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**A. GLIMPSE  
OF  
THE PAST**

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to Sir Joseph Pope  
with very kind regards  
7<sup>th</sup> March 1915. J.S.

A GLIMPSE OF THE PAST.

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SPEECH DELIVERED

BY

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL H. R. SMITH

C.M.G., I.S.O., A.D.C.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

OF

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS OF CANADA

BEFORE

THE CANADIAN CLUB OF OTTAWA

30TH MARCH, 1912.

OTTAWA:

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*May it please Your Royal Highness, Mr. President and Gentlemen:—*

As you are probably aware, fate has placed me in a position where I have the privilege of hearing many speeches while making none myself. So, to-day, I am but the humble echo of those eloquent voices, which, in their time, held mighty sway, and most of these have since passed into the peace of eternal silence.

I have been told to speak half an hour, wherein I hope to sketch lightly some of the events of half a century; but, first, let me express the pleasure I feel at meeting you, Mr. President and the members of the Canadian Club, among whom I am glad to recognize many old friends. May I add also, my keen appreciation of the large and distinguished audience, which has done me the honour of being here to-day.

I entered the Parliamentary service of old Canada on the first day of May, 1859, the seat of Government being, at that date, in the City of Toronto. The Government then in power had assumed office on the 6th of August, in the previous year, and was composed as follows:—

### FOR LOWER CANADA.

The Hon. G. E. Cartier, Premier and Attorney-General, East;  
The Hon. A. T. Galt, Inspector-General;  
The Hon. N. F. Belleau, Speaker, Legislative Council, L.C.  
The Hon. L. V. Sicotte, Minister of Public Works;  
The Hon. Charles Alleyne, Provincial Secretary;

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The Hon. P. M. Vankoughnet, Commissioner of Crown Lands;  
The Hon. Sydney Smith, Postmaster-General;  
The Hon. John Ross, President of the Council; and  
The Hon. George Sherwood, Receiver-General.

Every one of these gentlemen rose to positions of honour in the service of the country. The names of Sir John Alexander Macdonald, Sir George Etienne Cartier and Sir Alexander Galt, were, in their time and later, household words in Canada, and since the days of which I speak, all have paid the last debt of Nature, and have passed away, warm in the regard of their countrymen.

There was a Legislative Council of 54 members, of whom 24 were elective; twelve of these came from each of the two Provinces, Upper and Lower Canada. The Legislative Assembly consisted of 130 members, and my father was Speaker of what was, then as now, termed the Lower House.

What struck me forcibly was the general good style and old fashioned courtesy of both Houses, as well as the excellent tone of debate, and the almost total absence of personal references. These legislators of long ago were men of good breeding and polite manners, and during the years that have passed, I have often felt that, when any politician aimed at becoming a Statesman, he could not begin better than by being a gentleman.

At the modest cost of \$28.00 a month, I found comfortable quarters at Ellah's Private Hotel, situated on the corner of Front and Bay Streets, where my father was living with Mr. Alexander Campbell (afterwards Sir Alexander), a member of the Legislative Council, Mr. John Ross, President of the Council in the then Government, and several other gentlemen mostly members of either House.

Among those I met at this most pleasant Hotel, was a Doctor, serving in the Royal Engineers, with the relative rank of Major. Of our large circle, this officer was the only one who, later, turned out not to be a gentleman, though possessing much the same style and bearing as the rest of our party. Wearing two war medals and several clasps for active service, with the reputation of having shown great bravery and of having been a cool principal in a duel when the opponent had been wounded, the astounding fact was revealed by death, a few years later, that this medical officer had been a woman. Very pathetic seemed the story of this lonely lady, who, in some mysterious way, had lived more than a dozen years wearing the uniform of Her Majesty's Army; and, amidst many stirring scenes and much activity, had concealed the secret of her sex.

One of my earliest experiences was a Ball at Government House, then occupied by His Excellency, Sir Edmund Head, who, in 1854, had been appointed Governor-General of Canada.

