he said, "remember always that you owe to your Sovereign and his deputies the respect and submission which is due to them."

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CHARLES DEVLIN, M.P.

Has It Out With Chief Secretary Long, Over Police Ruffianism.

London, May 25.—Mr. Charles Devlin asked for the names of the constables who drew a Mr. Thomas Higgins, J.P., over a stone wall at Carrowkeel on April 30.

Mr. Long—I informed the hon. member on Monday that Mr. Higgins was not thrown over the wall, but that he was merely pushed on by a constable. The name of this particular constable is not known. There were many constables present, and several persons were moved on.

Mr. Charles Devlin—On my own responsibility, and as I was present, I can say that Mr. Higgins was violently thrown over a wall, and I say that the right hon. gentleman's information is inaccurate. I saw the occurrence myself.

Mr. Long said he was given accurate information on the point.

Mr. DeLaney—Will the right hon. gentleman say whether it is a fact Mr. Higgins might have lost his life on this occasion if there were not people at the other side of the wall to catch him when the police threw him over?

Mr. Devlin—I saw them, and I say it was a most brutal exhibition on the part of the police (Irish cheers).

Captain Donelan—Will the right hon. gentleman take steps to obtain accurate information on this subject?

Mr. Long—I have done so.

Mr. Devlin—I hold to my statement that my information is quite accurate.

Mr. Redmond—The right hon. gentleman has given certain information to the House, namely, that this gentleman was not thrown over the wall by the police. Mr. hon. friend says he was present on the occasion and saw him thrown over, and yet in the face of that statement by an hon. member of this House, the right hon. gentleman says he still adheres to his opinion that his information is accurate. I wish to ask is that in order? (Irish cheers).

Mr. Moore—The facts only are at issue (laughter).

The Deputy Speaker—This is not the time for making statements and contradicting them. This is the time for asking questions. The matter can be raised at a later stage and threshed out.

Mr. Redmond—Do you mean at the end of questions? This is a statement made across the floor of the House impugning the testimony of an hon. member who witnessed the occurrence.

Mr. Devlin—If I cannot raise this at the end of questions I am precluded from raising it at all, because a blocking motion has been put down.

The Deputy Speaker—I do not think this is a question which could be raised as a matter of privilege at the end of question time. It could be fully discussed in Supply on the proper vote.

Mr. Devlin—But the Chief Secretary has impugned my veracity, and I think I ought to be allowed to state exactly what occurred.

Mr. Corbett rose amid shouts of "sit down" and "throw him over the bench."

The Deputy Speaker—The matter cannot now be discussed. This is a time allotted for the asking of questions on the paper.

Mr. Devlin—I will not discuss against your ruling, but I adhere to my statement as absolutely accurate (Irish cheers).

Mr. P. O'Brien—We will get Corbett over the wall at the next election (laughter).

Irish M.P. Dead

Mr. W. O'Doherty, M.P., who was seized with apoplexy and paralysis at the House of Commons, died in Westminster Hospital last week. His death creates a vacancy in the representation of North Donegal, for which division he had sat as a Nationalist since 1900, when he was returned by a majority of 950 over Mr. O'Connor, Independent Nationalist. Mr. O'Doherty was born in 1868, was admitted a solicitor in 1893, and had held several public offices in Londonderry.

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