

CHAPTER 20.

THE GOVERNMENT A WATER-LOGGED SHIP. —1863.

The House having dissolved without voting any supplies, in June, it became absolutely necessary that Parliament should be assembled at as early a date as possible after the election, and accordingly the proclamation was issued, fixing August 13th for that purpose. As soon as the members had put in an appearance at Quebec, very active canvassing took place, but it was quite impossible to foretell with accuracy what the division list would disclose. The first trial of strength, necessarily, would be the election of a Speaker. Brown was principally spoken of by the ministerialists, and a great fight over his election was anticipated, as he would be a bitter pill to swallow by those who otherwise would be supporters of the Government from Lower Canada. At the last moment, however, discretion was thought to be the better part of valor, and Mr. Wallbridge was nominated by Mr. Sandfield Macdonald, and seconded by Mr. Dorion, and was elected by a vote of sixty-six to fifty-eight, to the great jubilation of the ministerialists.

It was appreciated on all hands that the existence of the Government depended at all times upon two or three votes. When, therefore, the question of the right of Mr. Rankin—Government supporter for the riding of Essex—came before the House for consideration, instead of being referred, as the universal rule was, to the Privileges and Elections Committee, it was moved by Mr. Scatcherd, a Government supporter, that the House declare Mr. Rankin elected. This proposal was bitterly opposed by the opposition, mainly upon the ground that it was contrary to all the established precedents and usages of the House. In speak-

ing to this motion, Mr. McGee made a very strong argument against the motion. Before the conclusion of his remarks, he was interrupted in a sneering manner by the Premier, which gave rise to the most scathing retort ever listened to in the House, and could only be compared to another extemporaneous speech drawn from him a month later, when attacked by one of his old friends, Mr. Huntington. The rupture of the political and personal relations which had existed for so many years between himself and the leading men on the other side of the House seemed to have acted as a stimulant upon his nervous system, so that during this whole session it was in a state of constant excitability, and the brightest oratorical efforts of his life time, in my opinion, were made at this juncture, when called upon to meet taunts of having deserted his old friends and proved traitor to his old cause. On this occasion, he said:—

“ I rise again, Mr. Speaker, because the privileges and constitution of Parliament are at stake. I regret to have heard, in the debate yesterday, Mr. Brown speak of the salutary established usages of the House as so many cobwebs, which, like any other cobwebs, had better be swept away than preserved. The honourable member, accustomed to play the tribune out of doors, seems to forget that we are here sitting, not as a public convention which shall decide its own internal arrangements by the will of a majority of its own members, but that we are sitting here in the ordinance of Parliament, for Parliament is not a convention of delegates, but is itself an ordinance, and the highest ordinance known to the constitution. We are here, not that we may be above the law, and that we may override the law, but we are here in this high place that we may set a conspicuous example of obedience to the law. If this method of speaking with levity, with contempt of the established forms and usages which

shall govern this House, shall unfortunately become common, the consequence will be to drag down what it is our first duty to maintain, the barriers of law and justice which protect our privileges and rights, and we shall destroy in the hearts and minds of the people those sentiments of respect and reverence for the rights and privileges of Parliament, which, by our example and precept, we ought to especially inculcate in others."

Proceeding then to deal with his relations to the present supporters of the Government, he said:—

"I have always acted in good faith and loyalty to my party." (Mr. Sandfield Macdonald interrupted, "At home and abroad?") To which Mr. McGee replied: "Yes, Mr. Speaker, at home and abroad. Although there may have been imprudence and many errors in the early career of one who was an editor at seventeen, and a public speaker before I was of age, and although there have been many things that my own judgment at this day does not approve, at all events, throughout the whole long road, and it remains for the most part in irrevocable type, the honourable member will find no act of duplicity, he will find no instance in which I ever betrayed a friend or intrigued against an associate. I have not been fair to men's faces and false behind their back. I have not condoled with sinister sympathy with the friends of a public man whom I desired to injure, while at the same time I placed in the hands of his enemies weapons of attack, forged by malice, and poisoned by slanderous personalities. I resume my appeal to the honourable gentlemen of the Reform party; perhaps it is the last I can, with propriety, make. Will you, for a Premier who obtained his position by accident and retained it by duplicity, will you set aside the salutary enactments which prescribe the proper tribunal to decide the facts relating to this election?"

This extract from Mr. McGee's speech will fail to give an idea of the rhetorical skill with which the words were uttered, of the expressive inflections of voice, of the keen irony and sarcasm that fired the speaker, of the earnestness of his appeal, of the warmth of his condemnation, or of the effect it had upon those who hung upon his words. The members upon the floor, and the spectators in the galleries, were spell-bound and almost breathless during the delivery, and the merciless flogging of the Premier excited the same feelings as would be aroused in a gladiatorial combat, in which one party, by the most exquisite thrusts, is done slowly to death. During the scene the Premier's features flushed occasionally, his hands twitched nervously, a ghastly sort of smile spread over his face, and he looked like a man who felt acutely the tortures he was undergoing, but was resolved to die game. He did not attempt to reply for some days, and by this time the effect could not be displaced.

An amendment to the Address, made by Mr. Sicotte, which was debated for many days, attacked the *replatriage* or reconstruction of the ministry as unconstitutional. In this amendment the Government was supported by a majority of three, the vote standing sixty to sixty-three. Later on, there was a division upon Mr. Brown's motion of enquiry into the expenditure on the new buildings at Ottawa, in which Government was sustained by a majority of four, the vote standing fifty-six to fifty-two.

An interesting debate followed the introduction of the Government Militia Bill, when Mr. McGee, on the 10th December, seized the occasion to express himself strongly on the importance of federation, a subject which he vigorously supported in season and out of season. On this occasion he said:

"Ninety-nine out of one hundred Americans have a fanatical faith in their institutions, and are prepared

to fight for them; yet, I hold that, take it all in all, the theory of the British system, fairly carried out, secures in the largest degree a Government blessed by liberty and law. We have a financial policy; we have here a militia policy; we ought to have a constitutional policy which will bring the hearts of all classes of the people into daily accord with the Government. If we cannot settle the constitutional difficulties between Upper and Lower Canada alone, let us seek in a union of all the provinces the alternative resource which it presents for reconstructing our whole system, so as to win for it the hearty love and confidence of the whole people. What we want first, to make soldiers, is not shakos and trousers with stripes, but trust and pride and a resolute preference for our own system of government. This is the *morale* which the highest modern authority assures us, in war, is equal to three to one against the physical force arrayed against it."

A few days after this debate, the House was thunderstruck by the announcement that Mr. Sicotte had been appointed a judge of the Superior Court. His qualifications were admitted on all hands, but the circumstances under which the position was offered and accepted—after his motion of non-confidence in the Government a few weeks before—and the importance to the Government of getting rid of his opposition in the House, were all calculated to shock the public conscience, and raise the suspicion of an improper transaction. In talking the matter over with Mr. McGee, he said nothing ever surprised him more than this affair. On the very day before, Sicotte had strongly urged Foley and himself not to listen to any overtures from the Government. He said he went to Levis the next morning, and on his return found the *Official Gazette* extra in circulation announcing the appointment.

On the 17th of September, Mr. Cockburn moved a vote of want of confidence in the Government owing to Sicotte's appointment. The division took place next day, which resulted in favour of the Government by only two votes.

CHAPTER 21.

Mr. MCGEE CROSSES OVER.

The friction which had existed between Mr. McGee and his old colleagues at the beginning of the session, at last culminated in a right royal battle, and ended, as might have been foreseen, in his going over unreservedly into the ranks of the Opposition.

On Tuesday, the 2nd of October, when some unimportant item of supply was being considered, Mr. McGee took occasion to charge the Government with breach of faith with the Maritime Provinces, in backing out of the Intercolonial Railway agreement of 1862. When he sat down, Mr. Holton replied, and amongst other things, said it was most unfortunate the member for Montreal West should ever have been a member of the Government of this country, and he would not undertake the defence of any acts to which that honourable gentleman had been a party. That Mr. McGee, by the course he had taken, had foreclosed himself from any courtesy whatever, except the strict line required by parliamentary etiquette.

Mr. McGee made a short reply, resenting the habit Mr. Holton had of calling members to order, and his exhibition of unparliamentary temper, his pompous ways and ridiculous assumption of superiority. This was in the afternoon. Late that night Mr. Huntington took up the cudgels on behalf of the Premier and Mr. Holton, and proceeded to lecture Mr. McGee for

the animosity he displayed towards his old friends, twitting him upon his new alliance with those whom he had formerly so bitterly assailed. It was now past midnight when this breeze sprang up, and was entirely unpremeditated by the parties or anticipated by the House. Mr. McGee rose to reply at one o'clock, and delivered himself, in part, as follows, after first referring to the offensive manner with which Mr. Holton had dragged his name into the debate:

"Mr. Huntington has referred to the hard things I have spoken respecting Mr. Cartier and Mr. Macdonald, but these were said in open warfare. They have said hard things of me, I have struck back as hard in return, but Mr. Cartier has never acted with me in political alliance; has never been in my confidence; he has been an open enemy, and I will say that the best friends I have ever made were made on the field of battle, and I hope I shall make him my friend in the same frank and outspoken manner in which I have made him my enemy. I have received no favours from the present ministry, and I owe them nothing; I was called to the last ministry because it was felt I represented in a manner the Irish Catholics of Canada, and could be of service to the ministry. I refused to canvas against the Finance Minister (Mr. Holton), and the Attorney General (Mr. Dorion), when seeking re-election in their constituencies. Mr. Huntington has criticized my conduct towards my old friends, but what could any honourable gentleman think of his course in the county of Shefford, when Mr. Drummond was a candidate for that constituency. The honourable gentleman intrigued for his defeat, that he might be elected for the county himself at a future time. He managed to play his cards so well as to get into the House, but it was by placing his foot upon the neck of a man insuperably nobler than himself in every respect. I see now that when a man

has drawn his sword in politics in Canada, it is better that he should throw away the scabbard altogether ; better no half measure, and such will not be my measures henceforth."

This extract very weakly indicates the keen sarcasm and fervid eloquence with which his subject was adorned, nor is it possible to convey any conception of the effective manner in which the reference to Mr. Huntington placing his foot upon the neck of Mr. Drummond was made. The gesture of contempt, the withering tone of voice, cannot be described. At the close, I, along with others of his admirers, gathered around Mr. McGee, and complimented him upon his splendid effort, and after some vigorous handshaking, we carried him off in triumph to his hotel.

On the 8th of October, there was another division, on Mr. Galt's want of confidence motion, in which the Government was sustained by another small majority of three votes. I have, perhaps, unnecessarily, given details of the close majorities with which the Government was sustained in its efforts to transact the public business, but I have done so because this evidence of weakness ultimately led to Mr. Brown's motion on the 12th of October, which justified my giving him and Mr. McGee the credit of being the fathers of confederation.

A few days before the 12th, Mr. McGee informed me, in great spirits, that Mr. Brown had consulted with him over the condition of public affairs, and had admitted the impossibility of either party carrying on the Government with the trifling majority which it was able to obtain, however often an appeal to the country was made. That Mr. Brown had said he would approve of a federal union of the two Canadas, or of all the provinces, or any other constitutional change which will eliminate the present sectional antagonism, that had become destructive to all progress,

and annihilates all hopes for the future welfare and advancement of the country. He, therefore, solicited Mr. McGee's support, which was freely promised, to a resolution which he moved on the 12th of October, and as it proved the embryo from which federation was developed, is well worthy of being set out *in extenso* in this narrative. The resolution read:—

“Whereas, on the 2nd of February, 1859, the Hon. Mr. Cartier, the Hon. Mr. Galt, and the Hon. Mr. Rose, members of the Executive Council of Canada, then in London, addressed a despatch to the Colonial Minister, in which they declared “that very grave difficulties now present themselves in conducting the Government of Canada in such a manner as to show due regard to the wishes of its numerous population. That differences exist to an extent which prevents any perfect and complete assimilation of the views of the two sections. That progress of population has been more rapid in the western section, and claims are now made on behalf of its inhabitants for giving them representation in the legislature proportionate to their numbers. That the result is shewn by an agitation fraught with great danger to the peaceful and harmonious working of our constitutional system and detrimental to the progress of the province. That the necessity of providing a remedy for a state of things that is quickly becoming worse, of allaying feelings that are daily being aggravated by the condition of political parties, has impressed the advisors of Her Majesty's representatives in Canada of the importance of seeking for such a mode of dealing with the difficulties as may forever remove them.”

Therefore, be it resolved, that a select committee be appointed, to enquire and report on the important subjects embraced in the despatch.”

As discussed and decided between Mr. McGee and Mr. Brown, this motion was only introduced to be withdrawn, Mr. Brown stating in the House that he moved the resolution to keep the matter alive in the meantime, but would introduce it again next session, and pointed out that the position in which the House found itself during this session was but another proof of the absolute necessity of some means being found for settling these constitutional difficulties which had so long divided the two sections of the province, and thought the solution of the question lay in the motion he held in his hands.

The business of the House was now speedily brought to an end, and prorogation took place on the 15th of October.

CHAPTER 22.

MR. BROWN'S MOTION.

On the 19th of February, 1864, the legislature again is in session at Quebec. There is much discussion in and out of the lobbies as to the strength the Government will disclose upon the first division. The Opposition feel very sanguine of defeating the Government, unless the same tactics are pursued as gave rise to so much adverse comment throughout the country last fall, when Mr. Sicotte was got rid of from the ranks of the Opposition, by appointing him to the Bench.

The strength of the Government has been weakened by two votes, through the defeat of the new Solicitor General, Mr. Richards, in Leeds, although he was returned by a majority of one hundred and thirty-five in the last election. This undoubtedly has had a very demoralizing effect upon the ministerialists.

