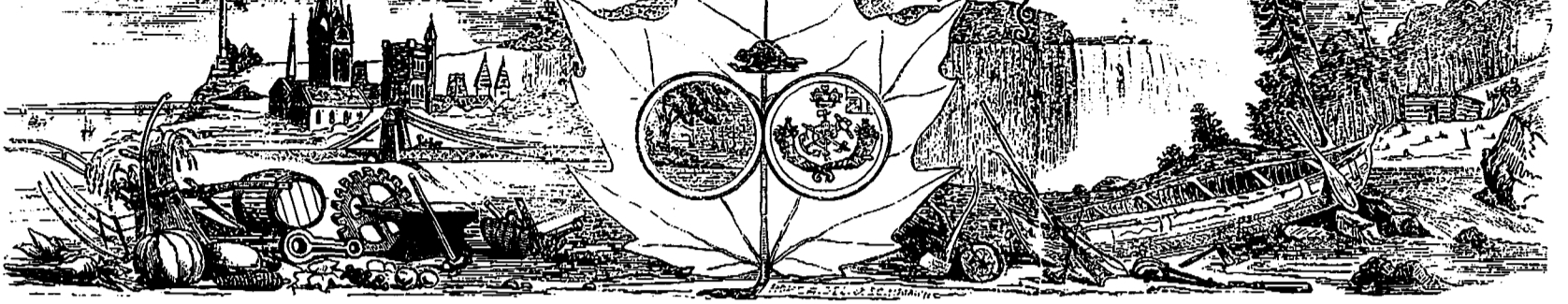


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MEMOIR OF THE
HON. ANTOINE AIMI DORION,
ATTORNEY GENERAL, LOWER CANADA.

[The particular notice of readers in Upper Canada is solicited to this Memoir, which we have received from a French gentleman resident in the Lower Province. Its author has expressed regret that he had not obtained some one to write it who is better acquainted with the English language than himself. None could have written it better: the narrative flows easily, and the glimpses into the interior of personal and party history are clear and instructive.]

In the old constituted states of Europe we find numerous families which are almost enfeoffed either in the army, the diplomacy, or some public functions of their country, and generation after generation, history shows them in a centenary frame which looks like a natural patrimony. In this new world and especially in this part of our continent (Canada) such a spectacle could scarcely be yet obtained; the fast life of our times, the new horizons springing every day to our amazed eyes, the succession and rapid discoveries of man and of the elements of nature, every thing contributes to inspire the youth and mature age with the idea that they may build new roads for themselves and for their offspring, and few sink of retracing the steps of their forefathers. And we find this general rule broken, in some instances, a trace the transmission of family vocations to us, at has been called family compacts, of which no one desires to have more than a fading recollection.

The subject of this short notice, the Hon. Antoine Aimi Dorion seems to belong to the substantial old stock of Europe, from which the best of the Colonists, of every origin, derive their primordial existence. Mr. Dorion is the son of the late P. A. Dorion, Esq., who represented the County of Champlain, in the two last parliaments of the Lower Canada Legislature, and grand-son of the late P. Bureau, Esq., who represented the county of St. Maurice, in the same Legislature. He is the brother of the member for the united counties of Drummond and Arthabaska, J.B.E. Dorion, Esquire.

Born at Ste. Anne de la Perade, near Three Rivers, on the 17th January, 1818,

Mr. Dorion, after his course of studies in the College of Nicolet, removed to Montreal, where he was admitted to the bar in the year 1842. In 1848, he was married to the eldest of three daughters of Dr. Trestler, all remarkable for the most precious qualities of women. As it unfortunately befalls to the best gifts of God, Mrs. Dorion had an early and quite a sudden death, after having given four children to her husband. Every one still remembers the general affliction created in the society of Montreal by that unexpected event, which was marked by the occurrence as unusual as it was well appreciated, of a Catholic Priest delivering an

oration on the tomb of a woman, in the presence of an unprecedentedly large assembly of mourners.