Time has somewhat dimmed my memory, but this was my first Ball, and I can recall many of its scenes; among these, comes the charming vision of a lithe and graceful partner, whom I secured for an early waltz. She was a French-Canadian lady, and as energetic as she was fair to see. "The Dawn of Love" was the name of the waltz; the lady's has faded from my mind, but I pray she may be now a grandmother with feminine descendants as beautiful as she was then. The soft strains of the exquisite music rose and fell, and my partner seemed to be floating while I remained but a dull

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Later, at supper, I tasted for the first time a famous 'vintage of champagne, and I learned that its name was "Clicquot," the product of a vineyard owned by a lady of that name, and only familiar as a beverage to the Crowned Heads of Europe. My father had told me not to drink more than two glasses, and I remember that I was careful to obey him. The wine of Madame Clicquot and your humble servant have been strangers ever since.

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A few months later, we were ordered to Quebec and the first Session opened there on the 28th of February, 1860. Ottawa had been determined upon as the future seat of Government for Confederated Canada, and about this time the Public Works Department undertook the construction of the splendid buildings which are now occupied on the hill, to which many additions have since been made.

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The Prince of Wales had been vested with the power of conferring Knighthood, and both Speakers, Sir Narcisse Belleau and my father, received this honour.

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Then, as now, the people of Canada were loyal British subjects, true to the Empire in heart and soul, reverencing their Queen, and thankful for the grand traditions which had made England the greatest country in the world. They thought of the Mother Land with all those tender feelings which cluster round the magic word "Home." May God grant that this condition be long continued.

We were now on the eve of Confederation, and time will not permit me to dwell longer on our pleasant sojourn in old Quebec, a City famous for its historic associations, and rich in splendid memories of the mighty dead.

In the days of which I am speaking there were no typewriters or telephones, and I have to this day a pewter inkstand which was given me when I joined the Service in 1859, a quaint old memento which has stood on my desk for more than half a century.

In 1861, Sir Edmund Head returned to England, and was succeeded by Viscount Monck, whom I remember as a very genial and energetic Irishman, who was generally popular.

Lord Monck was the first Governor General who occupied Rideau Hall, when the seat of Government was fixed at Ottawa,



in 1867, and I have a vivid recollection of doing duty in an old fashioned sentry-box near the front door, during the first Fenian Raid, being at that time a private in the Civil Service Rifle Corps.

We reached Ottawa early in the year 1867, and the first Dominion Parliament assembled on November 6th of that year. It was pleasant to be the occupants of such fine offices, and we were greatly struck by the natural beauty of the City as well as by its stern morality.

The police were very busy making people good, and there were awful stories of how wicked citizens used to kill each other, and quietly drop the corpses over the cliff behind the Parliament Buildings. No doubt these tales were exaggerated, but there certainly had been religious quarrels, and I remember hearing a most distinguished Jurist regret that, having a good shot at a famous statesman, he had missed getting him by the untoward accident of a bad percussion cap.

Is it not strange that the bitterest quarrels emanate from questions of piety, and remind one of that Irish Roman Catholic priest, who, viewing his flock engaged in a physical discussion on parish matters, remarked: "Just look at the darlins' down there bating each other *for the love of God.*"

About this time I met Mr. Thomas D'Arcy McGee and greatly admired his eloquence and genuine Irish humour. There were none so bright and witty in the House at that time, and seats were always well filled when it was known he was going to speak.

I well remember a certain evening when, in his usual original style, he attacked the then Acting Leader of the House, Sir George E. Cartier:—"Suppose, Sir," said he, "any honourable member had a friend in town whom he wished to entertain, do you think, Sir, for one moment, that he would bring him here to this House to show him the Ship of State drifting helplessly and hopelessly along with such a figure-head as *that* at the prow? No, Sir, he would take him anywhere else—to a fire—if there happened to be one that night."