On the 14th of March, Mr. Brown moved again his resolution introduced in the October previous, *re constitutional changes*, and supported it by a very powerful speech. The debate on this resolution resulted in its being ultimately carried by a substantial majority. It showed how considerable was the advance made by the idea of a federation of the provinces during the last six months, and materially contributed to the coalition of parties which was arrived at before the session ended. I am justified, therefore, in dealing with the debate at some length. After reading his motion, Mr. Brown said:—

“I think, Mr. Speaker, that political feelings have so far subsided as to enable every honourable gentleman to see that it is absolutely necessary we should have all causes of variance between the two sections of the province remedied; that the time has come when we can approach a question like this with a degree of harmony, that we could never bring to its consideration in former times. I have sought to bring the subject before the House in the least objectionable form. I do not bring forward now a proposition of my own, but appear as a defender of a policy that has been enunciated by my honourable friends on the opposite side of the House. I have determined that I will take ground that cannot be assailed; that is perfectly indisputable, and that both sides of the House have agreed to. I ask my honourable friends opposite to take that course now which they considered it desirable to take five years ago. There was never a wiser or more sound and patriotic advice given by ministers of the Crown than was given by His Excellency's advisors upon this subject, in the words I have just quoted. (Mr. Cartier here interrupted, “This is the first time that you have ever said so.” Mr. Brown, continuing): I can, on that account, say it with more force now, and I can say it with all my heart. If I have been unable

to give the honourable gentleman's late Government credit for what good actions they may have performed upon other subjects, I have always given them credit for their bold and manly intentions on this, and I am sorry the Government of my honourable friend from Kingston has not carried the question to a practical result. I ask no more at present by my motion than that a day shall be appointed to consider the great propositions which the honourable gentlemen laid down in 1859, when acting in the responsible position of sworn advisors of the Crown. Here upon one side is the Hon. Mr. Cartier and on the other side the Hon. Sandfield Macdonald; the one has a majority in Lower Canada, and the other has a majority in Upper Canada. Now, the question is, which of these honourable gentlemen shall prevail. I think until every effort has been exhausted by the honourable member for Cornwall to obtain a majority from both sections, he is not justified in governing the country. I hope that my honourable friends opposite are tired of crises, for a general election will surely come if this thing be not done. I stand here as an independent member, and did I consider that the interests of the country would be advanced, that the principles I advocate would be advanced to-morrow by the removal of this administration, I would give my vote for that purpose without hesitation. I wish to call the attention of the House to the effect that the present system of carrying on the affairs of the country has produced. There have been constant jarrings between Upper and Lower Canada, and numerous occasions of crisis in the successive governments. There was a crisis in June, 1854, and another in September, 1854. In 1855 there were two, and also in 1857. In July, 1858, there was a crisis when the Brown-Dorion Government was formed, and another in August, and another in December. Then there was the Robinson crisis, and the

Carling crisis, and the Cauchon crisis. Then there was the great crisis in 1862, and another in 1863, and how many there will be in 1864, no one can tell. (Mr. Cartier: "It is a chronic state." Mr. Brown): Undoubtedly, we have been in a chronic state of crises for eleven years. No honourable gentleman will presume to say that this is a desirable state of things to have continued. The question is, what remedy ought to be applied? The member for Montreal West (Mr. McGee) is favourable to a federation of the provinces, and of a monarchical government. I do not know whether the member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Galt) is in favour of a confederation of all the provinces, or of the Canadas alone. (Mr. Galt: "Of all the provinces." Mr. Brown): There are some in favour of a dissolution pure and simple, and some favourable to a legislative union of all the provinces. I have no doubt the committee will be able to discover some basis upon which the legislature can agree. I therefore propose the following committee: Cameron, Cartier, Cauchon, J. S. Macdonald, McGee, Holton, Foley, Galt, Turcotte, Dorion, Chapais, Dickson, Dunkin, Joly, McKellar, Scoble, Street, and the mover."

To this resolution, Mr. Perreault rose and moved an amendment, praying the Imperial Government to pass a Bill to provide that the principle of equality of representation of the two sections of the province shall by the legislature always be maintained, unimpaired and inviolate. Mr. Perrault is a diminutive man, and his amendment caused considerable amusement. Mr. Brown and he presented an appearance like Landseer's painting of dignity and impudence. The effect was heightened by his attempt to speak in English, of which language he had but little command. He received so little support that his amendment was voted down by a majority of fifty-seven, without debate. Mr. Galt, in speaking to the motion, said he was as-

tonished that the Government proposed to let the House divide upon this motion without expressing its policy. As for him, he would vote against it, because he thought the Government should not delegate its functions by referring such an important matter to a committee. Mr. John Sandfield Macdonald answered, pointing out that Mr. Galt, although a member of the Government for many years, since 1859, had never introduced any legislation upon the subject, and said that the present Government did not propose to be drawn into expressing any policy on the matter.

Hon. J. A. Macdonald said, we must have, not a federation of the provinces, but a unification of the provinces, with one legislature, with one Government, and as nearly as may be, with one set of laws. We must have, not a federal union, but a union in fact. He then attacked Mr. Brown for his inconsistency on the question of representation by population, inasmuch as the despatch referred to in the motion admitted the impossibility of that principle, and suggested a federal union as an alternative. The Hon. Mr. Cartier also said he would oppose the motion, as the result would be simply to smother the question. Mr. Brown, as might have been expected, was supported by his right hand man, Mr. McKenzie, who said it was not too much to have expected from a statesman of Mr. John A. Macdonald's standing, that he should give the House the benefit of his statesmanship on the subject, but no remedy had been proposed by him. As for himself, he would vote for any Government, Tory or any other, that would settle the question. He was not particular as to what that remedy was, but would accept any reasonable plan of settlement. Until, however, some settlement was made, it would be impossible to expect the agitation to cease. Mr. Cartwright, who had been returned to the House at the last election, and who had hitherto given an independent support to Mr.

J. A. Macdonald, threw the weight of his talents, now beginning to be appreciated, in support of the motion. He said he had listened with great pleasure to the remarks made by the honourable member for South Oxford (Mr. Brown), in introducing his motion, and he could say he would have great pleasure in seeing him get his committee. The honourable gentleman had said he had no followers, but however this might be, it could not be denied that he occupied a position that was occupied by only one other gentleman (Mr. McGee). The honourable member for South Oxford was the representative man of a very considerable section of the population, as was also the honourable gentleman to whom he referred (Mr. McGee). Mr. Brown certainly had the control of this matter, as well as, in a great measure, the sectional difficulty which it involved, in his hands. The honourable gentleman had the power to effect a great deal of good, if he devoted his time to the task of effecting an armistice between the contending parties.

The debate now stood over, and was not resumed until the 19th of May.

I was accustomed each evening to smoke my pipe in Mr. McGee's room, which joined mine, and I became the recipient of his views upon this important question. He said he proposed to speak in favour of the motion later on, and thought Mr. Brown was showing very high patriotism in proceeding with the matter, knowing he was acting in direct opposition to the views of Dorion and Holton, as well as many of his old followers in the Upper Province. The attitude of the Opposition leaders, he thought, was in accordance with a policy they had adopted on the question since confederation was first broached, namely, to take no step which by any chance could imperil their political fortunes. If it could be shown to afford a party advantage they would put all their strength behind it.

but at present they could only see in the success of the motion a victory for their old enemy, George Brown. They feared that to support the motion would imperil their position in Lower Canada, and might throw the vote of that section of the province into the hands of Mr. Sandfield Macdonald, who was waiting, ready to take advantage of just such an eventuality. The curse of our country was, that in practical politics party success stood higher than the good of the people. He felt assured that Macdonald, Cartier and Galt were, in their hearts, favourable to some solution such as this to our national ills, but they did not think, from a party standpoint, the time was ripe to adopt it. They believed the Government was on its last legs, and were not disposed to lose a chance to turn them out, and thought, to support this motion would certainly deprive them of that opportunity. Perhaps nothing could better indicate the demoralized condition into which responsible government had now fallen than an incident which occurred on the night of Sunday, 21st March. Mr. McGee and I had been out late, and returning about midnight, as we passed through the hall of Russell's Hotel, an inner door opened, and out came Mr. Sandfield Macdonald, Mr. Holton and Mr. McDougall, the three most prominent members of the ministry, and with them Alonzo Wright, the member for Ottawa County, who was classed amongst the independent members of the House, and who was known to be much interested in seeing the new buildings at Ottawa completed at an early date, and the legislature take up its residence in the beautiful home now being erected for it on the magnificent site overlooking the Ottawa River. Only one conclusion could be drawn from the circumstance, namely, that the strongest influences were being used to control Mr. Wright's vote.

CHAPTER 23.

MR. MCGEE'S REMINISCENCES.

A few evenings later, Mr. McGee spoke to me, with great concern, of the Fenian movement which was spreading throughout Canada, and which, in the light of future events, is deserving of more than a passing notice. Incidentally, he told me something of his early career, when his soul was filled with youthful enthusiasm and aspirations for the glory and advancement of his race. He spoke of a dinner, described by the *Montreal Gazette*, held on St. Patrick's night, in the Exchange Hotel, in Montreal, a few evenings before, where one hundred Irishmen were present, and where sedition of the rankest kind was talked and sung, one of the songs being a parody on "Britannia, the Gem of the Ocean," which was sung as "Britannia, the curse of the ocean, the scourge of the brave and the free," and had for its refrain, "To hell with the Red, White and Blue," all of which, the report said, was received with loud and prolonged applause. "My poor, unfortunate fellow-countrymen; God help them," he said, "any Yankee orator, with lots of gush, can work on your national susceptibilities. In the States they induce you to enlist in the army of the North by telling you, when the war is ended you shall be marshalled, and taken to Ireland, to deliver your fellow-countrymen from the tyrant's yoke. He spoke of one, O'Mahoney, as a crack-brained enthusiast, twice an inmate of a lunatic asylum, who had organized a Fenian society in the United States. "These wretches," he said, "I know have been in Montreal, for I have plenty of friends there who keep me posted about all their doings, but so far, I believe, they have received no encouragement." He proceeded to write a public letter to the Irishmen of Montreal, which was shortly

afterwards published in the *Gazette*, warning them to have no parley with these American agitators, and quoting to them the very serious penalties which our Canadian laws pronounced upon every one who should administer, or aids in or is present at, the administering of an oath by which any person agrees to commit any seditious, treasonable or felonious act. Referring, on this occasion, to his early career, he remarked: "God blessed me with the best blessing given to man, a loving Christian mother. If I have any merit as a writer of verse, the poetic fire was inherited from her dear spirit, and was nurtured by the sweet Irish melodies she sang to me in childhood. As the years go by her memory becomes brighter and brighter, even as a star when the shadows of night come on. She instilled in my mind a love of poetry, and for the old legends of my native land. I came to America when 17 years of age, to the home of an aunt in Providence, R.I., but after a short stay, went to Boston, when the agitation for the repeal of the union in Ireland was at its height. I always had what is vulgarly styled, the "gift of the gab," and soon acquired a small reputation for my speeches in favour of the movement. In a short time I was offered, and accepted, a situation on the *Boston Pilot*, and in two years I was editor. I had some success, and in 1845 was offered and accepted the editorship of the *Dublin Freeman Journal*. I imagine O'Connell did not know what a youngster I was when he made this offer. The *Journal* did not prove advanced enough for my ideas, and I joined Gavin Duffy in editing the *Nation*. At this time I wrote most of my poetry dealing with the early history of my people. We were hot-blooded and visionary, and the famine, which now laid Ireland low, seemed to us the trumpet call to action. I was sent to Scotland to arouse my compatriots there. I had no sooner arrived than I

learned of the collapse of our insurrectionary movement, and that a reward was offered for my arrest. After many narrow escapes I reached the American shore once more, disillusioned, a sadder and, I believe, a wiser man. In Philadelphia, in 1848, I started a new paper called the *Nation*, but in the bitterness of my spirit at the lukewarmness or coldness of the Irish clergy towards our recourse to arms, I soon became embroiled with the bishop, and my paper had to succumb. I undertook the publication of the *Irish Celt*, in Boston, in 1850, and continued this until I was invited to Montreal in 1857. During this period the scales were removed from my eyes. Like the blind man when he saw Christ, I could say, "Once I was blind, but now I see." The utter folly and impracticability of attempting to elevate the Irish people by inciting them to rebellion became apparent. I saw that he was the truest patriot who best could inculcate in them a desire to carve out homes for themselves and their children in a new country, and elevate themselves to a position of mental equality with their neighbours, and encouraged them to be contented with their new surroundings. Much must be forgiven to the ignorance and self-confidence of youth. Our aims were high. We valued not our lives in Ireland's cause. We were willing, and actually did, put to the hazard our all, whether domestic happiness, liberty, and even our heads, in the cause which was dearer to us than our very lives. Call the attempt insane, if you will; tell us the wrongs we complained of were partly imaginary, if you will, and that a rebellion under no possible circumstances could have succeeded, all of which I admit; yet our motives were honest, were patriotic, were unselfish, and the blame to be attached to us should not be great. Because I have been through it all myself, because I see what a will-o'-the-wisp, what a delusion all this fenianism is, I have no

patience with those wretched agitators who make use of the Irish, and trade on their ignorance and patriotism for their wicked purposes. I have this to say, however. I shall fight this movement in Canada to the last ditch. Fenianism shall never get a hold upon our people here, if I can prevent it. I am told O'Mahoney, who is the head centre, has spoken of me as a Judas Iscariot, and a traitor to Ireland, a snake whose head should be cracked, but I can beat him in this fight, for I have the confidence of the Irish people in Canada; they believe in my honesty and sincerity.

CHAPTER 24.

A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT—1864.

