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LONDON, SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 1925

### CENTENARY CELEBRATION OF THE FIRST CANADIAN

If the Honorable Charles Murphy never did anything else for the land he loves and serves, the centenary celebration of the birth of Thomas D'Arcy McGee, which he so nobly conceived and so worthily carried out, would place him high among those who have rendered distinguished service to Canada.

History is a lamp to the feet of those who would do their part in guiding the destiny of a people. And in the history of Canada, Thomas D'Arcy McGee has written a glorious chapter. But that chapter was obscured and half-forgotten until the worthy conception, the genius for organization, and the "driving power" of Mr. Murphy revealed its glory and its inspiration on the hundredth anniversary of the birth of its author.

Never was a lesson in history so successfully, so luminously taught. The McGee centenary celebration has illumined the mind and stirred the heart of all Canada. Across the years a new generation of Canadians listened to "the prophet of Confederation, the triumphant missionary of union" tell again with that marvellous eloquence, that shines even through the printed page, of his vision splendid of a great new northern nation.

"The story of a nation's heroes is the fountain source from which it draws the wine of its later life. There is no inspiration that so quickens the ambition of youth, stimulates public service and deepens love of country like the memory of great men who have gone."

Thus the Right Honorable Arthur Meighen, in an address whose eloquence and diction proclaim his racial kinship with McGee, struck the keynote of his eulogy and pointed the moral of the whole celebration. We are proud to devote almost all the space of the CATHOLIC RECORD this week to this great lesson in Canadian history. If we quote here some pregnant passages from the memorable speeches delivered it is because we would move the most lethargic to read, to re-read, and to read again the eloquent and sincere tributes to one of the greatest of the makers of Canada.

Speaking of these Mr. Meighen truly says they "have receded out of politics into history."

"Nothing left now to distort the perspective with which we can view the men of that time and measure their powers, their motives, and their achievements. There are some of those giants who have stood every test, who have grown in stature through half a century of criticism and whose place in our annals is now forever secure. One of these is Thomas D'Arcy McGee."

Again:

"If Macdonald and Cartier were the architects of Confederation, D'Arcy McGee was its prophet. He it was who in its grandest form caught the vision splendid; he it was who spread the fervor with which he was himself consumed; he it was whose restless pen and matchless platform power carried right into the hearts of the masses his message of tolerance and good will. It was D'Arcy McGee who was the triumphant missionary of union."

"It is seldom," said the Right Honorable, the Prime Minister, "so many circumstances combine to give to an occasion the memorable character of the one we are assembled to celebrate this evening." From the statesman's point of view Mr. King appraised the qualities and achievements of McGee.

"With the seer's vision he looked into the future, to a Canada as wide as the seas are apart; single in aim and purpose, and utilizing for

the good of all what properly was the inheritance of all.

"One cannot look back on those years preceding Confederation without feeling that to one of McGee's vision, passion for unity and love of country, it was a great moment in which to have lived."

The always gracefully and lucidly eloquent Speaker of the House of Commons, the Honorable Rodolph Lemieux, in proposing the toast to the Memory of Thomas D'Arcy McGee, said:

"It is only fitting and proper that on this centennial, grateful Canadians should pause and unite in paying a solemn homage to one of the intellectual giants of this country, draw inspiration from the life which shed luster on the land of his birth and the country of his adoption."

And he concluded by pointing out one of the great and inspiring lessons learned from a study of the life and work of McGee:

"If the voice of McGee could still be heard, there would come from his lips a call to the faint-hearted: Stand foursquare for Canada, have faith in her institutions and in her future of immeasurable possibilities."

Mr. Beatty, President of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, showed that he felt the spell of McGee's eloquence in his speech before the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society of Quebec in 1892, and he made it plain that he thinks Canadians of today might profit by the dead statesman's wise counsels.

