

OUR CANADIAN PORTRAIT GALLERY.

No. 66.—THE LATE HON. T. D. MCGEE.

It is not our purpose to give a long account of the life of the Hon. T. D. McGee, who, three years ago, met such a tragic end on the streets of Ottawa; for many sketches of his career have been written, and some of them are to be found in almost every library in Canada. It is fitting, however, that his portrait should occupy a place in our Gallery, and we have chosen the present occasion for its insertion.

Thomas D'Arcy McGee was born at Carlingford, Ireland, on the 13th April, 1825, and was, consequently, forty-three years of age at the time of his death. At the age of seventeen he went to the United States, and soon afterwards began his career as a journalist and lecturer. In 1845 he returned to Ireland and obtained a position on the staff of the *Freeman's Journal*. He soon after got deeply involved in the "Young Ireland" movement, on the collapse of which he was fain to make a hurried return to the United States. The hot blood of youth still coursing in his veins, he continued to do and say some things which his maturer judgment condemned. In less than ten years he became cured of his Republican notions and on the invitation of a large number of prominent Irishmen throughout Canada, he took up his residence in this city. At the general election in 1857 he was elected as one of the representatives of Montreal and continued to sit for the Western division until his death. He was a member of the Macdonald-Sicotte Government for about a year, and returned to office again in 1864, when the late Sir E. P. Taché formed his Ministry. Mr. McGee continued in the Government until 1st July, 1867, when for state reasons he, along with Dr. Tupper, declined the proffered portfolios in the Dominion Cabinet. He had endured a long sickness, terminating in renewed health and vigour, and was just beginning to resume an active part in public affairs when he was suddenly cut down on the 7th April, 1868. So far removed from the scene the following account reads as if altogether surcharged with feeling; but at the time of the melancholy occurrence, it was read in Ottawa with sad interest and held to be but a moderate expression of the public excitement and sorrow; the extract below is from the editorial which appeared in the *Ottawa Times* on the morning of Tuesday, April 7th, 1868, and must have been written within about two hours after Mr. McGee was shot:

"With feelings which we cannot describe we record the instantaneous death of the Honourable THOMAS D'ARCY MCGEE, by the bullet of the assassin, treacherously fired from behind, at the very moment that the honourable gentleman was in the act of inserting his latch-key in the street door of his lodging-house, about half-past two o'clock this morning. Poor McGee! But a short time before he had been speaking as only he could speak, and in one of the very highest strains of his eloquence, on the subject of Union and good will among all the people of these provinces. He had threatened Nova Scotia that she would be conquered with kindness, and in a few hours afterwards he was a corpse by the hand of the murderous assassin! Our heart is too full for utterance on such a horrible event, with the sound of the fatal shot almost ringing in our ears; it will send a thrill of horror through the heart of every Christian man, not only in the wide Dominion of Canada, but wherever the English language is spoken, and in every country of the civilized world. The martyr McGee will take his place in history among the brightest and most noble victims ever cruelly sacrificed by ruffian hands, because of devotion to their country. Perhaps it was fitting that on the eve of his sacrifice he should have devoted his peerless eloquence to teaching the sublime lesson of patriotism to less devoted men.

"Mr. McGee had left the House of Commons a little after two o'clock, in the company of Mr. McFarlane, M. P., and Mr. Buckley. At the south-east corner of Metcalf and Sparks Streets, Mr. McFarlane left him; at the corner Mr. Buckley turned in the direction of his own home, and Mr. McGee had only to walk with clear moonlight, almost as bright as day, to his lodgings at the Toronto House on Sparks street. Arrived there (not more than two minutes' walk from Metcalf street), and just while inserting the latch-key into the door, the sound of which attracted Mrs. Trotter, who immediately came to open it, and as she did so she heard the sound of a pistol-shot simultaneously with the sight of the flash, and shutting the door again in an instant raised the alarm in the house.

"Dr. Robitaille and other boarders immediately rushed down stairs, and the door being opened all that was mortal of the gifted orator, the distinguished statesman, the patriotic Irish Canadian, THOMAS D'ARCY MCGEE, was found lying across the sidewalk!