Again, I recall a rather festive night at Duignan's Private Hotel, which was situated on the corner of Sparks and Bank Streets, where a number of us lived and enjoyed ourselves, as young men are apt to do. There were cool drinks and tobacco, and some revelry, when we heard a step on the stairs, and a moment after, Mr. McGee appeared:—"Gentlemen," said he, in his rich Irish voice, "I happened to be passing on the opposite side of the street, and I saw the house with its cold stone walls and closed doors, and a warning voice whispered to me as I lingered:—"Thomas, you ought to go home,"

but I looked again, and heard the clink of glasses and the sound of merry laughter, and another, and a stronger voice said:—"D'Arey, you'd better go in"—and here I am."

His welcome was warm and the fun went on with added zest. Presently, a young Civil Servant, who was under the impression he could recite, attempted "The Bridge of Sighs"; Mr. McGee was all attention, and those who sat near him saw that he was apparently moved by deep emotion. His handkerchief was in his hand, and we, who were close to him, heard him murmur: "Poor girl,—poor girl,—*she's murdered again.*"

Months later I walked home with him to his rooms on Sparks Street, which were not far from my own. The night was a remarkable one, for it was the fourth of April, 1868, and later, I learned that we were dogged to his door by those who, on the following night, shot and killed him. Then, he was alone, having parted from some friends at the adjacent corner of Sparks and Metcalfe Streets. And so, twenty-four hours later, he died a martyr to free speech and the country he served so well.

It fell to my lot in due time to be present at the execution of Whalen, who was convicted of this murder, and I can recall that the gaol yard was lined with troops, and that each man carried a proper supply of ball cartridge, but the scene was quiet and solemn, and no excitement marred this last stern enforcement of the majesty of the law.

Early in 1872, I became Acting Sergeant-at-Arms of the House of Commons, and of those whom I then saw in the Chamber, but one remains there to-day, in the person of the Honourable John Haggart, who is now the senior member of the House.

Parliament in Session is an interesting study, but above all, it is full of *esprit de corps*. Members have certain rights and privileges, and woe betide the man who attempts to curtail or interfere with them. A Liberal will fight for a Conservative or *vice versa*, if any Member is attacked or unjustly treated, outside the line of politics.

The Speaker thus generally receives the greatest deference and respect, and his rulings are rarely questioned or disputed.

There is, too, one inanimate object in the House which must always awaken historic memories, and which is found in almost all legislative bodies: I mean the Mace, which is the emblem of the Power and Authority of Parliament.

History records that, in the House of Commons at Westminster, there have been but three Maces: the first one disappeared when Charles the First lost his life on the scaffold, and its ultimate fate remains a mystery. Later, Cromwell ordered another Mace to be made, and it is remarkable that some years after, he scornfully referred to this same Mace as "That Bauble," desiring it to be removed from the Table during that eventful Session of 1635, when the great Protector dismissed the Parliament; this so-called "Bauble" also disappeared. The third Mace, which is now in use has no date nor inscription, beyond the initials "C.R." It first appeared in the House on the Restoration of Charles the Second, in 1660.

I cannot trace the Mace of the Commons of Canada further back than 1841, the date of the Union of Upper and Lower Canada, and there is good reason to believe that it was manufactured at that time, the cost being \$1,500.00.

Through all its shining years the Canadian Mace has remained intact and unsullied, and has had but two surprises: one, being at Montreal in 1849, when the mob burned the Parliament Buildings, and carried it to Sir Allan MacNab's rooms, in the Donegana Hotel. The second surprise was in 1905, when Mr. Speaker Sutherland, gave orders to have the time honoured initials "V.R." removed, and those of the reigning Sovereign substituted. "The date," said the then Speaker, "should be changed," and this order was also given. The idea was quaint and original, but was not seriously regarded, and, happily, no change was made.

The Prayers of Parliament are always uttered with closed doors and proper solemnity, and alternately, in French and English.