"No deeper philosophy or finer inspiration has fallen from the lips of any public man than the following paragraph which I will quote:

"All we have to do is, each for himself, to keep down dissensions which can only weaken, impoverish and keep back the country, each for himself do all he can to increase its wealth, its strength and its reputation, each for himself, you and you, gentlemen and all of us, to welcome every talent, to hail every invention, to cherish every gem of art, to foster every gleam of authorship, to honor every acquirement and every natural gift; to lift ourselves to the level of our destinies, to rise above all low limitations and narrow circumstances, to cultivate that true catholicity of spirit which embraces all creeds, all classes and all races, in order to make of our boundless provinces, so rich in known and unknown resources, a great new Northern Nation."

"In this inspiring passage I would first draw your attention to a phrase which is repeated three times, namely, the phrase 'each for himself.' Here, I think, is a view of the national spirit which of recent years has inclined to be obscured, but which to my mind is vital. Whenever any problem has to be faced, any enterprise has to be promoted, we hear at once the cry, 'Why does not the government do something?' a cry which is not stayed until some government department has been forced to undertake work which may not be the proper function of government at all. Instead of each of us doing it for ourselves, we leave it to George."

The paragraph Mr. Beatty quotes we have given before. We have no apology to make for repeating the quotation. It might well be a memory selection in our school readers. When we quoted the passage a month ago we made this comment singularly like that of Mr. Beatty:

"That virile iteration 'each for himself' points its moral today and always. We are apt to forget that only when Canadians, 'each for himself,' rise to the higher conception of patriotic and civic duty that Canada can realize that great destiny foreseen and striven for by D'Arcy McGee."

The greatest men in Canadian public life from that modest hero and sterling character Baron Byng of Vimy, the Governor-General of Canada, down; men and women in all walks of life; the best that this virile nation of the north can boast; all were proud to be associated with the commemoration of the great patriot-statesman to whom Canada will forever be indebted. The more the life of D'Arcy McGee is studied the deeper will be the appreciation of his magnificent work in nation-building, the more receptive shall we be to the inspiring lessons of patriotism which McGee above and beyond all others is the great and eloquent teacher.

At long last McGee has come into his own, and to her sons and daughters Canada's story thereby becomes immeasurably more inspiring.

### HOW WE TEACH HISTORY

"With unreserved enthusiasm I congratulate the authors of tonight's event—and particularly Hon. Charles Murphy, to whom we owe its conception and to whose driving power we certainly owe its success. It will be a good thing for the national spirit of Canada, it will help develop a real national personality when we can all join in veneration of the great deeds of the fathers of our country. It will help marvellously the cause of unity in this Dominion when all of us get to realize that we as well as other nations have our patriarchs, men and women who have lived great lives, given to their country the last full measure of devotion and left an inheritance of fame which is now to every province a common treasure and a common pride. Here we are gathered in hundreds three score years after the death of D'Arcy McGee and we are going to see to it, if we can, that this great Irishman, this great missionary of Ireland, this far greater Canadian and missionary of Empire, comes at last into his own.—The Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen.

That paragraph from Mr. Meighen's speech at the McGee celebration explains its purpose and indicates its significance. Its purpose will be accomplished if the great and first Canadian comes at last into his own.

Mr. Murphy knew that his idea of a fitting celebration of McGee's centenary could not fail, if adequately carried out, to stimulate greatly the study of the life and work of the man it was designed to honor. Study has been stimulated to an extent that must satisfy even the enthusiastic Mr. Murphy, and that is the one reward he would desire for his indefatigable work to have McGee "come into his own."

In his closing speech at the banquet Mr. Murphy must have astonished that brilliant gathering, that had just heard the eloquent and sincere tributes to McGee's work and worth, when he said:

"The first suggestion that I have to offer is one relating to the position accorded McGee in Canadian history by the writers of Canadian text books for use in the schools."

"Doubtless, you will be surprised to learn that in these text books there is no mention made of the name of McGee."

"This omission was first brought to my notice by Mr. M. C. Geary of Saskatoon."

