

for grave reflections on grave thoughts. The truth is, that Mr. McGee always seemed to be, in spite of himself, either mischievous or playful: and regardless alike of the place or the occasion, he appeared to be seized with an irresistible impulse to scatter about him an uncomfortable kind of melo-dramatic spray which occasionally drifted and thickened into a rain of searching, infectious, comic banter, which, as a matter of course, amidst roars of laughter, would drown reason, logic and speech in a flood of exuberant fun. Such efforts, however, did not always succeed. Indeed, more clever than praiseworthy, they scarcely deserved success, for people do not always admire what they laugh at. Reaction follows every kind of excess. Members began to talk of decorum of debate, and the necessity of recalling the House to a state of order. None better than Mr. McGee knew that he could, if occasion needed, be grave as well as gay, wise as well as witty, serious as well as jocose. He knew that he could lead thought as well as provoke mirth. He knew that at the fitting time he could make for himself a name, and for his adopted country a place, which would attract respect and honor in both hemispheres.

Having fairly looked his work in the face, Mr. McGee would, as we might reasonably conjecture, cast about him for fitting co-operators. This portion of his public life seems to have been beset with perplexing peculiarities. With an upper-crust of paradox there must, we may suppose, have been an under-current of contradiction. As a party man, Mr. McGee chose his side, but in the presence of his declared principles and published opinions it is difficult to understand by what laws his choice was determined. On his arrival in Canada, he had, for reasons which he deemed to be sufficient, declared himself to be "against the Government." Nor can it be denied that for the space of six years he proved the sincerity of his declaration. On the 20th May, 1862, the fortress which he had so persistently battered, fell, for the Cartier-Macdonald administration, which he had opposed and denounced, having been defeated on the motion for reading the Militia Bill the second time, was constrained to resign. In the Sandfield Macdonald-Sicotte administration, which succeeded to power, the subject of our sketch was offered and accepted the office of President of the Council.