I remember an English Speaker, who, perhaps prematurely, appealed to Heaven in the former tongue, and the witty comment of Alonzo Wright, M.P., who expressed a hope that GOD understood what was being said, as he felt sure no one on earth ever would.

Mr. Davia was, in his day, a source of great amusement to the House, and held a high place as a humorous and original speaker. He, like D'Arcy McGee, was often most entertaining, and his Irish wit and quick repartee never failed him. I can recall a very pointed attack which he made on a certain Government which had incurred his temporary displeasure:—"What is it," said he, "Mr. Speaker, that I see before me; a Government, it is true, but one which delegates its powers to Deputy Ministers who rule it. Sir, I cannot fill these empty skulls with brains; men style them a Cabinet, but to my mind, Sir, they are only a Cabinet of Antiques."

I remember two scenes in the English House of Commons, in which Irish Members figured, on both occasions exhibiting the

peculiarities of the most amusing people on earth. A Member had been addressing the House at tiresome length and became annoyed at frequent interruptions.—“Sir,” said he, “I regret to call attention to the unseemly noises which appear to be coming from both sides of the House, and I wish to tell honourable gentlemen, here and now, that I am not addressing them, Sir, I am speaking to posterity.”—And then there came from far back in the Chamber a thin Irish voice which said: “*They’ll be listenin’ to you soon, if you go on.*”

The other is an allusion to the supposed grasping character of land owners in Ireland:—“Mr. Speaker,” said this orator, “such is the rapacity of the Irish landlord, that, if placed alone upon a desert island, his first act would be the despoiling of *the pockets of the naked savages.*”

Here, too, we have some specimens of robust English from Members of our own House: Away back in the seventies, Mr. John Hillyard Cameron, an able and distinguished lawyer, speaking in defence of Sir John Macdonald, during a fierce debate when political feeling ran high, eulogized his Chief with warm eloquence.—“Sir,” said he, “I do not believe in these cries of corruption which come so glibly from honourable gentlemen, and I do believe that, for every dollar we spent, the opposite party spent two dollars; and, when I hear honourable gentlemen getting up and boasting about their purity, I confess I don’t believe them; for my experience of life has taught me that the man who is most virtuous, usually says least about it. Sir, we were boys together, and from that day to this day, I have stood here at his back, a humble, but, I trust, a useful follower; and in all these years, whatever may have been said about my right honourable friend’s tendency to bring Members from that side of the House and place them upon this side, this fact stands out in clear prominence, that he is here before you to-day, a poor man and a pure man.”

Mr. Alexander Mackenzie was no less warm in his fervent Scotch earnestness in regard to the loyalty cry which seems to have been with us ever since: “Sir,” he retorted on a later occasion, “I am sick of the continued cries of disloyalty which come with such a bad grace from the opposite side of the House, and in replying to them, I cannot do better than quote the words of a great English Statesman, who, upon being similarly taunted, replied: ‘Mr. Speaker, I hold myself second to no man in loyalty to my Gracious Queen, but because I am loyal to her, I do not think I should also be loyal to her man servant, her maid servant, her ox and her ass.’”

Many years have passed since I listened to those earnest voices—now forever silent—but their very tones are still fresh in my memory,

for every word was uttered with the sincerity of conviction, and none who heard them could doubt their strong devotion to the opposite parties which they served so faithfully and so long.

May I close these reminiscences of parliamentary amenities with a couple of doubtful compliments paid to honourable friends: "Mr. Speaker," said a leading Member from New Brunswick, "I have listened with great interest and some amusement to the remarks which have fallen from the lips of my honourable friend in reference to the policy of his Government. Why, Mr. Speaker, the policy of his Government is the policy of the late Government—and there he sits, an effete politician, dandling upon his knee the posthumous child of a previous administration and counterfeiting the joys of paternity."

Still more pungent are the words of another Leader, in allusion to an equally distinguished opponent:—

"Sir," said he, "in the light of the astounding statements which we have just listened to at such inconvenient length, I think I am justified in saying, that, had Sapphira lived in the time of the honourable gentlemen she would infinitely have preferred him to Ananias."