"Another correspondent, the Rev. Mr. Graham, writing from the Manse, at Sovereign, Saskatchewan, dealt with the same subject in these terms:

"As an Irish-Canadian, deeply interested in the forthcoming centenary of Thomas D'Arcy McGee, I beg to draw your attention to the fact that in the school history of Canada the name of Thomas D'Arcy McGee is not even mentioned."

"The history referred to is used in the Saskatchewan public schools at present; and I note that it is used in Ontario—indeed my copy is labeled 'The Ontario Public School History of Canada.'"

"Could not something be said or done at your Ottawa meetings to draw attention to the matter, and have this book revised in accordance with the fact, or else turned down by the proper authorities?"

"May I say that I am a Presbyterian minister out here, and a member of the St. Patrick's Society of Saskatoon."

"These extracts make it plain that here and now we should resolve that Canadian school histories must be re-written in the light of truth and justice and without delay. That is a duty we owe to the land we live in, and to the youth of the country who are to be the future leaders of public opinion in Canada."

Mr. Lemieux said truly that "there is no history so picturesque and so dramatic as that of Canada."

Again he said: "Of all those who led in the movement for the union in 1867 Thomas D'Arcy McGee is assuredly the one who was the most romantic and arresting."

Picturesque and dramatic our school histories emphatically are not; perhaps the fact that the career of McGee was most romantic and arresting was sufficient reason for the compilers of Canadian his-

tory text books to suppress all mention of him or of his great work. Well, they might have done worse, they might have damned him with faint praise. Is this a case of deliberate suppressio veri, and suggestio falsi, or is it just the plain dry-as-dust consistency that makes our school history books succeed in nothing but arousing a distaste for all historical reading?

### THE FIRE

There was a fire last week at Mount St. Joseph Orphanage where your humble servant, the Editor of THE CATHOLIC RECORD, is resident chaplain. It was only when newspapers from distant points reached us that we realized the shock the first alarming despatches must have caused many of our friends. These first despatches told the truth—the fine old building was apparently doomed to entire destruction. But the gallant London Fire Brigade, under the masterly direction of Chief Aitken himself, achieved the impossible and confined the fire to the attic story in which it originated. All London is congratulating the Chief and his men; at Mount St. Joseph they will always have a place in the prayers of the little ones, the Sisters and the Chaplain.

### NOTES AND COMMENTS

A LEADING firm of art dealers in New York are suing the Telephone Company for \$60,000 damages owing to the omission of their name from the quarterly issue of the directory. Evidently telephone subscribers are not to have a monopoly of trouble.

A CONTRIBUTOR to the Edinburgh Weekly Scotsman writes that when he left London the last week in March that city was "basking in early morning sunshine of almost summer warmth," and that north of Newcastle Bamburgh Castle and St. Cuthbert's Holy Isle were clearly defined against a blue sky on a bright spring evening but that he crossed the border into Scotland in a snowstorm, and that the Pentlands were "white to the hill-tops." Backward springs are not peculiar to Canada.

It is not alone in the practices of advanced English churchmen that the dawning of a better day in regard to the conception of pre-Reformation times is to be noted, but in the larger vision of writers and students of history. The tradition which held so long as to the mental and moral condition of the people in those old Catholic times is surely if slowly breaking before the sun of investigation, and men begin to see that, as Maitland said so many years ago, the so-called "dark" ages were in many respects far in advance of our own. Cardinal Gasquet by his great work on the English Monasteries forever dispelled the pernicious tradition that those institutions destroyed by the rapacity of Henry VIII. were but the abodes of corruption; and many lesser writers have not been slow to follow in his train.