To return to matters political. Two days after the incident at the Russell Hotel, above described, before the Orders of the Day were called, the Premier (Sandfield Macdonald) announced to the House, that feeling its majority was not sufficient to permit of carrying on the Government of the country efficiently, the ministry had placed its resignation in the hands of the Governor, and thereupon moved the adjournment of the House. Although we all felt that the ministry was wading slowly, toilsomely, and painfully, through deep waters, the announcement was a surprise; but we were all eager to take advantage of the situation. Mr. McGee was jubilant, feeling that this result was, at least, a just retribution upon Sandfield Macdonald for his traitorous conduct the year before to his Lower Canadian colleagues. Ferguson Blair unsuccessfully attempted to construct a coalition Government, and approached our leader for that purpose, but he knew they were in our power, and refused them terms. On the 23rd Cartier is entrusted with the

forming of a Government, but decides to have the responsibility placed upon the old veteran, Sir Étienne Tache, who was induced, solely from patriotic motives, to undertake this task, when his great age made such a burden very difficult to bear. The new administration is announced on the 30th; and my pleasure at seeing Mr. McGee once more take a position in the Government, commensurate with his great talents, was very great. His portfolio was that which was most congenial to him, and which had been promised him by the Macdonald-Sicotte administration, namely, the Department of Agriculture, which included the Bureau of Emigration.

The House now adjourned until the 3rd of May, to allow of the new ministers being returned by their constituents. Mr. McGee was returned by acclamation in Montreal West, and I was not surprised to find him again ringing the changes upon his hobby of the union of the provinces. Concluding his remarks on this head by calling his hearers to witness how he had at all times, in or out of office, zealously advocated the union of the provinces as the panacea for all our national ills. Great disappointment was felt by all of our friends at Mr. Foley's defeat in Waterloo. It means a loss of two votes, and in such a close contest as we are now constitutionally engaged in, this is most serious. It seems to show that George Brown is still supreme, and that another dissolution will still further reduce our supporters from Upper Canada. Affairs are rapidly assuming the position of a solid Upper Canada against a solid Lower Canada vote.

We had no more than fairly got started in May, after the adjournment, than the battle was again in full swing. Mr. Dorion, on the 13th, when Mr. Galt moved that the House resolve itself into a committee of supply, presented an amendment against the reduction of the canal tolls, in which the division list showed

us in a majority of two, the vote being sixty-four to sixty-two. On the 19th, the adjourned debate upon Mr. Brown's motion for a committee *re constitutional changes*, which had been standing since March 19th, was resumed. It soon became apparent that this motion was going to divide parties on altogether new lines. The members for the eastern townships, who during all the years in which representation by population had been to the fore, had plead for conciliation and toleration, seemed now heartily in sympathy with this motion, which appeared to them to afford a ray of light in the dismal darkness into which everything political was plunged. The balance of the Lower Canada members were opposed to it, almost to a man, viewing the motion as the thin edge of the wedge, which, if inserted, meant destruction to the predominance of their province in Canadian affairs. Amongst our friends in Upper Canada I found a strong feeling in favour of the motion. Nearly everybody was completely sick of the present state of affairs, which left the Government of the country at the mercy of two or three scalawags, who made a crisis something to be anticipated every day the House was in session.

Mr. McGee made a stirring address in favour of the motion, in which, amongst other things, he said:

"During the first session I sat in this House, Mr. Speaker, I seconded a motion to institute a committee of the House to enquire into the possibility of the union of the British North American provinces. In 1860 I had such a motion put upon the paper, and moved it, but failing to get sufficient support, I withdrew it. I have always advocated the union of these provinces, both before and since I had a seat in Parliament. I entirely believe in giving the member for South Oxford (Mr. Brown) an alternative proposition for his motion on the representation question. I am willing he should have his committee, and I will vote for it.

Mr. Brown is a man sectionally the strongest in his own section of Canada, while provincially he is the weakest man in the House. Why is this? Because, with all his great ability and energy, he has attached himself to sectional instead of national politics; because he has never embraced, with his heart and brain, the country as a whole, the country as a whole has rejected him from its reason and affections, and he is to-day as powerless in Canada as a whole as if he had no influence in Canada as a part."

Mr. Cartier said he would vote against the motion, as "time would solve the difficulty." While Mr. John A. Macdonald again made capital of Mr. Brown's inconsistency in abandoning representation by population, which was made clear by nominating for his committee members of whom a majority were well known to be opposed to representation by population. Therefore, Mr. Brown had really selected a committee favourable only to a federation of the provinces. He said the Government had already done all they could to have this federation adopted. They had solicited the Imperial Government in 1858 for their aid, but their suggestion had not been favourably received. Recent events in the United States had made him still more disinclined to federation, believing that a stronger form of union and government was requisite. He was, therefore, not going to vote for the appointment of a commission to consider whether this was the proper remedy. Upon the division the motion carried by 59 to 48.*

*Amongst those voting against the motion were Cartier, Cauchon, Dorian, Galt, Holton, John A. Macdonald, Turcotte, John S. Macdonald and Dunkin.

CHAPTER 25.

COALITION WITH GEORGE BROWN—1864.

On the 6th of June, the Essex election case came again before the House. The Attorney General West moved a mild resolution, requiring the returning officer, Sheriff McEwen, and his poll clerk, to appear at the Bar of the House, and at the same time expressed his opinion that these officers had failed in the performance of their duty in making no return. The evidence clearly showed that the whole trouble had arisen through animosity of the returning officer to Mr. Rankin, the person entitled to the seat, and a very strong feeling was abroad in the House, that if so gross a failure of duty should be dealt lightly with, it would result in great abuses, and the rights and privileges of all the members were at stake to see that a fitting punishment was awarded to those who had interfered with the due administration of the Election Act. Mr. Scatcherd voiced this sentiment of the members in moving an amendment, that the returning officer had acted wrongfully in not returning Mr. Rankin as member for Essex, and his amendment was carried by a vote of 55 to 49. An enquiry from Sandfield Macdonald, as to what the Government proposed to do in view of the vote, gave rise to an acrimonious discussion, and I was amused at a comment made by Mr. McGee upon Mr. Huntington's remarks, which, like many of his epigrams, was more pointed than delicate, namely, that his speech was like a sermon, of which it was said if the text had the small-pox the discourse would not catch it.

On the 7th, when the Orders of the Day were again called, the Attorney General West having moved that there stand, until next Thursday, an amendment of Mr. McDougall's, that the returning officer had been

guilty of a breach of the privileges of the House in failing to return Mr. Rankin, was carried by a vote of 57 to 55.

On the 13th Mr. Brown reported to the House, from his committee *re constitutional changes*, saying a strong feeling was found to exist amongst the members of the committee in favour of a change to a federal system, and such progress had been made as to warrant the committee in recommending that the subject be again referred to a committee at the next session of Parliament, the only members of the committee voting contra being John A. Macdonald, Sandfield Macdonald and Mr. Scoble. Next day, when the House was moved into a committee of supply, Mr. Dorion moved an amendment that at length brought the precarious house of cards in which they dwelt tumbling down on the ears of the ministry, and clearly proved that, as parties were now constituted, representative government had become impossible in Canada. The amendment censured Mr. Galt, the present Finance Minister, for making, five years before, an unauthorized advance to the Grand Trunk Railway. This amendment carried by a vote of 60 to 58. On the 15th, Mr. John A. Macdonald announced that the situation had been communicated to the Governor, and asked the adjournment of the House without declaring the Government's intentions. The breach between Mr. Sandfield Macdonald and Mr. Brown was seen in the support given to the Attorney General West by the latter when the former refused to comply with this request. Mr. Brown said he thought the Government should have allowed it the fullest opportunity of considering what course to pursue.

Nothing but rumours and further adjournments until the 17th, when the House was electrified by the announcement by John A. Macdonald, that there had been conferences with gentlemen on the other side, that

progress had been made, and he saw the solution of all the difficulties without a dissolution. When he concluded by the words, "I may say the honourable member with whom I have conferred is the honourable member for South Oxford (Mr. Brown)," he was greeted with prolonged cheers. This announcement took every person by surprise, and caused unprecedented excitement amongst the members. There were exclamations of approval, and astonishment everywhere, and the excitement was still further increased when the impulsive member for Montcalm (Mr. Dufresne), who had long been unfriendly to Mr. Brown, arose from his seat, and rushing across the floor, offered his hand to that gentleman, who shook it warmly, his face radiant with smiles of complacency and satisfaction. When the House adjourned, as it at once did, there were cheers and clapping of hands on all sides, and Brown and Dorion were quickly surrounded by other members, some cheering and others laughing, and everybody talking. Astonishment was the predominant feeling of the vast majority. "What does it mean," was the question in everybody's mouth. The Brown men in the House scarcely knew what to make of it, while the anti-Brown members of the Opposition were downcast and apparently mortified. During the debate they had been unable to conceal their chagrin. Sandfield Macdonald was unhappily agitated. McDougall frowned darkly and ominously. The *rouges* professed to be jubilant. "It will ruin Cartier in Lower Canada," they said. "How can he go before his constituencies and say, 'Let us make an alliance with George Brown.' It will be the end of his rule in Lower Canada. To a thoughtful person the occurrences of to-day appear pregnant with results of vastly greater importance than perhaps ever befell Canada. In the first place, it will disrupt the present political parties. In fact members are now

enquiring, "For what side am I," and those desirous of leaving the city are non-plussed on the question of "pairs." Evidently the French supporters of the Government disapprove of it, while the English-sneaking members of the eastern townships are more decided in their approval.

On the 20th it was known that an agreement had been come to between Mr. Brown and the Government, to the effect that as the views of Upper Canada could not be met under our present system, the remedy must be sought in the adoption of the federal system, and the following memorandum was signed: "The Government are prepared to state, that immediately after prorogation they will address themselves, in the most earnest manner, to the negotiations for a confederation of all the British North American provinces. That for the purpose of carrying on negotiations and settling the details of the proposed legislation, a Royal Commission shall be issued, composed of three members of the Government and three members of the Opposition, of whom Mr. Brown shall be one, and the Government pledges itself to give all the influence of the administration to secure to the said commission the means of advancing the great object in view. That, subject to the House permitting the Government to carry through the public business, no dissolution of Parliament shall take place, but the administration shall again meet the present House." The same day it was known Foley and Buchanan would have to leave the ministry. On the 21st Sandfield Macdonald and Dr. Parker were drumming up the malcontents. In the evening a caucus of the ministerial supporters was held in the office of the Attorney General West, when he explained the basis of the arrangement, and the members, by a majority, expressed confidence in the Government, and approval of its programme. The Upper Canada opposition caucus was

held at Kent's Hotel. It was attended by forty members, of whom thirty-four pledged themselves to support the federal platform, but Dorion and Holton, with the Lower Canada *rouges* have pronounced themselves unalterably opposed to it.

What effect the political combination may have upon the fortunes of political parties is one of the questions over which men naturally speculate. The first effect is to bring the two majorities into unison. Upper and Lower Canada shake hands, and promise to sit down quietly and arrange their difficulties. The ministry, which but the day before the hostile vote that produced the combination, depended upon one or two individuals for the breath of life, suddenly becomes numerically strong, having, probably, a majority of half a hundred at its back. No one troubles himself now how Mr. Rankin or Mr. Bell or Mr. O'Halloran votes. Members feel they can leave the House without danger of a ministerial crisis; they can go home without having to drum up a "pair." Nevertheless, this large ministerial majority is not made up of the most consistent material. Many members find themselves in very awkward positions. There is much to forget, if not to forgive, all around. The situation is scarcely less embarrassing than novel. There is among members of the House a strong undercurrent against the arrangement, but the force of numbers breaks down everything, and prudence makes many a tongue silent.

Many think that one result will be a loss of strength to Mr. Cartier in Lower Canada. It is not difficult to see what point of attack the *rouges* will select; they will try and confound the distinction between representation by population under the legislative union, and the same thing under the vastly different circumstances of federation. The fear of the uncertainty of a much prized autonomy is the most

sensitive part of a French Canadian. Let him once believe, rightly or wrongly, that this is in danger, and he holds every other consideration as secondary. The difficulty which meets the *rouge* in taking advantage of the situation, is the fact that they have always denied that Mr. Brown is a danger to Lower Canada. They have said this a thousand times, and cannot now expect to be credited if they urge the contrary to be the case.

Mr. Brown spoke truly when he said it mattered comparatively little to himself or John A. Macdonald to assent to the recent ministerial changes, but to Mr. Cartier it was a step of serious consequence. Lower Canadians would have short memories if they were all at once to make a truce with Mr. Brown. Whether they will follow Mr. Cartier in his new path is hard to predict. The tone of the French press, so far, indicates that it will be no flowery one for him.

CHAPTER 26.

MR. BROWN'S EXPLANATIONS.

On the 22nd of June, negotiations for the new coalition Government having been concluded, the result of the deliberations, in detail, are read to the House by Mr. John A. Macdonald, by which it appeared Mr. Brown agreed to enter the Cabinet with two of his friends from Upper Canada, the names not to be submitted until after prorogation. Upon the conclusion of this ministerial explanation, some discussion took place, in which Dorion, Holton and John A. Macdonald took part, and finally Mr. Brown arose to address the House. He appeared almost over-

come by his feelings. His lips twitched nervously, and his voice at first was tremulous and almost inaudible. He said:—

“I would, Mr. Speaker, be practising deception did I conceal from the House what I feel on this occasion. I am well aware of the position I have occupied in this country for many years; that I have stood opposed to hon. gentlemen opposite for ten or twelve years in the most hostile manner. I am well aware, in dealing with the question of the solution of our difficulties, and with the question of men of opposite political opinions going into the same Government, that I have used language and spoken in tones respecting hon. gentlemen in the Government, which, had the agreement just read been signed under such conditions as has been attached usually to political alliances, could not have enabled me to stand here and justify my position before the country. I would deceive the House if I attempted to conceal for a moment that I am fully aware of the painful position I occupy before the country, as being that of one who will probably be spoken of as doing what he did from personal motives and for self-aggrandizement. I am free to confess that had the circumstances under which the country is placed been one whit less important than they are, I should not have approached hon. gentlemen opposite to negotiate with reference to the present difficulties. I have long stated that I was prepared, as far as I was concerned, to join any man, no matter to what party he belonged, with the object of effecting a settlement of those great questions which have so long divided the country. I have been for years connected with a body of gentlemen from Lower Canada whom I have learned to esteem, who have stood with me through great difficulties, and whose kindness I can never forget, but party alliances are one thing, and the interests of the country an-

other. For my honourable friends, the member for Hochelaga (Mr. Dorion), and Chateauguay (Mr. Holton), I have no terms to express the personal attachment that has existed between me and them. Nothing but a feeling of the urgent necessity of the case, and the manful way in which this question has been taken up by the member for Montreal East (Mr. Cartier), and his colleagues, would have induced me to do that which the members for Chateauguay and Hochelaga could feel was in the slightest degree contrary to the position in which I have stood towards them. I think these hon. gentlemen will acknowledge that I have this justification for my course: that I have for a long period urgently besought them to take up this question in the way in which it is now proposed to deal with it. I hope the course I have felt it my duty to pursue will not entail a weakening of those bonds of personal friendship heretofore existing between the hon. gentlemen and myself. I hope the day will yet come when they will look upon this step as the best that could have been adopted. Can any hon. gentleman think it is any pleasure or joy to me to sit in the Government with hon. gentlemen opposite, and oppose my old friends? Nothing but the strongest sense of duty would ever place me in such a position. I have struggled to avoid entering the Government. I was willing to help them, and I would have remained outside of the Cabinet, and given them all that honest and loyal and hearty aid that any man could give, but they would not consent. I would now say to my friends from Lower Canada: Let us try to rise superior to the pettiness of mere party politics, and take up the question as it should be considered. Wait till a measure is brought down, and if we are to be condemned, let us be so, but, at any rate, give us an opportunity of showing we are honest, and will do our duty to our country.