The most turbulent and unruly scene I have ever witnessed in the House was on the 10th of May, 1878, such being the last day of the Second Parliament. Utter chaos and confusion held high carnival. Leading men on both sides used language which I do not care to repeat, while eyes flashed and fists were clenched, and front ranks pressed closer to each other. Luckily, this row of perhaps ten minutes duration, was quelled by the arrival of Black Rod, and the only blows struck were those of that official as he hammered on the front door. But Parliament had passed through a violent spasm, and its speedy oblivion was not unwelcome.

In my experience of public and official life, I have found no evil more to be guarded against than that intolerable disease which is popularly known as "swelled head"; there is no more blighting mental malady, for it turns the once modest ~~man~~ into something which his fellow creatures care to see but rarely. Happily, such cases are not epidemic here, but everywhere, where men are placed in positions of sudden and wide-spread authority, they are to be found. */man*

There was once a little man in a town in France, who was accosted by a stranger who asked: "Can you tell me the way to the Post Office, my good man?" And at once came the inflated reply:

"Sir, I am not a good man, I am the Mayor." Similar in thought was that self-centered citizen, who—

"Wondered what they'd say

When he died;

What the Press would write about him,

What his friends would think about him,

What the world would do without him,

When he died;

But they didn't even know—when he died."

And now, gentlemen, let me apologize for having offered you something very different from the eloquent and learned addresses to which you are accustomed. My story has been but a simple one, with no merit save its truth.

In the years that have gone, history has seen many important changes: There are Telephones and Wireless Telegraphy, Type-writers and Aeroplanes, Motor Boats and Automobiles, Strikes and Suffragettes, Smokeless Powder and Weapons of such range as to put the enemy out of business when he is miles away, but above all these facilities for rapid life and sudden death, we are proud and contented in the possession of a Country of vast and valuable resources, of great areas, and possessing all those natural advantages which, in the golden future before us, must make Canada one of the richest Nations of the earth, and the happy home of many millions.



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There was a dinner-party in the evening, and I was presented to His Royal Highness, who looked very slim and youthful in his well fitting scarlet uniform. He gave me a cigar of delicious flavour, and some sensible people told me that I ought to keep it always, and hand it down to posterity. Unhappily, I was young and foolish, and getting away into a quiet place with a young officer, proceeded to smoke with fastidious deliberation. My memory is dim as to what followed, but I do remember that, at the last, the ceiling began to wave softly, and the floor to slant in various directions, so that standing on it became a matter of acrobatic skill; and when, later, my mother came to me, I could only express a fervent wish to lie down and die. This was my first and last smoke for many a day.

On the 25th of August, His Royal Highness completed the task for which he had been induced to visit Canada—the laying of the Corner-Stone of the Victoria Bridge at Montreal. A week later he proceeded to Ottawa and there laid the Foundation-Stone of the Parliament Buildings, whence he journeyed through the western part of the Province. His course was marked by the greatest enthusiasm, and from first to last, it was one grand, warm hearted ovation.

Then, as now, the people of Canada were loyal British subjects, true to the Empire in heart and soul, reverencing their Queen, and thankful for the grand traditions which had made England the greatest country in the world. They thought of the Mother Land with all those tender feelings which cluster round the magic word "Home." May God grant that this condition be long continued.

We were now on the eve of Confederation, and time will not permit me to dwell longer on our pleasant sojourn in old Quebec, a City famous for its historic associations, and rich in splendid memories of the mighty dead.

In the days of which I am speaking there were no typewriters or telephones, and I have to this day a pewter inkstand which was given me when I joined the Service in 1859, a quaint old memento which has stood on my desk for more than half a century.

In 1861, Sir Edmund Head returned to England, and was succeeded by Viscount Monck, whom I remember as a very genial and energetic Irishman, who was generally popular.