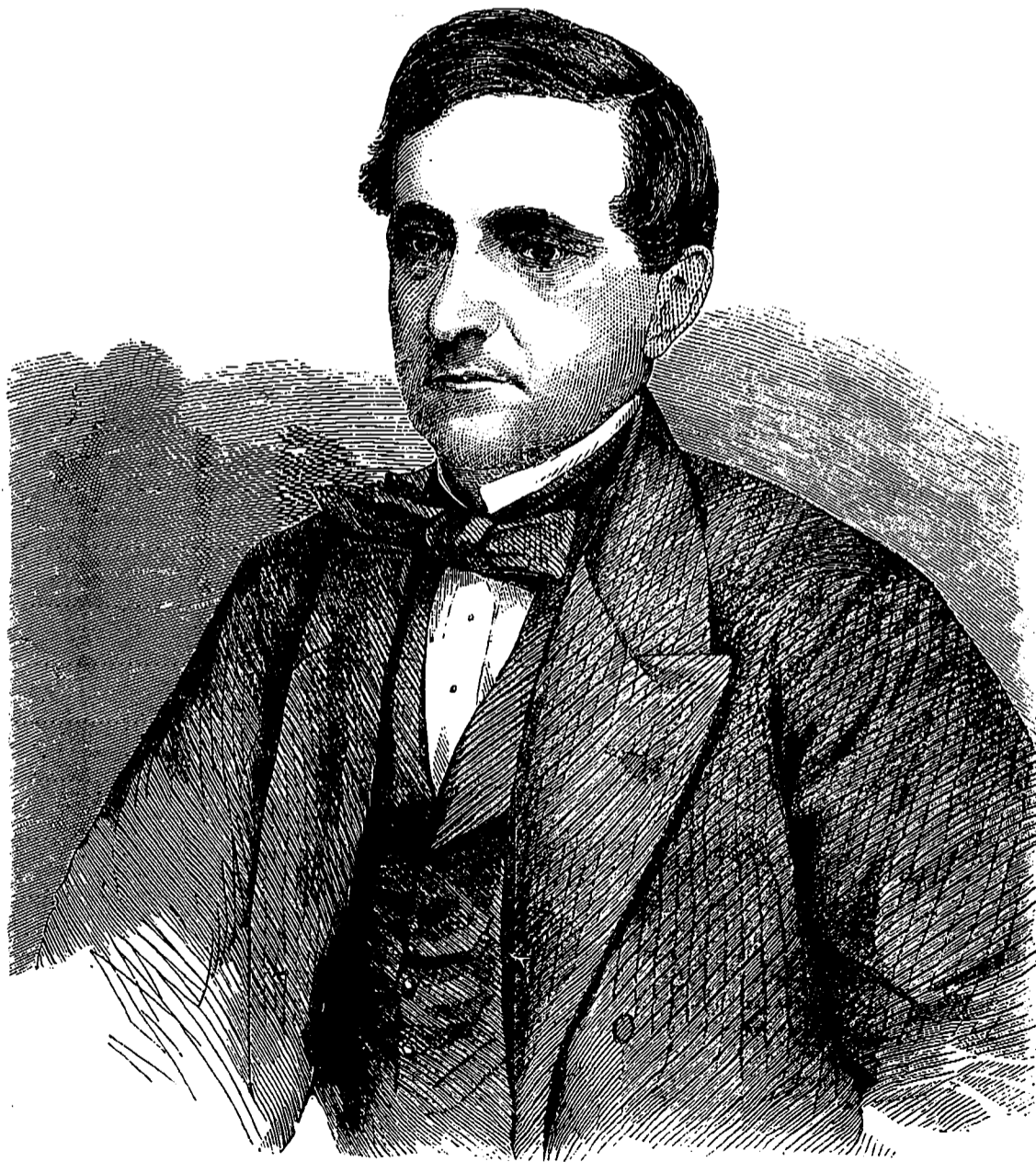
Mr. Dorion was elected three times Barronier (President) of the Montreal bar.— His first election as such was unquestionably the highest testimonial that could be given of the consideration in which he stood in the brotherhood of the long robe, being then very young in years, comparatively with this grave situation. In Lower Canada a member of the bar unites in his person the different vocations of Barrister, Advocate, Attorney, Solicitor and Proctor. Mr. Dorion acquired very early the reputation of being well versed

in the different branches of his profession. Learned in the principles of Law, his advice was from the beginning as eagerly sought for, as his clear and unvarnished elocution was relied upon, and although he is still a young man, he is looked upon as one of the Nestors of the Montreal bar. From his first start, he worked to realise the unquestionable doctrine that if reputation begins by talent, morality alone can consolidate it.

A conventional meeting of the liberals of Montreal having put him forward as a candidate for the city, at the general election of 1854, he was returned by the highest vote given to the six candidates in the field, as was also the case in the general election in 1857.

His public career has been marked with the same success as his professional life. As we all know, the leaders of parties are not created by formal elections. The tacit consent of political friends and the self-ordination of the meritorious, are the two indispensable elements to constitute the chiefs of parties.

What has been deridingly called the Rouge party, was first formed in 1848.— It would be difficult to delineate its embryo, but as far as it can be done, we might attribute its origin to two or three causes. Three or four years before, the youth of Montreal, and it is more proper to say, the youth of the whole Lower Province, were gathered for the first time into association. Until 1844, there never was, in any part of Lower Canada any occasion for the young men of French origin to meet as a class and to compare with each other, as to aptitudes for thinking, writing or speaking. The pulpit, the bar and the hustings were the only tribunes known, and they were in the exclusive enjoyment of the grown up men. In 1844 the Institute Canadian was founded, and similar institutions spread over every town and village like a train. Freedom of thought, of speech, of reading was the fundamental franchises conquered for the benefit of all men over 17 years of age. At first the members of this newly born literary world, could exhibit but very poor specimens of literature, as was to be expected. Their tribune was but rusticum rostrum. But three or four years had been sufficient to develop the latent talent of a score of young men, who scarcely suspected that they were quite equal to the most reputed men of the



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