Were I to say that I do not feel very painfully the position in which I stand to my old friends throughout the country, I would not speak the truth. During the vicissitudes of public life, and while I have been contending with the many difficulties that have beset me, if there was one thing more than another which I have relied on for encouragement, it was the belief that I possessed the sympathies of the honest yeomen of Upper Canada, of whom I feel proud. If there is anything that inspires me with a painful feeling in reference to the present line of conduct, it is the apprehension that these friends will misinterpret my motives. I think I am entitled to the sympathy of hon. gentlemen on my side of the House in my present position. I have no fear, however, as to the result when the measure contemplated is properly understood, or the sincerity of the parties to the negotiations is justly appreciated, for in the long period of twenty years which I have had in public life, I have never found the sound common sense of the people of Upper Canada has been mistaken in the end. If hon. gentlemen ask me how I can enter a Cabinet with only two other members of the Opposition, to whom nine members of the Government will be opposed, I would answer that I would not care if any of my friends accompanied me in the Government, except for the assistance and ability they would bring to the aid of the Government. So perfectly satisfied am I of the honesty and sincerity with which hon. gentlemen opposite have approached this question, so convinced am I that they will carry out their pledges, that I would consent to enter the Cabinet alone if it were necessary, without the additional guarantee of the admission of two of my friends. If I have no other success to boast of during my political career than that which has attended me in bringing about the formation of a Government, with the strength which no other Gov-

ernment has possessed for many years—a Government formed for the purpose of settling the sectional difficulties between Upper and Lower Canada, I feel that I have something to be proud of, and that I have accomplished some good for the country. I wish no greater honour for my children, no more noble heirloom to transmit to my descendants, than the record of the part I have taken in this great work."

The final result was immensely gratifying to Mr. McGee. In speaking of it, after our return from the House, he said: Brown has made the greatest exhibition of moral courage I ever knew or read of in political history. Think of a man who, for fifteen years and more, has been supporting representation by population as the only remedy for our constitutional ills, consenting now to set it aside, against the wish of most of his supporters in Upper Canada, and all his friends in Lower Canada. Scarcely a Grit will swallow this without a grimace and a curse at his leader's apostacy. His followers in the House do not disguise their apprehension of the result, but this is not the worst of the situation for him. It is barely two months since Sandfield Macdonald, finding himself too weak to effectively carry on the country's business, approached Cartier and Tache, with the suggestion of a coalition. What did Brown say to this? No language could be made stronger than that made use of in the *Globe*, of which I have a copy. He then read from the issue of April 16th: "If John S. Macdonald, while leader of the Liberal party, and yet in office, had really and truly sent a message to George E. Cartier, that he was prepared to betray his friends, and strike hands with him, the leader of the enemy, he would be the basest traitor to be found on British soil." He has just done what Sandfield Macdonald attempted to do, and his enemies in the opposite camp will not permit him to forget it. Nothing but an ab-

solite belief that his country's existence was at stake, would ever have sufficed to bring a man as high-spirited as Brown to join hands with the very enemy he has so long and so bitterly assailed.

Next to Brown, the man who has taken the greatest risks to his political future by his course in this matter is Cartier. He has some loyal followers in the House who will cling to him whatever the result may be, and the support of the Brown men will make the coalition Government sure of its existence for the balance of its parliamentary life; but if the House had to be dissolved, and Dorion appealed to the prejudices of his fellow-countrymen, I venture to predict that he would come back with a solid French Canadian vote. Before another election is held, confederation will have become a reality in all likelihood, and it will be too late to make capital out of his abandonment of his country's interest. He is shrewd and far-seeing, and has fully calculated upon this before committing himself to his present course. You can depend further upon his pushing this federation scheme with all the strength of his being. He must make it a success or give up his political power forever. He has put his all to the hazard, and nobody knows the fact better than himself. He prides himself upon not following but leading public opinion, and has claimed that this is the highest type of statesmanship. He will have an opportunity of exemplifying his views in this instance. He has the unanimous voice of his people against him, and nothing but complete success will justify his conduct in their eyes.

On the 30th of June, the ministerial readjustments were carried out, and Mr. Brown became President of the Council; Mr. Mowat, Postmaster General, and Mr. McDougall, Provincial Secretary,

in the place of Messrs. Buchanan, Foley and Simpson. The new Government still has at its head the Hon. Sir Etienne Tache.

CHAPTER 27.

THE QUEBEC CONFERENCE—1864.

During the session of Parliament just described, an invitation was received by the Speakers of the two Houses from the Chambers of Commerce of Halifax and St. John, for the members, to accept their hospitality and visit the Maritime Provinces. Owing to the lateness of the session, it was impossible to take advantage of this at the time, but as soon as the Houses were prorogued, Mr. McGee, on behalf of the assembly, and Mr. Tessier, on behalf of the council, took the matter in hand, and by their exertions an excursion was arranged to leave Portland, by boat, on the 4th of August. Besides the members, invitations were sent to representatives of most of the Canadian papers. It was heartily responded to, and on the day in question, there assembled thirty-three of us from the Legislative Assembly, eighteen from the Legislative Council, and a large number representing the papers of Canada. The weather conditions, when we arrived at Portland, were anything but encouraging. The rain poured in torrents all day, and when we arrived at the wharf, about 5 p.m., which was the hour fixed for our departure, no boat was in sight, and no waiting-room available for our disconsolate crowd. All were wet and miserable, and as the hour went by without any immediate prospect of getting away, a number became so discouraged, they returned to their hotels, and gave up the trip altogether. When the steamer finally put in an appearance, and we got on

board, it was found the berth accommodation only sufficed for three-quarters of our party, and those not active enough in looking after their comforts were compelled to sleep on the bare floor. To their complaints, Mr. McGee said, laughingly: "Besides your transportation, you were only promised your *board*." At Eastport Maine, Mr. Tilley, Premier of New Brunswick, joined the party. We were most hospitably entertained throughout. Banquets were tendered us at Halifax and St. John, and every effort made to arouse public interest and support for the proposed union of the provinces. We were surprised, however, to find the mass of the people opposed to the scheme, although the prominent public men and citizens gave it a hearty support, with some exceptions.

Some excitement was produced on the day we were billed to sail from St. John to Portland, on our return, by the news that Confederate gunboat, "Tallahassee" was ranging up and down the coast, destroying northern shipping; that she had already sunk twenty-five vessels, and the passengers and crews of merchantmen had been put ashore at Yarmouth, and other points along the Nova Scotia coast. This was a nice state of affairs. She might be right in our track, and waiting outside the harbour to gobble us up as soon as we were at sea. These forebodings, fortunately, proved unnecessary. The trip was made in safety and comfort, Mr. McGee, with his jokes and fun, being the life of the party.

It appearing in the February of this year (1864) that all hopes of an arrangement with Canada was at an end, the legislatures of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island passed resolutions authorizing their respective Governments to enter into negotiations, and hold a convention, for the purpose of effecting a union of the Maritime Provinces. The convention was to meet at Charlottetown, on the

8th of September. Before their sittings were concluded, the convention was notified of the intention of a delegation from Canada to meet it, with the view of discussing the larger question of a union of all the provinces. Proceedings were thereupon adjourned until the delegation could arrive, which it shortly afterwards did, consisting of Messrs. Macdonald, Cartier, Brown, Galt, McGee, Langevin, McDougall and Campbell. After an earnest and animated discussion, the maritime delegates were so far convinced of the advantages of the larger proposition, that they agreed to drop their present proposal of a maritime union only, and accept the invitation of the Canadian delegates to meet them in Quebec in October. This informal invitation was subsequently followed by one from the Governor General, addressed to all the Lieutenant-Governors, including Newfoundland, to send delegates to meet at Quebec, on the 10th October, to consider the union of all the British North American provinces.

Mr. McGee wrote me, shortly after his return, that the Canadian delegates would require a secretary for their private work, in addition to the official secretary of the convention, and if I would accept the position, he thought the Premier would offer it to me. I did so very willingly, and on the 12th found myself again in the old historic city.

All the members of the Canadian Government were members of the convention, while Nova Scotia was represented by five delegates, New Brunswick by seven, Prince Edward Island by seven, and Newfoundland by two. The maritime party, and their wives and retinue, had been taken on board the Canadian Government steamer "Victoria," at Pictou and Shediac, and though delayed by storms and gales, arrived safely on the 9th, and were put up at the St. Louis Hotel, during their stay, at the expense of the

Canadian Government. Sir Etienne Tache was unanimously chosen chairman of the conference, and Colonel Bernard acting secretary, while the provincial secretaries of the respective provinces were appointed honorary secretaries of the convention. The conference sat with closed doors for the purpose of secrecy. During the sittings, from time to time, the delegates from each province withdrew, to discuss matters which arose in general conference, but upon which they had not come to any decision amongst themselves, and here my duties were mainly performed, but my position necessarily made me conversant with everything that took place in convention. One and a half days were first occupied in regulating the mode of procedure to be adopted, and all finally concurred in the resolution, that in taking votes on all questions to be decided by the conference, except questions of order, each province or colony, by whatever number of delegates represented, should have but one vote, and that in voting Canada should be considered as two provinces.

On the 11th the conference unanimously concurred in the resolution, that the vast interests and present and future prosperity of British North America would be promoted by a federal union under the Crown of Great Britain, provided such union could be effected on principles just to the several provinces.

This evening Her Excellency held a very brilliant Drawing Room in the Council Chamber of the Parliament Building, at which all the leading personages, civil and military, were present.

On the 12th, the motion by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mr. Archibald, was unanimously concurred in, by which it was resolved, "That in the federation of the British North America provinces, the system of government best adapted under existing circum-

stances to protect the diversified interests of the several provinces, and secure efficiency, harmony and permanency in the working of the union, would be a general government, charged with matters of common interest to the whole country; and local governments for each of the Canadas and for the Maritime Provinces, charged with the control of local matters in each of their respective sections, provision being made for the admission into the union, on equitable terms, of the North-West Territories, British Columbia and Vancouver."

The discussion of this resolution occupied a large part of two days, and were it not made clear that Lower Canada would never consent to a legislative union, it appeared to me the sentiment of a majority of the delegates was more favourable to a legislative than a federal union.

The 13th was taken up mainly in a discussion of the frame to be given to the new constitution, and finally it was resolved to take the British constitution as a model for the general government.

On this same day was opened a discussion upon the composition of the legislative council or senate; Mr. Tilley proposing twenty-four for Upper Canada, twenty-four for Lower Canada, and thirty-two for the four Maritime Provinces. This question occupied all the 14th, 15th and 17th, when it was finally resolved that the Legislative Council should consist of twenty-four members from Upper Canada; twenty-four from Lower Canada, ten from Nova Scotia, ten from New Brunswick, four from Prince Edward Island, and four from Newfoundland.

As we were returning to the hotel from the conference, the city was thrown into a state of great excitement by the falling of a large mass of rock from the Citadel, upon Little Champlain Street, destroying three houses, and killing many of the unfortunate

inmates. The streets were soon filled with a sympathetic crowd, who labored all night in attempting to rescue those who had not been crushed to death.

On the 15th the members of the conference were the guests at a banquet given by the Quebec Board of Trade.

On the 18th the resolution was concurred in, of Mr. Macdonald, that the members of the Legislative Council should be British subjects, of the full age of thirty years; that they should possess real property qualifications of four thousand dollars over and above all incumbrances, and be worth that amount over and above their debts and liabilities.

After many motions and amendments, made and negatived or withdrawn, it was finally resolved that the members of the Legislative Council in the federal legislature should be appointed by the Crown at the recommendation of the federal executive Government, upon the nomination of the respective local governments, and that in such nomination due regard should be had to the claims of the members of the Legislative Council and of the Opposition in each province, so that all political parties might be as nearly as possible represented.

On the 19th, Mr. Brown at length had the proud satisfaction of moving a resolution which carried into effect the principle of representation by population, which he had been fighting for in Upper Canada for fifteen years or more. The resolution provided, that the basis of representation in the House of Commons shall be population, as determined by the official census every ten years, and that the number of members at first shall be two hundred, distributed as follows: Upper Canada, eighty-nine; Lower Canada, sixty-five; Nova Scotia, nineteen; New Brunswick, fifteen; Newfoundland, seven; Prince Edward Island, five; and that for the purpose of readjustments, Lower Canada

shall be the unit of population, with sixty-five members. This resolution was vigorously opposed by the Prince Edward Island delegates, who said their province would not go into confederation if this motion was concurred in, as it would have no status whatever. Other members pointed out it had been well understood at Charlottetown that the principle of representation in the popular chamber should be representation by population, and it was idle to raise the question now. The resolution carried, all concurring except Prince Edward Island. Next day the subject was again informally discussed, but the view of the Prince Edward Island delegates was that this clause would preclude their province from joining the Union.