Lord Monck was the first Governor General who occupied Rideau Hall, when the seat of Government was fixed at Ottawa,

in 1867, and I have a vivid recollection of doing duty in an old fashioned sentry-box near the front door, during the first Fenian Raid, being at that time a private in the Civil Service Rifle Corps.

We reached Ottawa early in the year 1867, and the first Dominion Parliament assembled on November 6th of that year. It was pleasant to be the occupants of such fine offices, and we were greatly struck by the natural beauty of the City as well as by its stern morality.

The police were very busy making people good, and there were awful stories of how wicked citizens used to kill each other, and quietly drop the corpses over the cliff behind the Parliament Buildings. No doubt these tales were exaggerated, but there certainly had been religious quarrels, and I remember hearing a most distinguished Jurist regret that, having a good shot at a famous statesman, he had missed getting him by the untoward accident of a bad percussion cap.

Is it not strange that the bitterest quarrels emanate from questions of piety, and remind one of that Irish Roman Catholic priest, who, viewing his flock engaged in a physical discussion on parish matters, remarked: "Just look at the darlins' down there bating each other *for the love of God*."

About this time I met Mr. Thomas D'Arcy McGee and greatly admired his eloquence and genuine Irish humour. There were none so bright and witty in the House at that time, and seats were always well filled when it was known he was going to speak.

I well remember a certain evening when, in his usual original style, he attacked the then Acting Leader of the House, Sir George E. Cartier:—"Suppose, Sir," said he, "any honourable member had a friend in town whom he wished to entertain, do you think, Sir, for one moment, that he would bring him here to this House to show him the Ship of State drifting helplessly and hopelessly along with such a figure-head as *that* at the prow? No, Sir, he would take him anywhere else—to a fire—if there happened to be one that night."

Again, I recall a rather festive night at Duignan's Private Hotel, which was situated on the corner of Sparks and Bank Streets, where a number of us lived and enjoyed ourselves, as young men are apt to do. There were cool drinks and tobacco, and some revelry, when we heard a step on the stairs, and a moment after, Mr. McGee appeared:—"Gentlemen," said he, in his rich Irish voice, "I happened to be passing on the opposite side of the street, and I saw the house with its cold stone walls and closed doors, and a warning voice whispered to me as I lingered:—"Thomas, you ought to go home,"



but I looked again, and heard the clink of glasses and the sound of merry laughter, and another, and a stronger voice said:—"D'Arcy, you'd better go in"—and here I am."

His welcome was warm and the fun went on with added zest. Presently, a young Civil Servant, who was under the impression he could recite, attempted "The Bridge of Sighs"; Mr. McGee was all attention, and those who sat near him saw that he was apparently moved by deep emotion. His handkerchief was in his hand, and we, who were close to him, heard him murmur: "Poor girl,—poor girl,—*she's murdered again.*"

Months later I walked home with him to his rooms on Sparks Street, which were not far from my own. The night was a remarkable one, for it was the fourth of April, 1868, and later, I learned that we were dogged to his door by those who, on the following night, shot and killed him. Then, he was alone, having parted from some friends at the adjacent corner of Sparks and Metcalfe Streets. And so, twenty-four hours later, he died a martyr to free speech and the country he served so well.

It fell to my lot in due time to be present at the execution of Whalen, who was convicted of this murder, and I can recall that the gaol yard was lined with troops, and that each man carried a proper supply of ball cartridge, but the scene was quiet and solemn, and no excitement marred this last stern enforcement of the majesty of the law.

Early in 1872, I became Acting Sergeant-at-Arms of the House of Commons, and of those whom I then saw in the Chamber, but one remains there to-day, in the person of the Honourable John Haggart, who is now the senior member of the House.

Parliament in Session is an interesting study, but above all, it is full of *esprit de corps*. Members have certain rights and privileges, and woe betide the man who attempts to curtail or interfere with them. A Liberal will fight for a Conservative or *vice versa*, if any Member is attacked or unjustly treated, outside the line of politics.