A good example of this new spirit is to be seen in a recently published "Short History of Somerset" (Methuen & Co.) by Walter Raymond. The book is written primarily for young people, but may be read with pleasure and profit by more advanced students. In writing this little history of the country in which I have the good fortune to live, the author writes in his Preface, "I have sought to awaken in the minds of the people and especially the children of Somerset an appreciation of the natural beauty which surrounds them, and of the places and objects of interest which abound on every side. But it has not been possible to tell them all, and the book is, at the most, an invitation to explore for themselves. My hope is that to read some of the legends and history of their country may not prove a task, and that, having taken these little excursions in my company they may hereafter travel abroad for themselves." And when it is added that the country gone over embraces the field of the exploits of King Arthur and King Alfred it is unnecessary to enlarge upon its historical and poetic charm.

SOMERSET CONTAINS within its borders many old churches and abbeys, mostly in ruin, but eloquent in their silent stones. Glasstonbury was one of the greatest monastic houses in England, and

is even today a place of pilgrimage to the studious and the devout. It is in contemplation of its magnificent fabric that Mr. Raymond gives voice to his thoughts on the institution of monasticism itself in these old days. For example: "It is common in the present day to jeer at monks; and to think of them as dishonest men, who pretended to lead holy lives whilst they were wicked in secret and bound themselves by vows they did not fulfil. If you see a picture drawn today of monastic life it is frequently some scene of feasting or revelry, or one in which the monks are made to look absurd. No doubt disorders at last crept into many religious houses, and there may have been great need to reform them, but it is impossible to look at the fragments and ruins of abbeys and priories remaining in our country without feeling that only a deep sincerity could have raised the magnificent buildings of which we do but see the crumbling walls."

OR THIS: "We must not judge the past by the thoughts and ideas which guide the world today. Things that have been quite wisely left behind were stepping-stones to the advantages we now enjoy. When many of the abbeys were founded, the greater part of England was unenclosed forest with few roads. Towns were small and far apart. The barons living in their castles were constantly at war with one another. It was a life of strife, and probably few Norman nobles could read and write. Printing was not known; and as all books had to be written by hand, they were rare and costly. The monasteries alone could provide them, for only they had libraries; and some of the monks were always busy making copies of books to be sold or exchanged for others they did not possess. Thus, in the quietude of the abbeys, learning found safety in the dark ages."

ONE OF THE things England lost by the Reformation was that old Catholic spirit of charity and of kindly hospitality which had flourished ever since the introduction of Christianity. The poor were not paupers in those days, nor were they debased by the modern doctrine. Sustenance in time of need came as a Christian right, and they were not lowered but raised as objects of Christian charity. No stranger was refused hospitality even at the lowliest cottage, for the people had been taught to believe that in turning a poor man from their door they might turn away Christ Himself, whose assurance they had ever in mind that an act of charity done to an outcast was done to Him.

AS TO THE part of the monasteries in this universal conception of the Christian spirit Mr. Raymond has this to say: "They also gave free lodging to travellers who otherwise would have had nowhere to go. The earl with his retinue and the poor pilgrim wending his way to some distant shrine were alike made welcome. A guest was permitted to remain for two days and two nights, so that himself and his horses might be well rested; but if for any good reason he desired to stay longer, he could only do so by permission of the abbot. The humblest person could have food and shelter. In a cell close by the gate was a porter, whose duty it was not only to open to visitors, but to bestow bread and refreshment to the poor who were in need of it." How different from the era of degradation of the poor which the "Great Pillage" of the sixteenth century ushered in!

DISCUSSION AS to the fitness of Canada as a field for emigration continues to occupy much space in old-country papers. The Edinburgh Weekly Scotsman in particular, whose editor visited Canada last year, has given much attention to the subject, and published a great deal of correspondence, pro and con. Commenting on a letter from Toronto, which certainly gives utterance to very uncomplimentary opinions regarding the country as a whole, the Editor pens this rejoinder: "It should be explained that practically all the unemployed in Canada drift to Toronto as the most favorable point for entry into the United States, and it is natural that that city should contain among those who are influenced by asserive conditions, the most deep-dyed pessimists in the whole of Canada. It is freely admitted that Canada has had a period of depression. But the whole question is, 'Does

Canada offer better prospects than the worker has in this country?' It may not do so in the towns, but informed opinion is unanimous in declaring that the man who is prepared to work and to stick to the land will 'make good.'"