"Mrs. Trotter's son, a page in the House, had just turned the corner of Wellington on to O'Connor street when the shot was fired, and coming down, as he could in a few seconds to Sparks street, he saw a man lying in front of his mother's door, and ran in consternation to the *Times* office to inform the printers of what he had seen. The alarm was immediately spread, and members of Parliament, including Sir John A. Macdonald, the Speaker, Hon. J. S. Macdonald, Hon. Mr. Chapais, with a great many others, besides the Sheriff, the Police Magistrate, medical men, &c., &c., were speedily on the spot.

"The body, which had fallen directly back from the door, had been in the mean time raised, leaving a large pool of blood which not only clotted on the planks, but ran into the street gutter beyond; and it was found that the ball had entered the back of his head, passed through his mouth, removing two of his front teeth, and lodged in the door, where it was subsequently found, as was also his latch-key, which he had just inserted for the purpose of opening the door!

"His half-smoked cigar which he had lighted at the House (of Commons) was also found near the door-step. The bare recital of these facts, which chills our very heart's blood, reveals a base, preconcerted, and, perhaps, long calculated murder, of which the annals of the most atrocious villainy may be searched in vain for a parallel! Sacrificed he was, and not for any personal crime, not for any deed done to any single

individual, but because he had the courage, the patriotism, the manhood to stand up boldly and speak out frankly for the principles and the institutions in which he trusted. Never was mortal man more truly or more cruelly murdered.

"On Monday next, the 13th inst., poor McGee would, had life been spared to him, have completed his forty-third year. He was just about fairly recuperated from his long and tedious illness, and all his personal and political friends were delighted to think that he was again restored to public usefulness. What are the reflections of his enemies to-day?

"Alas! Poor McGee! The great heart of the Dominion will ache to its very core, the warm flush of sympathy in the breast of every honest man who claims the name of Irishman will bedew his cheeks with tears; the patriot sons of the British Isles will mourn, and from the very antipodes will come back the cry of wailing to answer the lamentations; that in the pride of thy manhood and the prime of thy usefulness, the monument of thy fame has been broken at mid-height! We can but say as thou hast but recently and so well said of a dear departed friend—and when we say it we try to blind our eyes from the vision of thy vile assassin—'Miserere Domine!'

Mr. McGee was a prolific writer, a clever poet, and a most persuasive orator. Scarcely a year passed from 1844 to the time of his death, without some work being published by him. Morgan's *Bibliotheca Canadensis* enumerates seventeen, exclusive of his lectures on literary subjects. Perhaps the highest compliment paid to his statesmanship was that of Mr. Gladstone, who declared that the time had come for the Imperial Government to adopt the course towards Ireland recommended by Mr. McGee of trying "the policy of even-handed justice." The late Earl Derby also expressed his unqualified approval of Mr. McGee's later utterances on Imperial and Colonial questions.

No. 67.—JAMES O'REILLY, Esq., Q. C.

The portly figure of this prominent member of the bar of Upper Canada, in the eastern district of that Province, is well known throughout the country, and fittingly takes its place in our Gallery this week *vis-a-vis* with that of the late Mr. McGee. Mr. O'Reilly has won his high position solely through his personal abilities. The wisdom of Sir John A. Macdonald in appointing Mr. O'Reilly to investigate the case of poor McGee's death was fully proved by the wondrously judicious manner in which Mr. O'Reilly conducted the preliminary investigation, and connected the various scraps of evidence by which he made out such a strong and convincing chain of evidence against the murderer. Probably the annals of no country contain a record more remarkable. Certainly Canada never before witnessed a trial so unequal, coming to a conclusion that so well fulfilled the public expectation. Against Mr. O'Reilly were pitted the Hon. John Hillyard Cameron, the very Nestor of the Upper Canada Bar, and a man of extraordinary powers of intellect, and wonderful smoothness of speech; Hon. M. C. Cameron, considered by many only second to his illustrious namesake; and Kenneth McKenzie, who, if not remarkable for forensic eloquence, stands second to none for legal lore. And this splendid trio of Upper Canada legal talent was backed by the cleverest criminal lawyer which the Quebec bar afforded, yet Mr. O'Reilly faced the formidable phalanx, won his case before the jury; stood an appeal to the Supreme Court, and finally secured from the United Bench of Upper Canada a confirmation of the verdict rendered by the honest and independent jurymen of Carleton. This was undoubtedly one of the greatest triumphs ever achieved at the Ontario bar.