The Speaker thus generally receives the greatest deference and respect, and his rulings are rarely questioned or disputed.

There is, too, one inanimate object in the House which must always awaken historic memories, and which is found in almost all legislative bodies: I mean the Mace, which is the emblem of the Power and Authority of Parliament.

History records that, in the House of Commons at Westminster, there have been but three Maces: the first one disappeared when Charles the First lost his life on the scaffold, and its ultimate fate remains a mystery. Later, Cromwell ordered another Mace to be made, and it is remarkable that some years after, he scornfully referred to this same Mace as "That Bauble," desiring it to be removed from the Table during that eventful Session of 1635, when the great Protector dismissed the Parliament; this so-called "Bauble" also disappeared. The third Mace, which is now in use has no date nor inscription, beyond the initials "C.R." It first appeared in the House on the Restoration of Charles the Second, in 1660.

I cannot trace the Mace of the Commons of Canada further back than 1841, the date of the Union of Upper and Lower Canada, and there is good reason to believe that it was manufactured at that time, the cost being \$1,500.00.

Through all its shining years the Canadian Mace has remained intact and unsullied, and has had but two surprises: one, being at Montreal in 1849, when the mob burned the Parliament Buildings, and carried it to Sir Allan MacNab's rooms, in the Donegana Hotel. The second surprise was in 1905, when Mr. Speaker Sutherland, gave orders to have the time honoured initials "V.R." removed, and those of the reigning Sovereign substituted. "The date," said the then Speaker, "should be changed," and this order was also given. The idea was quaint and original, but was not seriously regarded, and, happily, no change was made.

The Prayers of Parliament are always uttered with closed doors and proper solemnity, and alternately, in French and English.

I remember an English Speaker, who, perhaps prematurely, appealed to Heaven in the former tongue, and the witty comment of Alonzo Wright, M.P., who expressed a hope that GOD understood what was being said, as he felt sure no one on earth ever would.

Mr. Davia was, in his day, a source of great amusement to the House, and held a high place as a humorous and original speaker. He, like D'Arcy McGee, was often most entertaining, and his Irish wit and quick repartee never failed him. I can recall a very pointed attack which he made on a certain Government which had incurred his temporary displeasure:—"What is it," said he, "Mr. Speaker, that I see before me; a Government, it is true, but one which delegates its powers to Deputy Ministers who rule it. Sir, I cannot fill these empty skulls with brains; men style them a Cabinet, but to my mind, Sir, they are only a Cabinet of Antiques."

I remember two scenes in the English House of Commons, in which Irish Members figured, on both occasions exhibiting the

peculiarities of the most amusing people on earth. A Member had been addressing the House at tiresome length and became annoyed at frequent interruptions.—“Sir,” said he, “I regret to call attention to the unseemly noises which appear to be coming from both sides of the House, and I wish to tell honourable gentlemen, here and now, that I am not addressing them, Sir, I am speaking to posterity.”—And then there came from far back in the Chamber a thin Irish voice which said: “*They’ll be listenin’ to you soon, if you go on.*”

The other is an allusion to the supposed grasping character of land owners in Ireland:—“Mr. Speaker,” said this orator, “such is the rapacity of the Irish landlord, that, if placed alone upon a desert island, his first act would be the despoiling of *the pockets of the naked savages.*”

Here, too, we have some specimens of robust English from Members of our own House: Away back in the seventies, Mr. John Hillyard Cameron, an able and distinguished lawyer, speaking in defence of Sir John Macdonald, during a fierce debate when political feeling ran high, eulogized his Chief with warm eloquence.—“Sir,” said he, “I do not believe in these cries of corruption which come so glibly from honourable gentlemen, and I do believe that, for every dollar we spent, the opposite party spent two dollars; and, when I hear honourable gentlemen getting up and boasting about their purity, I confess I don’t believe them; for my experience of life has taught me that the man who is most virtuous, usually says least about it. Sir, we were boys together, and from that day to this day, I have stood here at his back, a humble, but, I trust, a useful follower; and in all these years, whatever may have been said about my right honourable friend’s tendency to bring Members from that side of the House and place them upon this side, this fact stands out in clear prominence, that he is here before you to-day, a poor man and a pure man.”