### THOMAS D'ARCY MCGEE

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when in no uncertain manner it threatened to display its ugly mien on this side of the Atlantic. To this patriotic cause he died a martyr.

### HIS LOVE OF COUNTRY

"Lastly, I should mention as the third of the qualities of constructive statesmanship pre-eminent in McGee, his belief in nationality, which is another way of expressing what we mean when we speak of love of country. In a sense this was the alpha and omega of all the rest. I like particularly the way in which as a mere youth in Ireland, he sought by voice and pen, in prose and in verse, to give to Irishmen a pride in their race and in their native land. How he labored to have them appreciate that they had distinctive characteristics worthy of being cherished; traditions and a history of their own, a literature of their own, and art of their own, all expressive of the genius of the race and the warmth and generosity of the Irish heart. He felt that all this wealth of culture and achievement was being lost, not only to Ireland but to mankind through lack of adequate national expression. He was prepared if need be to sacrifice his own life to gain for others so great a possession."

"The same high aim actuated him with reference to Canada from the moment he put foot on Canadian soil. It underlay all his efforts to bring about Confederation. He saw clearly the richness of our vast spiritual inheritance. His experiences in other lands had given him power to see by comparison and contrast how much we who live under Canadian skies have reason to be thankful to Providence, for with the scholar's eye he dipped into our past and saw the streams of influence and of culture pouring their distinctive contributions into our common national inheritance. He loved the French explorers, the missionaries and early pioneers; he cherished with equal fervor the exploits of the early settlers of British stock. With the seer's vision he looked into the future, to a Canada as wide as the seas are apart; single in aim and purpose, and utilizing for the good of all what properly was the inheritance of all."

### NOT YET WHOLLY FULFILLED

"One cannot look back on those years preceding Confederation without feeling that to one of McGee's vision, passion for unity and love of country, it was a great moment in which to have lived. It is well to remember that they only live who have the vision, and that the dream of complete unity and nationality, as McGee cherished it, is even yet not wholly fulfilled."

"There is one aspect of McGee's patriotism of which I should like to add a further word. It was continually expanding, not contracting. It sought its realization in the largest entity, not the smallest. It found its real expression, not in dismemberment but in wider union. Had he lived in our day he would have sought not a separate Ireland and a separate Canada, but an Ireland and a Canada of national status and powers of national expression, co-equal in the course of time, with those of the United Kingdom itself. To him membership in the British Empire would have been, not something of which to entertain a fear, but something to cherish, to develop, to expand. He would have seen it, as it is fast becoming—if indeed it has not already so become—a galaxy of free nations, a union of sister States, a great co-operative commonwealth, inspired in all its parts by ideals of freedom and justice extending not only from sea to sea but encircling the entire globe."

### MEMORIAL IN BRONZE

"The Government of Canada has erected to the memory of D'Arcy McGee a bronze portrait statue of himself. We are all familiar with its place on Parliament Hill in close proximity to the Library of Parliament. He stands in an attitude suggestive of kindness and moderation, looking out across the waters of the Ottawa towards the Laurentian hills and the setting sun. It is an environment in which his spirit might well love to dwell. It is a memorial to a patriot son of Ireland, a great Canadian whose life was a sacrifice to the ideals he cherished. It stands there today, speaking to us on this 13th day of April, of the day of his birth and the day of his burial."

"In front of the Parliament buildings, on the approach to the main entrance to the grounds, there stands another monument, with the words cut out in the stone base: 'Galahad cried: 'If I lose myself, I save myself.' Such is the vision of immortality it seeks to express. It is a symbolical figure. It, too, commemorates the life of a Canadian of Irish descent, a life that was given in sacrifice, in an attempt to save the life of another. By the strangest of coincidences the day of the burial of Henry Albert Harper, the young journalist and

public servant to whose memory it has been erected, was also the anniversary of the day of his birth. Thus destiny, linking the cradle with the grave, leaves us to wonder over the mysteries which she delights to weave."