On the morning of the 20th, resolutions were passed for a session of Parliament each year, and limiting the life of Parliament to five years, and providing, that until other provisions were made by Parliament, all laws relating to elections in the various provinces should apply to the members elected for such provinces respectively. Mr. Brown's motion that there should be one Legislative Council Chamber in each local government, after some debate, was withdrawn.

The conference did not assemble this afternoon, but the members visited some of the places of interest in the city, amongst others, Laval University. The same evening a resolution providing for the appointment of lieutenant-governors by the Governor General in Council, to hold office five years, was concurred in.

On the 21st the most important resolution of the conference up to this time was introduced by Mr. Macdonald, determining the powers of the Federal Government, which, with but slight alterations, was adopted.

On the 21st Mr. Galt introduced the financial resolution of the conference, whereby the principal pub-

lic works and property in each province were vested in the Federal Government. It also fixed the public debt of the new confederation at sixty-two millions of dollars, and provided a basis upon which each province should be entitled to annual subventions from the federal treasury.

On the 24th, as if significant of his subsequent position as champion on behalf of the provinces in the great constitutional conflicts with the Federal Government, Mr. Mowat introduced a resolution which defined the powers of the local legislatures. The clauses of this resolution formed the subject of debate, both on this day and the next, when the item of education became the subject of an important amendment from Mr. McGee, which was concurred in, as follows:—

“Saving the rights and privileges which the Protestant and Catholic minority in both Canadas may possess as to their denominational schools at the time when the constitutional Act goes into operation.”

Some of the New Brunswick delegates opposed Mr. Mowat's resolution, which gave the Federal Government all powers not expressly conferred upon the local legislatures, desiring that the provinces should have jurisdiction in all matters not expressly conferred on the Federal Government. The evils which this distribution of powers gave rise to in the United States, leading as it did to a civil war, operated strongly in favour of those who thought the largest measure of authority should be given to the Federal Government.

On the 26th Mr. Galt introduced a resolution, which was concurred in, that in the general legislature the English and French language should be employed.

This concluded the proceedings at Quebec, and on the 27th, the delegates having been invited to visit

the principal cities in Canada, proceeded to Montreal by special train, furnished by the general manager of the Grand Trunk Railway (Mr. Brydges). A short session of the conference was held at the St. Lawrence Hall, when the resolutions adopted separately at Quebec, with some minor amendments, were affirmed, and the report prepared and signed, which was hereinafter spoken of as the Quebec Resolutions, and which formed the basis of the subsequent conference in England, and of the legislation in the various provincial parliaments.

A ball at the St. Lawrence Hall that evening, and a banquet tendered by the city next day, which was presided over by Sir Fenwick Williams, concluded the proceedings in Montreal.

On the 31st the delegates proceeded to Ottawa, by river, and were entertained at the Russell House during their stay. The new Parliament Buildings, now nearly completed, were inspected, and the party entertained at luncheon in the future picture gallery, by the contractors. A ball was given the same evening at the Russell House, and the party left next morning for Toronto, by way of Prescott, receiving addresses at Kingston, Belleville and Cobourg. In Toronto Canadian hospitality was continued, a splendid banquet being given to the visitors at the Queen's Hotel. Here, for the first time, the provision as to secrecy in regard to the proceedings at Quebec, which had, with more or less success, been preserved, although the general features had leaked out, and had been published in the press, was done away with, and in his speech Mr. Brown gave the details of the proposed confederation.

CHAPTER 28.

THE FIRST SESSION OF 1865.

Parliament having been called to assemble on the 19th of January, the day previous found me once more in Quebec. Once more the abrupt precipices and towering rocks, rolling valleys stretching away for miles on either hand, commanding mountains in the distance, all bearing a white and dazzling mantle of snow; once more the antiquated streets in their winter garments and the vigor of its icy and bracing climate.

It is a matter of extreme difficulty to define the exact position of many members of the House with regard to the Government, and the grand scheme of confederation which it intends to press upon Parliament. It is easy to perceive that there is a strong, lurking hostility, which requires only judicious and skilful handling to develop into a vigorous and effective opposition. The strength of the Government does not exist in the homogeneity of its supporters, but rather in the absence of all organization amongst those who are disposed to resist the scheme in Parliament. It is agreed, however, by those who do not conceal their hostility, that the ministry is composed of such discordant elements that it will be difficult to hold it together. Those who talk in this style appear to be confident that the coalition will break up in consequence of divergence of views on most questions which will come up for discussion, and that a return to party government cannot be long prevented.

The reply to the Address from the Throne was moved by Mr. Robitaille, and seconded by Colonel Haultain. No time was lost by the Opposition in opening attack upon the new coalition. Dorion's

amendment, that the House neither wish nor seek to create a new nationality, was promptly voted down, upon division, the only Upper Canada members voting for it being Rymal and Wallbridge.

On the 3rd of February, Sir Etienne Tache introduced a resolution in the Legislative Council, that an address be presented to Her Majesty that she be graciously pleased to cause a measure to be submitted to the Imperial Parliament for the purpose of uniting the Canadas, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island into one Government, with a constitution based upon the provisions of the Quebec Resolutions. On the 6th Mr. John A. Macdonald introduced a similar resolution in the Assembly. The five great speeches for the resolution were made in the following order, and by Mr. John A. Macdonald, Mr. Cartier, Mr. Galt, Mr. Brown and Mr. McGee. As the subject afforded room for much display of eloquence, it is not surprising the speakers, all of whom were practised debaters, proved equal to the occasion, but I do not consider the debate of this session equal in importance to the preceding one, which I have described in so much detail. The result was a foregone conclusion, so long as the union between Mr. Brown and his supporters on the one hand, and the Conservative party on the other, subsisted.

Confederation was not dependent upon the cogency of the arguments now adduced in support of it. Once the coalition Government determined that the Quebec Resolutions must be passed in the exact form in which they had been adopted by the conference, there was really nothing to be done in this Parliament except to put them through. The debate was, so far as results were concerned, largely one of form. No vote was changed; no different result was accom-

plished than would have resulted had the Government, without debate, moved the adoption of the Resolutions.

Perhaps the country would not have been content had there not been a full discussion, and full reports given by the press of all that was said upon the subject. I shall content myself, therefore, with a short account of the matter.

Mr. Brown's speech was characterized mainly by a note of thanksgiving at the result. He could say, so far as he was concerned, all that he had room for in his mind at this moment, was a feeling of rejoicing that his country should have the benefit of this measure, and a just feeling of gladness that men were found at the right moment possessed of firmness and patriotism enough to forget their personal political feelings, and cast aside all prejudices and antipathies.

Mr. Dorion referred to Mr. McGee as having argued in favour of the new nationality, in his paper, the *New Era*, as far back as 1858, and complimented him on the ability with which he had laboured for this object, and upon the success which appeared at length about to crown his efforts; saying, however, that, in his opinion, confederation was only a device of politicians to get out of the difficulty in which they were placed, and not in response to a call from any considerable portion of the people of the country. Mr. McGee disclaimed all credit for himself, but awarded to the despatch of 1859, and Mr. Brown's motion for a committee on *constitutional changes* in the preceding session, the first place for the results which had finally been achieved, and proceeded to say:—

“I will dismiss the antecedent history of the question for the present. It grew from an early and feeble plant to be a stately and flourishing tree, and,

for my part, anyone that pleases may say that he made the tree grow, if I can only have hereafter my fair share of the shelter and shade.

Constitutional government amongst us had reached its lowest point when it existed only by the successful search of a messenger or a page after a member willingly or unwillingly absent from his seat. Anyone in those days might have been the saviour of his country. All he had to do was, when one of the many successive Governments was in danger, to rise and say "yea," and, *presto*, the country was saved. The House was fast losing, under such a state of things, its hold on the country. The administrative departments were becoming disorganized under such frequent changes of chiefs and policies."

After the leaders of the new policy had thus spoken, the Opposition leaders and the rank and file took part in the debate. Holton and Dorion naturally led off in the attack. They both objected, not only to the principle of the Bill, but also to the details, and did not forget to point out that the Reform members of the coalition had thrown over their old principles, as well as their old friends. To this charge Mr. McKenzie said he and others had been accused of deserting their party because they declined to act with gentlemen from Lower Canada with whom they had formerly been allied. There had been no deserting whatever. The fact amounted to this, that when their political friends from Lower Canada declined to act in the matter of settling our sectional difficulties, he, and those who acted with him, could only support those who took up the task. If the Upper Canada Liberals had refused the terms offered to them merely because honourable gentlemen opposite had been for years opposed to them, they would have acted in a most unpatriotic manner, and he, for one, was not prepared to take such responsibility.

Before the debate had proceeded very far, and on the 5th of March, those of the House and country favourable to the Union were paralyzed at the result of the electors in New Brunswick, where all the prominent confederation leaders, Tilley, Fisher and Gray, were defeated, and the government itself shortly afterwards was replaced by one hostile to the Union. Staggering as was this blow, the coalition leaders did not flinch, and Mr. Macdonald at once made a ministerial explanation to the House, in which he said they would persist all the more in pushing forward the scheme; that this untoward result in New Brunswick made it all the more important that the Quebec Resolutions should as soon as possible receive the assent of the House, to counterbalance in England the ill-effect of the New Brunswick elections. This announcement was followed in a few days by a motion which created intense irritation amongst the Opposition members, who claimed the Government had thereby broken its pledge at the opening of the House, when it promised that the fullest opportunity for discussion of the Bill should be given. The resolution offered by Mr. Cartier was, *that the motion be now put*, to which, according to parliamentary procedure, no amendment could be offered. Holton characterized the conduct of the Government as a base trick, and turning his attention to his quondam friend, Mr. Brown, said he had abandoned those Liberals with whom he had acted for years, and observed that the honourable the Attorney General, West had, by his superior strategy, drawn him into the Cabinet, and turned him to advantage for his own purposes. It has been said, he remarked, that the political wayside is strewn with the grave-stones of the former supporters of the honourable the Attorney General West, by connection with whom they have all been sacrificed. I can see in the future

a grave yawning for the noblest victim of them all; for him who has advocated for years the rights of the people of Upper Canada, and the liberties of the country in this House.

It was quite apparent, in his reply, that Mr. Brown felt keenly these charges of disloyalty made against him, but this was the cross he took up, when his sense of public duty led him to make an alliance with the enemies of a lifetime, and he had much more criticism to bear, as we shall see in the next session. Occasionally the debate was illuminated by flashes of wit or repartee. When Mr. Dorion presented some four petitions against confederation, McGee pointed out that many of the signatures consisted simply of a cross, and might easily prove fictitious. To this Holton said, "Who send us here, but the men who sign crosses?" Mr. McGee replied, "Well, I must say that they inflicted a cross upon this House when they sent to it the honourable member for Chateauguay." On the 10th of March the main motion passed, on a vote of ninety-one to thirty-three, of whom only eight of the opposition were from Upper Canada.

CHAPTER 29.

SECOND SESSION OF 1865.

Shortly after the House adjourned, matters began to look as serious for confederation in Nova Scotia as it already was in New Brunswick. During the winter, Dr. Tupper and Mr. Archibald, respectively the leaders of the Conservative and Reform party in that province, and who, with their friends, formed the majority of the House, held joint meetings throughout the province in favour of the union,

but before long it was abundantly plain that the feeling of the great mass of the people in that province was quite as strongly against the union as in New Brunswick. On the 23rd of March, so strong was this, that the Government led by Dr. Tupper was compelled to introduce the following resolution:—

“Whereas, under existing circumstances, an immediate union of the British North American provinces has become impracticable, and whereas, a legislative union of the Maritime Provinces is desirable, whether the larger union is accomplished or not; resolved, that in the opinion of this House the negotiations for the union of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island should be renewed, in accordance with the resolutions passed at the last session of the House.”

Within a few weeks thereafter, the Prince Edward Island elections were held, when again the unionists were overwhelmingly defeated, all the leading members of the Quebec conference being numbered amongst the fallen. In the new House, only five out of twenty-eight members favourable to confederation were returned.

By the middle of May, it may safely be said, that in the opinion of nearly every one in Canada, the union of the provinces was deemed at an end for many long years to come.

Interest in the subject revived in September, when, upon an invitation from the Upper Province, a large maritime delegation visited our country. The Western Fair at London was being held at this time, and on the 21st, the delegates visited our city, and were given a splendid banquet, at which Mr. McDougall, the Provincial Secretary, addressed them on behalf of the Government. They were much impressed by the agricultural resources of our western counties, and by the immense display of produce and machin-

ery, and more than all, at the crowds that were present, about seventeen thousand people on the day of their visit.

On the 8th of August, the House again assembled at Quebec. The Opposition was now led by Holton and Dorion from Lower Canada, and John S. Macdonald, M. C. Cameron and John H. Cameron from Upper Canada. The tediousness of the discussion was broken on the 24th of August by an exhibition of Mr. McGee's inimitable debating power, wherein fine thrusts have more effect than laboured eloquence. The House was in supply. Mr. Holton had sarcastically inquired what the Government had accomplished during the recess, to which he replied: "The member for Chateauguy has never, during all this great debate, really discussed the question of policy before the House; he has never spoken upon the principle of confederation. He rose at page 17 of the confederation debates, and sat down for the last time at page 1021. He was up after every public speaker during that lengthy discussion. He spoke four times as often as the very honourable and long-winded member for Brome (Mr. Dunkin)—who spoke two days—and, after all, never spoke upon the question or delivered himself for or against confederation. He objected that this thing was wrong and that thing awry; that this thing had a squint and the other thing was a-gee. He never said he was opposed to the union, nor discussed the merits of the case from the beginning to the end of the session, and never will, I am sure. He is always bugling here a little and there a little, and ought, like the old housekeeper, to keep a trash bag by his side for these scraps and fragments with which he loves to amuse himself. He complains that nothing has been done, but how can he talk about the Government doing nothing, when he himself, in the late Govern-

ment, as Finance Minister, lay-in of a budget six weeks and brought forth absolutely nothing."