Mr. Alexander Mackenzie was no less warm in his fervent Scotch earnestness in regard to the loyalty cry which seems to have been with us ever since: “Sir,” he retorted on a later occasion, “I am sick of the continued cries of disloyalty which come with such a bad grace from the opposite side of the House, and in replying to them, I cannot do better than quote the words of a great English Statesman, who, upon being similarly taunted, replied: “Mr. Speaker, I hold myself second to no man in loyalty to my Gracious Queen, but because I am loyal to her, I do not think I should also be loyal to her man servant, her maid servant, her ox and her ass.”

Many years have passed since I listened to those earnest voices—now forever silent—but their very tones are still fresh in my memory,

for every word was uttered with the sincerity of conviction, and none who heard them could doubt their strong devotion to the opposite parties which they served so faithfully and so long.

May I close these reminiscences of parliamentary amenities with a couple of doubtful compliments paid to honourable friends: "Mr. Speaker," said a leading Member from New Brunswick, "I have listened with great interest and some amusement to the remarks which have fallen from the lips of my honourable friend in reference to the policy of his Government. Why, Mr. Speaker, the policy of his Government is the policy of the late Government—and there he sits, an effete politician, dandling upon his knee the posthumous child of a previous administration and counterfeiting the joys of paternity."

Still more pungent are the words of another Leader, in allusion to an equally distinguished opponent:—

"Sir," said he, "in the light of the astounding statements which we have just listened to at such inconvenient length, I think I am justified in saying, that, had Sapphira lived in the time of the honourable gentlemen she would infinitely have preferred him to Ananias."

The most turbulent and unruly scene I have ever witnessed in the House was on the 10th of May, 1878, such being the last day of the Second Parliament. Utter chaos and confusion held high carnival. Leading men on both sides used language which I do not care to repeat, while eyes flashed and fists were clenched, and front ranks pressed closer to each other. Luckily, this row of perhaps ten minutes duration, was quelled by the arrival of Black Rod, and the only blows struck were those of that official as he hammered on the front door. But Parliament had passed through a violent spasm, and its speedy oblivion was not unwelcome.

In my experience of public and official life, I have found no evil more to be guarded against than that intolerable disease which is popularly known as "swelled head"; there is no more blighting mental malady, for it turns the once modest ~~man~~ into something which his fellow creatures care to see but rarely. Happily, such cases are not epidemic here, but everywhere, where men are placed in positions of sudden and wide-spread authority, they are to be found. */man*

There was once a little man in a town in France, who was accosted by a stranger who asked: "Can you tell me the way to the Post Office, my good man?" And at once came the inflated reply:

"Sir, I am not a good man, I am the Mayor." Similar in thought was that self-centered citizen, who—

"Wondered what they'd say

When he died;

What the Press would write about him,  
What his friends would think about him,  
What the world would do without him,

When he died;

But they didn't even know—when he died."

And now, gentlemen, let me apologize for having offered you something very different from the eloquent and learned addresses to which you are accustomed. My story has been but a simple one, with no merit save its truth.

In the years that have gone, history has seen many important changes: There are Telephones and Wireless Telegraphy, Type-writers and Aeroplanes, Motor Boats and Automobiles, Strikes and Suffragettes, Smokeless Powder and Weapons of such range as to put the enemy out of business when he is miles away, but above all these facilities for rapid life and sudden death, we are proud and contented in the possession of a Country of vast and valuable resources, of great areas, and possessing all those natural advantages which, in the golden future before us, must make Canada one of the richest Nations of the earth, and the happy home of many millions.