### SPIRIT WHICH IS ETERNAL

"But these are memorials of bronze. Memorials to D'Arcy McGee more living, yea, more enduring, because of the spirit which is eternal, have found their place in our midst. Of such, Mr. Chairman, is this centenary celebration over which you preside and for the thought and arrangements of which a special acknowledgment to yourself on the part of all assembled here is due. Of such is the tribute paid to McGee's memory by the presence here this evening of His Excellency the Governor General the representative of His Majesty the King; and by the presence as a representative of the United States of Mr. Martin Conboy, the president of the New York Bar Association, to whom, on behalf of the Government of Canada, I should like to extend a word both of welcome and of thanks."

"This centenary celebration if it has significance at all, is surely an occasion of renewed dedication to the great principles for which Thomas D'Arcy McGee lived and died. We have seen the vision, the vision he gave us of national unity; are we prepared to follow the gleam? From the emerald isle its bright rays fall upon our land tonight across a century of years. They are infused with the mysteries of martyrdom, and with all of hope and of promise that martyrdom signifies at this Easter-tide. 'Our friends, sir, need have no fear but that Confederation will ever be administered with serene and even justice.' These words, addressed to His Honor, the Speaker of the Commons, were among the last uttered close to 'Serene and even justice' to men of all races of all creeds, of all classes, of all sections of our great Dominion and the great Empire of which it is a part! This is the memorial it is ours to raise, it is the only memorial adequate to the memory of so great a man."

### RIGHT HON. ARTHUR MEIGHEN LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Right Hon. Arthur Meighen, leader of the Opposition and former Premier of Canada, said:

"The story of a nation's heroes is the fountain source from which it draws the wine of its later life. There is no inspiration that so quickens the ambition of youth, stimulates public service and deepens love of country like the memory of great men who have gone. England has erected her Empire of today around the names of Cromwell, of Bacon, of Newton, of Shakespeare, of Pitt, and Burke, and Wellington and Canning, and a hundred other luminous figures who have adorned her past. The flames of Italian patriotism have been fed for generations at the shrine of Cavour, of Garibaldi, and of Mazzini, and in France there is not a home that has not resounded with the praises of Charlemagne, of Colbert, of Richelieu, and of Napoleon: while in the United States, the perfection of modern democracy, tens of millions of citizens do homage to the memory of Washington, of Marshall, of Lincoln and of Grant."

"Canada has now reached the time when the lives at least of her founders have receded out of politics into history. There are no controversies of today which date back to the era of Confederation—nothing left now to distort the perspective with which we can view the men of that time and measure their powers, their motives, and their achievements. There are some of those giants who have stood every test, who have grown in stature through half a century of criticism and whose place in our annals is now forever secure. One of these is Thomas D'Arcy McGee."

### A MISSIONARY OF EMPIRE

"With unreserved enthusiasm I congratulate the authors of tonight's event—and particularly Hon. Charles Murphy to whom we owe its conception and to whose driving power we certainly owe its success. It will be a good thing for the national spirit of Canada, it will help develop a real national personality when we can all join in veneration of the great deeds of the fathers of our country. It will help marvellously the cause of unity in this Dominion when all of us get to realize that we as well as other nations have our patriarchs, men and women who have lived great lives, given to their country the last full measure of devotion and left an inheritance of fame which is now to every province a common treasure and a common pride. Here we are gathered in hundreds three score years after the death of D'Arcy McGee and we are going to see to it, if we can, that this great Irishman, this far greater Canadian and missionary of Empire, comes at last into his own."

"D'Arcy McGee was Irish in lineage and nativity, but in every element of his character, in every vein of his being, in every bud and blossom of his personality he was more Irish still; all the world admires in that race he possessed, a fine generous nature, a delicate sensibility, a passion for the beautiful in everything, in language, in landscape, in literature, in the