The following biographical sketch of Mr. O'Reilly is copied from the advanced sheets of a new work—"Men of the Dominion"—by Henry J. Morgan, Esq.:

"James O'Reilly, Q. C., was born in the County of Mayo, Ireland, on the 16th of September, 1823. His father, Peter O'Reilly, Esq., descendant of the O'Reillys of Cavan, now in his eightieth year, immigrated from Ireland to Canada in 1832, the year of the first cholera, and settled at Belleville, in the County of Hastings, where he was engaged in mercantile business for a number of years—until the breaking out of the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-38, when he turned out with his regiment, the 2nd Hastings Militia, in which corps he held a commission as captain. He continued with his company in active service for two years, and secured the thanks of the Lieut.-Governor of Upper Canada for his services and loyalty to the Crown.

"In 1842 young O'Reilly commenced the study of the law, being that year admitted a member of the Law Society of Upper Canada, and the first student examined by the present Secretary of that Society, Hugh N. Gwynne, Esq. He first entered the law office of Charles Otis Benson, then a prominent barrister in Belleville, where a short time before he had completed his education under the direction of the late William Hutton, Esq., the head of the Grammar School for the County of Hastings. Mr. Hutton, a relative of Sir Francis Hincks, was a gentleman of learning and ability, who subsequently held an important position in the Bureau of Statistics in the old Province of Canada.

"Mr. O'Reilly remained only a short time with Mr. Benson, when he entered the office of the Hon. John Ross, Q. C., subsequently Attorney-General for Upper Canada, then engaged in the practice of his profession, and supposed to have secured the largest practice of any law office in the Province. He remained in Mr. Ross's office until a few months before he was called to the bar, when he went to Toronto and completed his law studies in the office of Messrs. Crawford & Hagarty—John Crawford Esq., M. P., and the present Chief-Justice of the Common Pleas.

"He was called to the bar on the 9th of August, 1847, and immediately commenced the practice of his profession in the city of Kingston—the leading members of the bar at Kingston being the present Premier of Canada, Sir John A. Macdonald, K. G. B., the Honourable Alexander

Campbell, Postmaster-General; the late Thomas Kirkpatrick, Q. C., and M. P.; and the late Sir Henry Smith, Q. C.—a good school to try the mettle of a young advocate. Mr. O'Reilly, in a wonderfully short time, secured a large and lucrative practice, and at one assize held no less than eighty-seven Briefs on the civil side of the court, besides a number of criminal causes, in which he was engaged as leading Counsel. The first important capital case was that of the Queen v. Brunhour for murder. It created much public notice at the time from the extraordinary circumstances connected with the alleged commission of the crime. After two days' investigation of the evidence, the jury acquitted the prisoner, and Sir James McAulay, the presiding judge, paid a high compliment to the young advocate for the skill and ability shown by him in the defence of his client. Shortly after this he was associated with Mr. Kenneth McKenzie, Q. C., for the defence in the case of the Queen v. Mrs. Asanath Smith, for poisoning by strychnine. The prisoner, after an extraordinary effort on the part of her counsel, was acquitted; but so great was the public indignation at the escape of the prisoner, that a guard had to accompany her to the American steamer to save her from the threatened violence of the people. Mr. O'Reilly, however, shared largely in the *clat* obtained by the counsel of Mrs. Smith. The case attracted considerable notoriety in England, being reported in the *Medical Journal* as the first trial in the colonies for murder by strychnine, where the colour-test—well known to chemists—was employed. Mr. O'Reilly's forensic powers were of no mean order, and an opportunity for their display was shortly given in a libel suit brought by Mr. Kenneth McKenzie, Q. C., v. the Publisher of the *Daily News*, Kingston, for an alleged libel on the professional character and standing of that learned gentleman. He was opposed by the eminent counsel, the Hon. J. Hillyard Cameron, Q. C., who held the leading brief for the defence—Mr. O'Reilly was the plaintiff counsel; the result being a verdict for the plaintiff and \$250 damages—at that time considered to be a large verdict against a public journalist. Next to the celebrated McGee case, that of the Queen v. Mrs. Bridget Farady, for the murder of her brother-in-law by poisoning, is the most remarkable. The case was tried at the spring assizes of 1867, county of Victoria. The plea was that of insanity and which, strange to say, was the first case known either in the annals of the British or Canadian Courts, where a plea of insanity proved successful on a charge of homicide by poisoning. The fact of the administration of poison to procure death, requiring care, thought and design, is incompatible with the presence of insanity at the time of the commission of the offence.