Mr. Brown and his Reform following, it has been said, joined hands with our people for one purpose only, and the incongruities arising from so anomalous a situation did not develop to any great extent so long as the coalition Government was concerned with matters directly relating to the subject of confederation, but as this second session progressed, and it became necessary to transact other public business, to make provision for the necessary expenditures, and adopt a financial policy, the Reform members of the Government found themselves more and more deeply entangled in the toils, from which there seemed no hope of escape, except by a mad rush, which would shatter, not only the Government, but the scheme of confederation. Outnumbered three to one in the Cabinet, they were compelled to adopt measures and support proceedings, which were diametrically opposed to their own views, and inconsistent with their political past. It was more than could be expected of human nature to hope that Mr. Brown's allies should not taunt him upon such occasions with his recusancy to the great principles for which he had struggled all his political life.

On the 7th of September, in supply, an item of a grant to the Trinity College of Toronto, a sectarian school, Mr. Holton said he knew before the honourable President of the Council (Mr. Brown) left his seat previous to entering the ministry, that he had not abandoned his position as a determined opponent of sectarian grants, but the first thing he does after getting into office is to ask a grant for Trinity College, a sectarian institution, opposed to the Provincial University of Upper Canada, and hoped the honourable gentleman would afford some explanation. To this Mr. Brown replied, with much agitation: "I do

not hesitate to say, that if I were in a party Government, I would not consent to occupy a place in it if I did not have my views carried out. But I am here for a particular purpose, and if the honourable member for Chateauguay fancies he is going to induce me to play into his hands, as an opponent of these great constitutional changes which the country desires, then all I can say is, that he is very much mistaken, indeed. I am in the Government for the purpose of carrying out a great object, and it would be absurd on my part if I had not made up my mind to sustain and repel such attacks as those which have been made upon me to-day. I expected such assaults, and I am prepared to defend myself. The honourable gentleman need not fear he can embarrass us; we are willing to make sacrifices to attain without delay a great and desirable end. The vast change we contemplate will, I repeat, far outshadow all such considerations as these, and I have no fear whatever but that my friends in the country will justify and appreciate my conduct. Had I differed with my colleagues, and demanded the adoption of my views upon the subject of sectarian schools, I would have had to retire from the Cabinet. And if I had, when might we have expected to obtain these great reforms, by which the present and other abuses of which we complained will be swept away. I contend that the Reform party, in joining this ministry, has done the best thing possible for the country. Do the honourable gentlemen opposite think it was a pleasant year I have passed since I entered the administration? Do they think it was anything but a feeling of patriotism that would ever have induced me to take such a position, involving such personal inconvenience and sacrifice?" (Ironical cheers from the Opposition.)

John S. Macdonald now continued the attack upon Mr. Brown, which was evidently premeditated,

and justified his action in recommending Mr. Brown to join the coalition Government, by the reason that he thought thereby it would prove Mr. Brown's political destruction. As this despicable admission was made, one could see the member for Lambton's lips tighten, and soon he was on his feet, dealing sledgehammer blows at the member for Cornwall. Referring to the Liberal caucus, at which Mr. Brown, in 1864, had been unanimously requested to join the Government, he said: "Every member of the Liberal party from the Upper Province was present at that caucus, except one; all but three voted, and no one was more active than the honourable member for Cornwall in securing the adoption of the resolution requesting Mr. Brown to join the Government. Either that honourable gentleman went to the meeting with the honest objects of a member of the party, or as a spy. He then pretended to act as a loyal member of the party, and as such must be held responsible. At that time it was perfectly clear to all of us that it was impossible to proceed as we were doing for years, during which the various Governments had struggled to carry on public business with only one or two of a majority, and we all felt that some change must be made. Under the circumstances, the Liberal party met in caucus, and the matter was fairly, clearly and deliberately discussed, and on no occasion did the member for Cornwall indicate any want of faith in the leader of the Liberal party. After all that, the honourable gentleman comes forward and tells us he had but one object in his course, and that was to destroy the President of the Council and the party attached to him. There is but one character known to history that could have been guilty of such an act; nothing more scandalous or unprecedented was ever known, and the honourable gentleman will find himself greatly mistaken if he thinks by this shameless avowal to

affect in any way the position of the President of the Council in the minds of his friends in the West."

In December of this year (1865), Mr. Brown sent in his resignation as a member of the Government. In the ministerial explanation given in the House by Mr. John A. Macdonald, in the June following, the reason assigned was a difference of opinion between Mr. Brown and the rest of the Government as to the best mode of renewing, conducting and continuing negotiations with the United States for a reciprocity treaty, then expiring.

Mr. Brown, in his public explanation at the same time, said he had entered the Government with great reluctance, and was willing still to give it a hearty support in carrying out the confederation measure. That when he was in the Maritime Provinces upon official business, he discovered in the papers that, in his absence, Mr. Galt and Mr. Howland were in Washington negotiating a treaty, when they had no authority so to do. That in handing in his resignation to His Excellency, the latter had received him with great kindness, and, after explanations, had said, "Then, Mr. Brown, I am called upon to decide between your policy and that of the other members of the Government," to which he replied, "If I am allowed to give a voice in the matter, I should say the Government ought to be sustained, though the decision is against myself. I consider the question of confederation as of far higher consequence to this country than any reciprocity negotiations."

It would appear clear that this incident alone would not have caused Mr. Brown's resignation, were it not, in his opinion, a culmination of a series of acts of similar character, in which his views were constantly ignored. This appears from the statement made by Mr. McKenzie in the House the next year, when he said he had been asked to join the Govern-

ment as a third member of the Reform party, and after consulting with Mr. Brown, he refused, as he found that this transaction was but the concluding act of a long contention, and that personal animosity had had a very great deal to do with it. Additional corroboration is found in the fact, that when, in the session following, Mr. Galt resigned on account of the Government dropping the Lower Canadian Protestant Minority Education Bill, Mr. Brown said that Mr. Galt's action was highly creditable, and that he had no doubt he acted from high and conscientious motives. Clearly, his animosity towards Mr. Galt was not of such an extreme and bitter character that it alone would have operated to induce him to leave the coalition Government.

When two men, with natures so radically different as were those of Mr. Brown and Mr. Macdonald, have stood opposed for more than a quarter of a century, we cannot hope to see them doing justice to one another. Indeed, they have become incapable of appreciating each other's motives and good qualities. This probably accounts for Mr. Macdonald's remarks, at a banquet in Montreal, more than ten years later, when he said that Brown joined his Government in 1864 by a sense of fear for the consequences resulting from his unwise and factious course, and that his patriotism was but "*momentary in its nature, and was soon repented of.*" A course of action, beginning in October, 1863, when he introduced his resolution *re constitutional changes*, which he caused to be carried in the House in the June following, against the votes of Mr. Macdonald and Mr. Cartier; which resulted in his alliance with his life-long political enemies for the purpose of bringing about the union of the provinces, and which induced him to remain in such alliance for eighteen months, although admittedly under circumstances which were gall and worm-

wood to a high-spirited man, and who, when he retired, agreed to give his old allies his support on confederation matters, and did so even when opposing his old friends Dorion and Holton, not only during the session of 1866, but afterwards, even to the extent of exerting all his influence to counteract the effect of their memorial to the Imperial Government against confederation, and continued this support without halt or hesitation, both by voice and pen, and by the great influence of his paper, right up to the final passage of the Bill by the English Parliament, such a support cannot, I think, with any fairness, be described as *momentary in its nature*, nor can it be said to have been *soon repented of*.

CHAPTER 30.

THE MARITIME PROVINCES.

1866.—All eyes in Canada are now turned towards the Maritime Provinces. It is felt the hopes of a union of the colonies is dependent upon the strength of the sentiment amongst our brethren by the sea.

Events here marched fast. The Government of New Brunswick declined in popularity as rapidly as was its accession to power. Amongst other things, its appointments were injudicious and unpopular. Moreover, the people had been taught that confederation meant pecuniary ruin, but the mists of prejudice were rapidly dispelled. Then, finally, the failure of the reciprocity negotiations with the United States convinced the commercial classes that no alternative was now left except a union with the other provinces.

Appreciating the change in public sentiment, Mr. Wilmot resigned from the ministry, but his resignation was not accepted by the governor, who, under instructions from England, was urging on confederation with all his might, and made every effort to induce his ministry to submit the question to the legislature. The majority of his advisors, however, were averse to his proposal. A ministerial crisis soon developed itself, and a new election began to be rumored. The union sentiment was somewhat strengthened in March by the adoption of the Quebec Resolutions by the Newfoundland legislature, by eighteen to six. The next stage was the defeat of the New Brunswick Government in the legislative council, when an amendment to the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne was carried, which declared the legislature to be fully convinced that a union of the British North American colonies would strengthen the ties which bound them to the mother country, and would be consistent with the best interests and prosperity of the provinces. Notwithstanding this crushing defeat, the Government refused to change its policy, and being sustained in its course in the popular Chamber, a deadlock between the two houses resulted. At length, in the Lower House, on the 10th of April, the Premier announced the resignation of the ministry. Mr. Wilmot was sent for by the Governor, and intrusted with the formation of a new Government, which was shortly accomplished. Mitchell, Tilley, Fisher and Williston, along with himself, being sworn in as privy councillors, and formed another coalition of parties for the purpose of carrying confederation, Messrs. Tilley, Mitchell and Fisher being the Liberal members of the new Government. The House was at once prorogued, to permit of the new ministers going before their constituents for re-election. Their return having indicated a revolution

in popular sentiment, the House was at once dissolved, and writs issued for a new election, which was held early in June, when the confederates were returned thirty-three in number, against eight of the opposition.

While this was the condition of affairs in New Brunswick, in the sister province of Nova Scotia there was the same opposition to confederation amongst the people, except in the cities and towns. This feeling had been stimulated and strengthened by the attitude the year before of New Brunswick. Yet there was some sign of hope in the fact that all the leading men, the divines and most of the newspaper men were in favour of the union. The failure of the reciprocity negotiations contributed to the same end. Nevertheless, popular sentiment was so little aroused in its support, that Dr. Tupper did not deem it prudent to make any reference, in the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the legislature in February, to the subject of confederation. Early in the session he brought down the correspondence with the mother country relating to a strictly maritime union, a resolution approving which had been adopted at the last session, and in this correspondence the Colonial Secretary said, that while having no objections to a union of the Maritime Provinces, yet, the Home Government was so committed to the larger scheme of federation with Canada, that they could not entertain the lower project, except as subordinate to confederation.

In discussing the question, Dr. Tupper said the Government of Nova Scotia could do nothing towards confederation so long as New Brunswick held out, but if New Brunswick gave way, this province would likely follow. In response to an enquiry, whether the Government would take the voice of the people on the subject, upon which they never had an

opportunity to express an opinion, the Attorney General refused to commit himself, simply saying the Government had no policy in the matter, and would not announce any until the occasion arose which required them to decide the question. Towards the end of April, resolutions were carried through both Houses by good majorities, not, as in Canada, adopting the Quebec Resolutions, but affirming the desirability of confederation, and appointing delegates to England; but subject always to the proviso, that the union to be accomplished should effectually insure just provisions for the rights and interests of the province. Whether obliquy or glory should be attached to the conduct of the majority of the House in carrying through a resolution approving of a union without consulting the electorate, neither political party holds a better position than the other. The old political parties were entirely disorganized on the subject of confederation. We find Dr. Tupper, the Government leader, and Mr. Archibald, the leader of the Opposition, approving of confederation, and each drawing support from his own side of the House; while a minority, equally drawn from both sides, was very active and outspoken in its opposition. In fact, enough of the circumstances have already been disclosed to show conclusively that the great scheme of confederation was only carried in all of the provinces interested by the joining of hands for that express purpose by members drawn from both political parties.

The Government of Nova Scotia, having become committed to the support of the union scheme, a campaign set in that, for vigor and determination, has not been surpassed in that or any other country.

The leader of the anti-confederates was now the Hon. Joseph Howe, the Nestor of the Reform party in this province, a man so beloved by his people that

even, at this time, his name cannot be mentioned without tears, to the men of his day, who were the followers of his political fortunes. Mr. Howe was now in the neighbourhood of seventy years of age. He had been identified with the long struggle for representative government in his province, and had carried his banner to the same victory that Baldwin and Lafontaine had in Canada. He had been defeated in Cumberland County by Dr. Tupper in 1855, but was returned to power five years later. In 1863 he was again defeated, and during the next few years was out of political life, by reason of his having accepted a public office as Fishery Commissioner.

I had heard Mr. Howe advocate a federal union in 1861, at Port Robinson, and his writings and speeches contained many similar expressions of opinion. But whether his antagonism to Dr. Tupper somewhat warped his vision, as personal antagonisms frequently do, all unconsciously to the subject, I do not know, but the fact remains, in May, 1866, he came out as the most uncompromising opponent of federation. He issued a manifesto to the people of his province, reviewing the earlier stages of the federation scheme, claiming that at the Intercolonial Conference at Quebec, in 1862, Archibald, McCully, McGee and himself had come to the conclusion, that it was premature to discuss the subject until after the Intercolonial Railway was built, free trade between the several provinces established, and the people drawn into some kind of accord, by social and commercial intercourse.

Following this up, the anti-members of the legislature prepared and signed a memorial to Her Majesty the Queen, setting out reasons for the Imperial Government not complying with the resolution passed by the legislature.

The great and chief point of attack was, that the Government and Dr. Tupper had acted treacherously towards the people in pushing through the matter without consulting the electorate. Mr. Howe began his campaign at Yarmouth with immense enthusiasm, which never suffered diminution, but constantly gathered strength, until, with the force and velocity of an avalanche, when the election of 1867 arrived, the confederates were overwhelmed with destruction, the sole survivor of the cataclysm being the worthy doctor himself.

Much occurred, however, in the meantime. Mr. Howe's idea was to create so great a demonstration against the union that Sir Fenwick Williams, the lieutenant-governor, should be compelled to dismiss his ministers, and Mr. Howe, being called upon to form a Government, might have the opportunity of appealing to the people. The Governor, however, was too closely in sympathy with the present Government, and under instructions too specific from the Imperial Government, to lend himself to any such suggestion. In his speeches Mr. Howe attacked the federal scheme because it would lead, he claimed, to annexation to the United States, would destroy their provincial legislature, destroy their liberties, and confiscate their revenues for the benefit of Canada. In one of his pamphlets he said, Canadian domination would be as distasteful as Austrian domination was to Switzerland, and if established over the people without their sanction, the Gessler from the St. Lawrence might occasionally hear the crack of a rifle, and be reminded that men think of their bullets when their franchises are denied.

Reviewing the situation at this day, it cannot be denied, I think, that, constitutionally, the people of Nova Scotia were entitled to be heard directly upon a question so vital to their welfare, and upon which

they never had an opportunity to express an opinion, unless it be argued that the end justifies the means. In all probability confederation would have been delayed for a little time, but it would ultimately have come, and with it a people voluntarily rallying around the new nationality, as in New Brunswick, instead of being dragged in against their will, and proving a thorn in the side of the new commonwealth. For years thereafter, indeed to this day, the bitterness was not entirely allayed, and they tell me in that province the only distinguishing mark known politically to the older generation, is that of confederate or anti-confederate.

It is not a fair analogy to point to Canada where confederation was carried by the legislature alone, because the sentiment of Upper Canada on the question of representation by population was known for years, and had been tested at many an election, and there was no such universal feeling against it in Lower Canada as existed in Nova Scotia. This was shown by the support given to Mr. Cartier in the same elections in 1867, when he was returned with a stronger following than Mr. Dorion, although the latter was all along the champion of provincial rights and the opponent of the federal union.

CHAPTER 31.

FENIANISM.

The year 1866 was marked especially, in the annals of our country, by an incursion of Fenians from the United States, and it is necessary that I should now deal with this movement in its relation to Canada. From 1864 to 1868, Fenianism was a lively

subject of discussion, and became a most dangerous evil, to be dealt with by the Government. I have mentioned already some remarks made by Mr. McGee, in the spring of 1864, concerning the organization, when its ramifications in Canada were little suspected, even by men so likely to have information as Mr. McGee.

As late as November, 1865, in a speech at Montreal, he stated that not one in a thousand of the Irish in Canada were in any way sympathizers with Fenianism. He was greatly deceived, as he afterwards frankly admitted, for at this very time the country was honeycombed with their secret circles. The founder of this movement was Colonel O'Mahoney, an educated Irishman, who had now been living in the United States for a number of years. He said himself, in a speech at Boston, the success of the brotherhood was the result of toilsome, painful and silent work for seven long years. The order started with a few hundred members, but by 1865 extended over the length and breadth of the land. The object of the brotherhood was to establish an Irish republic by the sword. As O'Mahoney about this time expressed it: "Ours is the only policy that can right the wrongs of Ireland. The days of peaceful agitation, of petitioning and parliamentary humbug is past forever in Ireland. The sword alone can win the liberty of that green isle. Away then with all associations that do not propose to win Irish liberty by the stalwart arms of Irishmen."

He then proceeded to arouse the enthusiasm of his hearers by saying: "The work is pressing, we cannot wait. We must co-operate with the Fenian army in Ireland. We must do it at once or the work of redemption will be lost. The hour of sentiment is passed, the time for work has come. Ireland is in her agony, her life blood is flowing from every vein."

O'Mahoney's headquarters were in New York, where he lived in luxurious style. A reporter who interviewed him was introduced into a parlor in which he and his chief assistant Killien were seated, and found the floor covered with the richest carpets, sofas, divans and easy chairs, upholstered in green and gold. The room had desks of ebony and mahogany. The folding doors were elegantly carved, and the windows had stained glass. Some years later, when deposed, and his accounts audited, this regal residence was found to have run away with one hundred and four thousand dollars out of the one hundred and eighty-five thousand beguiled by him out of his poor, ignorant, but generous-hearted fellow-countrymen.

The Fenian organization consisted of state, district and local bodies, called circles, each of which had a presiding officer called the Centre. At the zenith of its influence, the brotherhood numbered six hundred and thirteen circles on this continent, of which eighty were in Canada. During this year—1865—the Irish republic on the American continent was formed at a convention held at Pittsburg. It was also provided at the same time that the new organization should hold a convention of the representatives from the circles from time to time, and in addition to the lower and representative chamber, there was provided another chamber, called the senate, to which body certain members were then appointed; the whole institution being modelled upon the American Congress, except that the republic had its only existence on paper.

Maffy of the Irish societies in Canada were hotbeds of fenianism, although ostensibly doing benevolent and charitable work. The head centre here was one Michael Murphy, president of the Hibernian Benevolent Society of Toronto, in which city the Fenians, in 1864, were in greater numbers than else-

where in Canada, but in a few years Montreal was still more deeply permeated with the leaven of treason than Toronto. The extent and power of the order was not thoroughly appreciated in Canada until November 5th, 1864, the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot in England, which was the occasion of a small Orange demonstration in Toronto. Late in the evening a rumour had spread that they proposed to celebrate the discovery of the popish plot by burning the Pope and O'Connell in effigy, and soon Fenians began to assemble in Queen's Park, armed with guns, swords and revolvers, to the number of four hundred. When assembled, one who acted as captain, ordered the men to fall into four companies, which they did with military precision, and each company having thrown out a skirmishing line, they moved to different parts of the city. About midnight these scouts were called in, and the companies having reassembled, marched through the city, and finally the men separated to their homes. Naturally the city was seething with excitement next day. A search warrant disclosed a large supply of pike heads, secreted in a tavern kept by one Maguire, on Queen Street. Evidences of other supplies of arms were found throughout the city, although made away with before the police were able to seize them.

Charges having been made against the Hibernian Society of being a Fenian organization, Murphy wrote to the press denying this to be the case, but boldly expressed the sympathy of his order for the Fenian or any other society having for its object the freedom and prosperity of the Irish people on Irish soil. Later on, we find Murphy travelling through Canada, establishing branches of the Hibernian Society, and, amongst others, an important lodge was organized at Ottawa, which subsequently obtained a notorious and bloody pre-eminence in the annals of the order. In

1866, Murphy threw off all disguise, and in attempting to cross the lines at Cornwall, with others traitors, was arrested, and a large number of incriminating documents found in his possession; but before the prisoners could be brought to trial, they escaped, with the outside assistance of their friends, and went to Buffalo, where they openly joined the Fenian brotherhood. When the secrets of the Head Centre were subsequently brought to light, we find amongst the items of money received during the fall of 1865, from Canada, as follows:—

Montreal, Canada—Part of first call.....	\$ 92 72
" " Balance of first call....	202 85
Toronto, Canada—First call	500 00
Quebec—Dues	104 75
And subsequently received from Mr. Murphy, Toronto, Canada	300 00

The hatred which this scoundrel and his associates bore towards Mr. McGee will be disclosed a little later, when we have to deal with the latter's Wexford speech.

Although the fire smouldered in secret in Canada, where the members of the order were liable to punishment for treason, in the United States the workings of the order were not the subject of much concealment. On the 28th of November, in a speech made by the Centre of a New York lodge, one McDermitt, who participated in a meeting in the Queen's Park, on the 5th, he claimed there was a great deal of concealed disloyalty in Canada, and said he would not fear to be one of five thousand to cross the river, for throughout all the country, with that display of force, the people would rise *en masse*, and cry for annexation to the United States. He claimed to have talked the rank-est treason in Toronto for several hours, and said the

authorities were afraid to interfere, knowing there were eight hundred armed men ready and willing to defend him. He also assured his hearers that he had an interview with Archbishop Lynch, who expressed himself as highly favourable to their cause. It was lying statements such as these that helped to gull the Irish American. No such interview ever took place with Archbishop Lynch, and although the matter was contradicted in the Canadian papers, the chances are such contradiction never reached the persons who heard the first story, and may have thought the Catholic clergy in Canada were befriending the movement. Throughout the fall of 1864, and the winter of 1865, the Fenian agitation in the United States became more and more prominent. A general convention of the brotherhood was held in Cincinnati, on the 26th of January, at which O'Mahoney presided, and which was attended by seventeen hundred delegates from all parts of the Union and Canada. A military organization committee was appointed, and Brigadier General McGroarty, of the United States volunteers, appointed its chairman. In the course of his address, he said Canadians had made fools of themselves in fearing a raid; that they were not organized to create a revolution in Canada; their objects related to Ireland alone.

There is no doubt the popular chamber of the paper republic, consisting as it did of delegates from Circles, almost all of which had been organized by O'Mahoney, approved of his views, and opposed anything in the nature of a raid upon Canadian soil. But the upper chamber or senate was composed of members holding entirely different views. The leaders of this section were Colonel Sweeny and Colonel Roberts, and they claimed to be, as indeed they were, leaders of an advance party which disapproved of O'Mahoney's methods, and advocated bringing mat-

ters to a crisis at once, by attacking England through her American colonies. From first to last, it must be borne in mind, the Catholic Church in Canada, the United States and Ireland, opposed with all its strength the Fenian organization, but during the years 1865 and 1866, the movement got beyond its control.

This was the condition of affairs in May, 1865, when Mr. McGee, who was attending the great Dublin International Exhibition as Canadian Commissioner, took advantage of the occasion to visit his old home in Wexford, and addressed an Irish audience upon the subject, "Twenty years' experience of Irish life in America." In his remarks many home thrusts were uttered that stung the Fenians to madness, and from this time onward he was the mark for all their venom and rage. Amongst other things, he said:

"In the United States there is no more sympathy for Ireland than for Japan, and far less than for Russia. In New England, the people, tinctured with puritanism, proud of their property and of their education, hate the Irish emigrant for his creed; despise him for his poverty, and underrate him for his want of book learning. The Irish emigrants in America have become rapidly demoralized. If they prosper, they mistake insolence for independence, and blasphemy for freedom of speech. A large proportion, however, do not prosper, but go to destitution, and it would be better, when they are about to embark, that the earth should swallow many an ingenuous youth and modest maiden, than that they should be what they are, in the streets and prisons of the United States. In Canada the Irish are morally and socially in a better position. Our countrymen exceed one-half a million, or one-eighth of the whole population. They are not one-tenth as numerous as in the United States, but I venture to say, the one-half a million yield a

larger aggregate of sterling worth, character and influence than the millions of our demoralized countrymen across the line put together."

This speech created a sensation in Canada, as well as in the United States, amongst the Irish people. In the city of Montreal, a disclaimer was signed and published by six hundred of his constituents, which said that his reflections upon the Irish in America were unhandsome, ungenerous and unjust. But we will see later on what were the forces behind the publication of this disclaimer.

Much more vigorous was the criticism of the Head Centre, Mike Murphy, at the Hibernian Society picnic at Niagara Falls. He said—

"The Irish are grateful, and never will they forget those who loved Ireland and suffered for her wrongs, but he who basely deserts the old cause in its most trying necessity seldom fails to receive at their hands the treatment bestowed upon Judases and Goulas, of past and present times. If Mr. McGee had remained true to the principles of his younger days, he would to-day undoubtedly be the foremost man in Canada, loved and respected by every true Irishman."

Whereupon three groans were given for the traitor McGee.

Mr. McGee returned from Ireland in July, 1865, and received an enthusiastic reception from his friends in Montreal. To them he said he had purposely delivered his Wexford speech from manuscript, and had spoken plainly because he felt it necessary to open the eyes of the Irish people, and dispel the glamour which interested demagogues had thrown over the condition of their fellow-countrymen in the United States. He followed this up, shortly after his return, by an open letter to an Irishman, who wrote to him for advice, in which he said: "As to the policy of Old England to-

wards Ireland, we claim to reserve our opinion; but as to British America, our home, we have very pointed convictions of duty and loyalty. We believe there is not a freer country under the sun, and we ought to stick up for it, come weal come woe. Anyone under the garb of an Irishman who purposes to advocate disaffection or disloyalty here, is our enemy, and we shall take every fair means of putting him down."

Later on, in the same year, at a banquet given in his honour in Montreal, he spoke with the greatest derision of the farcical Irish republic on Manhattan Island, with President O'Mahoney, the escaped lunatic, as chief magistrate, and its senate, composed of a shoemaker from Massachusetts; a dealer in second-hand goods from New York; a plumber from Rhode Island; a candy dealer from Illinois, and such like men from other States. Rising in a loftier flight, he said: "Many of my friends complain that in my Wexford speech I ought to have diluted my address with some strictures on the Irish grievances, which badly call for redress. I recognize these grievances as well as they do. I will go as far as any man in a constitutional effort to obtain redress. I will resign, if necessary, my place in the ministry, so as to move a resolution in Parliament along this line. God knows, the Ireland I loved in my youth is near and dear to my heart. She was a fair and radiant vision, full of the holy self-sacrifice of the older time, but this Billingsgate Beldame, reeling and disheveled, from the purlieus of New York, with blasphemy on her lips, and all uncleanness in her breast, this shameless impostor I resist with scorn and detestation."

CHAPTER. 32.

FENIANISM CONTINUED.

During the fall of 1865, the Fenian rising in Ireland was nipped in the bud by the English Government, and the leaders who were not arrested fled from the country. Stephens, the Irish Head Centre, and O'Donovan Rossa, the representative of the Irish in America, carrying much American money and letters from O'Mahoney, were amongst those imprisoned in Dublin. In October a Fenian convention was held in Philadelphia, which was largely attended by delegates from all over the Union, as well as from Canada, when the Canadian delegates presented the meeting with an Irish banner, amidst much enthusiasm.