"He served in the City Council of Kingston for a few years as Alderman, being elected almost unanimously after a residence of some eighteen months in Kingston. Several times asked by his political chief, Sir John A. Macdonald, to enter political life, he steadily declined, preferring to continue in the practice of his profession. He was also solicited to stand for the Local House at the last general election.

"He was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1854, and succeeded the late A. J. Macdonell, Esq., as Recorder of Kingston, which he filled until abolished in 1869, by the Local Government of Ontario.

"Mr. O'Reilly is a Bencher of the Law Society of Upper Canada, and in 1869 was called to the Quebec Bar."

THE ROYAL MARRIAGE.

(From our Special London Artist and Correspondent.)

Windsor, England, }
March 14, 1871. }

The Royal Borough is now approaching a culminating pitch of excitement, in anticipation of the great event of the 21st inst., the marriage of H. R. H. the Princess Louise. Crowds of visitors from London are pouring into the residential town and making determined raids after lodgings, and for these, when they are to be found, fabulous sums are extorted by those of Her Majesty's neighbours who have rooms to spare. Small parlours in antiquated houses, and garret-like sleeping chambers, let for an amount almost sufficient to cover an entire year's rent, and 'tis my belief, if the demand increases steadily during the next few days, that many will have to content themselves with shut up bedsteads in obscure cupboards—cupboards that have not been opened since the time of Elizabeth, William III, or Queen Anne. The only persons who seem to view the present feverish state of affairs with philosophy, are the soldiers of the garrison, who are certain, whatever may betide, of their bed and board, and an unobstructed sight of the pageant. Brown, Jones and Robinson, for a consideration, may succeed in obtaining a billet in the town, but it is quite another question as to whether Robinson, Jones and Brown will have interest enough to secure a position within the precincts of the Castle; however, they are courageously determined to do their best—in fact, I may suggest that their's is, in every sense, a *for Lorne hope*. By the way, that reminds me that the Bishops will most undoubtedly wear the Lorne Sleeves at the marriage ceremony.

Let me tell you that making the preparatory sketches of architecture, &c., in St. George's Chapel, for the coming event, is by no means a pleasant task. The building, despite a brave defence on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities, has been wrested from the Dean, and handed over entirely to an army of noisy workmen. Where, heretofore, the swelling anthem has been chaunted, twice, daily—and remember we are in the midst of Lent—a clang of hammers resounds among the vaulted traceries of the roof, and profane whistling echoes through the choir instead of the deep or flute-like tones of the organ. Tavern boys troop over tombs of buried kings with clanking pots of beer, and thirsty carpenters and upholsterers' men give their bellowing orders for "another half-pint." Now and again a huge plank falls with a crash on the tessellated pavement and coarse adjectives are heard, where but yesterday prayers were intoned commending the Sovereign and her Garter Knights to the guidance and care of their Maker. Aproned labourers are perched on ladders with long brooms, bringing clouds of dust from the pendant banners, that wave in all their pomp, surrounded by crests of kings, emperors, and nobles of every degree. And there is one om-