About this time also a complete split took place between the representative assembly of the Irish republic and the senate. The latter assumed to depose O'Mahoney from his position as Head Centre for malfeasance in office, accusing him of illegally issuing and disposing of sixty-five thousand dollars of bonds of the republic, without the approval or knowledge of the senate. O'Mahoney replied by a counterblast, excluding the senators from their positions.

When the next congress was held, in January, 1866, the Circles, by a majority of five hundred to one hundred, supported O'Mahoney, and solemnly deposed Colonel Roberts from the presidency, to which he had been elected by the senate. This split was never healed, a large section always being opposed to a raid upon Canada. An active propaganda, however, now was carried on by the advanced party, under Colonels Sweeney and Roberts; they said: "Let us move on the frontiers, the Government of Canada is imbecile. Ottawa, the capital city, can be easily taken by a handful of Fenians, who could throw up works and hold

it against any force the Canadian Government can or is prepared to send, until reinforced. What a thrilling effect such an achievement would have throughout Europe. We must now accept the gage of battle. We must go to Canada and fight it out there. The war has commenced in Ireland; the Fenians must follow it up here, and hit England hard in a tender spot."

Early in the new year, Colonel Sweeney, at the head of his war department, issued a circular, calling for prompt military organization, and promising active and efficient work instead of words. He and Colonel Roberts made a tour through the Northern States, addressing immense crowds, at such cities as Buffalo, Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago. In all these places they asked for contributions, and pledged an early campaign in Canada.

The Fenian organs also announced that a federal officer had volunteered to lead the army of invasion; that the time for action had now arrived, and all that was required was that sufficient arms be placed in the hands of the thousands ready to take their place in the field; that the men in the movement were determined to fight, and if the millions of their race in the United States would now prove steadfast and true to the cause, the fight would result in a glorious victory; that speedy and effective action was now the purpose of the Fenian brotherhood, and that all that was wanting were the implements of warfare.

At Chicago Sweeney said: "We have strength, resources and opportunity now beyond anything that has ever blessed the hopes of Irishmen before. Considerable purchases of arms have been made, at a low rate, under sanction of the Senate. Before the summer's sun kisses the hill tops of old Ireland, a territory will have been conquered on which the green flag, the sunburst of old Ireland, shall float in triumph,

and a base be formed for some glorious operations there." Roberts said, at the same meeting: "When we have once that territory (Canada), we will have to be recognized by foreign nations. We can issue letters of marque, and our sailors will not be hung as pirates, but treated as prisoners of war. This will be a fatal blow to England's greatness. Her workshops will be closed, her looms stilled, their spindles no longer going, and the masses of the people, ground down by a tyranny such as no other people but the Irish have suffered, will begin to know some of the bitter lessons the Irish people have learned."

This proposition to invade Canada was not acceptable to the Fenian body in Canada, with few exceptions. To those of them who had interests at stake every reason conspired to induce them to oppose any such proposition. They suffered nothing under Canadian laws, and no change in their institutions would give them a better government than they already enjoyed. Some might have a preference for a republican form of government, but the wish for a change was not strong enough to warrant them in placing their lives and property at stake. A strong protest, therefore, was extensively signed by the Canadian Circles, and presented, through a delegation, to O'Mahoney, at his headquarters in New York, protesting against any such invasion. This protest was cordially received by O'Mahoney, and was by him published, coupled with his comments, in which he appealed to the brotherhood to reject with contempt the advice of any man who strove to distract their attention from Ireland's wrongs, and degrade the organization by making it an instrument of wanton aggression upon an inoffensive people.

Early in the year also it was announced at the headquarters of Colonel Sweeney, in New York, that money was pouring into the treasury for war pur-

poses, at the rate of fifteen thousand dollars per day, and that applications were being daily received from all parts of the Union for commissions to raise troops to take the field against Canada. In Buffalo three regiments were drilling every night, and this city was a depot for the accumulaton of arms, ammunition and outfits.

The suspension of the habeas corpus in Ireland proved a valuable auxiliary in working up enthusiasm and excitement amongst the Fenians in the United States. O'Mahoney now issued a proclamation, saying: "Brothers, the hour of action has arrived; the habeas corpus has been suspended in Ireland; our brothers are being arrested by hundreds and cast into prison; call your Circles together immediately; send us all the aid in your power at once, and, in God's name, let us start for Ireland, our destination. Aid, brothers! Help, for God and Ireland." This also furnished the occasion for holding mass meetings in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Troy, Burlington, St. Louis, and at all Colonel Sweeney received the heartiest pledges of support, and large sums were forwarded to headquarters.

He announced his plan of operation as follows: "Detroit, Rochester, Plattsburg and Portland are appointed rendezvous for the troops, and forces at Detroit and Rochester will operate conjointly upon Toronto, Hamilton and London, while other forces are to move from Ogdensburg and Plattsburg upon Montreal. When the Canadian borders are once crossed bases of operations will be established in the enemy's country, so that international quarrels with Washington may be avoided. It is expected to have a million and a half dollars of ready cash, to give transportation and maintenance for thirty thousand troops for one month. Of this force, eight thousand will carry the line of the Grand Trunk west of Hamil-

ton, while five thousand will cross from Rochester to Cobourg, prepared to move east or west, either to assist the three thousand who will cross at Wolf's Island to Kingston, or take part with the western detachment in capturing Toronto. This, it is thought, will occupy two weeks. Thus entrenched securely in Upper Canada, holding all the lines of the Grand Trunk Railway, and sufficient rolling stock secured to control the main line, the Fenians hope to attract to their colors fifty thousand American Irishmen, and equip a navy on Lakes Huron, Erie and Ontario. This having been accomplished, thirty thousand men, under General Sweeney, will move down the St. Lawrence upon Kingston, simultaneous with ten thousand men by the lines of the Chambly, and these will converge upon Montreal.

" At Chicago the Fenians already possess five sailing vessels, a tug, and two small transports. At Buffalo they are negotiating for vessels. At Bay City and Cleveland, they have crafts in process of refitting. All these will simultaneously raise the green flag, and stand ready to succour the land forces. Goderich, Sarnia and Windsor will be simultaneously occupied. All the available rolling stock will be seized, and the main line of the Grand Trunk cut at Grand River to prevent passage of cars and locomotives to Hamilton. The geographical position and configuration of Upper Canada will permit of a few thousand men holding the interior section of country between Cobourg and Georgian Bay. These are connected by a chain of lakes and water courses, and the country affords subsistence for a vast army, and horses sufficient to mount as many cavalry as the brotherhood can muster, as well as quartermasters' teams in quantity. This section will at once be reduced to a grand military department, with Hamilton for the capital,

and a loan advertised for. While this is being negotiated, General Sweeney will push rapidly forward on the line of the Grand Trunk, in time to superintend the fall of Montreal, where ocean shipping will be found in great quantity. With the reduction of Montreal, a demand will be made upon the United States for a formal recognition of Canada, whose name at once is to be changed to New Ireland. While this is being urged, the green flag will scour all the bays and gulfs in Canada. A Fenian fleet from San Francisco will carry Vancouver and the Fraser River country, and give security to the Pacific squadron rendezvousing at San Juan, and the rights of belligerents will be enforced upon the British Government, as a prompt retaliation for the cruelties of British court-martials. The population of the British provinces is little above two and a half millions, and the military resources of the united provinces fall short of sixty thousand men. Of these, nearly ten thousand are of Irish birth or descent. The States will furnish, for the subjugation of these, eighty thousand veteran troops. With the single exception of Quebec, it is believed, the whole of the British provinces will fall in a single campaign. During the ensuing winter, diversions will be put in motion in Ireland, and while it is believed the brotherhood can defy the Queen's war transports and land an army in the west, arrangements will be developed to equip a powerful navy for aggressive operations at sea. Before the first of January it is thought fifty commissioned vessels of war, and privateers, carrying three hundred guns, will be afloat, and to maintain these, tremendous moral influence will be exerted upon every Irish American citizen to contribute to the general funds for the support of war. The third year of Irish tenure of Canada will, it is believed, array two great powers against Great Britain."

The Canadian Government was not blind to what was going forward on the other side of the line. Communications from the English ambassador at Washington, received early in March, led to ten thousand volunteers being called out for active service, and troops were stationed at all the prominent points along the border. These precautions led the Fenian leaders temporarily to call a halt, and when the month of March passed without any further movement being made, the volunteers were withdrawn. In April an attempt was made to capture Campobello, an island near Eastport, on the Maine border, the attempt being made under the auspices of Colonel O'Mahoney, and was intended to serve as a basis of operations against England. The mismanagement which attended the whole enterprise, coupled with the suffering and privations to which the men taking part in the movement were subjected, threw a damper upon all operations, and led to bitter denunciations against the leaders responsible for the occurrence. This catastrophe proved the ruin of O'Mahoney's influence. He attempted to exculpate himself by publishing a letter, in which he said that Campobello was considered neutral territory, and was claimed both by the United States and England, and that, if captured, would not lead to complications with either country. He laid the blame for the exposure of his plans upon traitors, and alleged that when the men arrived at their destination they found the place fortified by the English, and a gun boat patrolling the coast, and that, under these circumstances, nothing was left to do but abandon the expedition.

Head Centre Stephens arrived opportunely just at this time, and assumed control of the American organization. O'Mahoney resigned, and the treasurer, Killien, was dismissed from office. The only

assets handed over were five hundred dollars, everything else having disappeared.

About the middle of May, the truce at first existing between Stephens on the one hand, and Roberts and Sweeney on the other, was ruptured. The former adopted O'Mahoney's views, denounced the proposed invasion of Canada, and urged a united effort to raise five million dollars, with which to proceed directly with the liberation of Ireland, and at once set out upon a tour throughout the United States, to advocate his views, and raise the necessary funds. At this point we part company with Mr. Stephens. Canada's interests are now involved in the movement of the other faction.

The Fenian senate, as we have said, endorsed Roberts and Sweeney. Funds had been provided, and the order now issued from headquarters, directing the various military organizations to proceed at once to the rendezvous already selected. Mobilization and concentration rapidly took place, and matters culminated by a Fenian raid upon the Canadian border at Fort Erie, on the first and second days of June, which is deserving of a chapter to itself.

CHAPTER 33.

FENIAN INVASION AT FORT ERIE.

During the weeks which immediately followed the 3rd of June, the railway companies advertised excursions from Toronto, London and other points to the field of battle at Ridgeway, and like many others who were interested in the late occurrences, I took advantage of the opportunity, and spent two days in its neighbourhood. I obtained a good deal of in-

formation, and arrived at some conclusions with respect to the affair which were not entirely in accord with the public view.

During the last days of May, more than two thousand Fenians arrived in Buffalo from places as far distant as St. Louis and Cincinnati. The Canadian Government also, at this time, received despatches from the United States, that the Fenians were massing at Buffalo, Detroit and Malone, N.Y.; that companies had left from New Haven, Boston and Cleveland, while other detachments were leaving Leavenworth, Kansas, Portland, Hudson and Rochester, and other Fenian centres. As a precautionary measure, Deputy Adjutant General Durie ordered four hundred men of the Queen's Own Volunteers, the 13th Volunteer Battalion of Hamilton, the Welland Field Battery of Artillery, and the York and Caledonia Rifles, to assemble at Port Colborne, of which force Lieutenant-Colonel Booker, of the 13th, was the ranking officer. All the troops, however, were under the command of Colonel Peacock, a British officer, who had fixed his headquarters at St. Catharines, and who had directly under him two hundred men of the 16th, his own regiment; three hundred of the 47th Regiment; a battery of Royal Artillery; all of these being regular troops; and the 10th Royals; a volunteer battalion of infantry from Toronto.

Having received word, on the 1st of June, that the Fenians had crossed the river, and that their scouts were seen in the afternoon in the neighbourhood of Chippewa, Colonel Peacock moved his forces from St. Catharines to Chippewa, and sent Captain Akers with a message to Colonel Booker, to move his troops early next morning from Port Colborne to Stevensville, a point about half way between them, so that their united force might move upon the enemy's position.

Colonel O'Neill had been selected by Roberts and Sweeney to command the Fenian Army of Invasion at Buffalo. He was described to me as a comparatively young man, of average height, well built, and of a dignified manner. He wore a light moustache, and short hair, his most prominent features being a high, square forehead and a Roman nose. This officer had a first-class record as one of Sherman's leaders, and we find, in reviewing the battle, that Colonel Peacock ignored the possibility of a competent officer being in command against him, and suffered for his mistake. Colonel Peacock further erred in forgetting that the bulk of the enemy consisted of disbanded soldiers, who, however unmilitary in their appearance, were seasoned men, who had taken part in many battles, and could be depended upon as veteran troops, to act with steadiness and courage at the time of trial.

To appreciate the situation, the reader must remember that Fort Erie is situated nearly opposite Buffalo, and forms the apex of a triangle, of which the base would be a line drawn from Chippewa, near Niagara Falls, on the north, to Port Colborne, on Lake Erie, to the west, the distance from any one of these points to the other being in the neighbourhood of sixteen miles. The village of Stevensville lay about half way between Chippewa and Port Colborne, and a few miles south of it is Ridgeway, a point on the Grand Trunk Railway, between Port Colborne and Fort Erie.

At four o'clock, on the morning of June 1st, between eight hundred and one thousand Fenians, under Colonel O'Neill, landed at Fort Erie, and shortly afterwards proceeded to the Newbigging farm, just north of the village, where they camped, and which they temporarily fortified. Colonel O'Neil immediately impressed horses, and mounting the most intelli-

gent of his men, sent them out as scouts, north and west, to obtain information with respect to his enemy, and the best positions at which to fight the battle, which he knew could only for a short time be delayed. His intelligent appreciation of the situation was immediately manifested, and the same evening he moved his whole force north, along the road which follows the windings of the Niagara River, to Chippewa, and encamped for the night on the best defensive position in the whole peninsula. This was the angle where the Black River, a sluggish stream, about ten or twelve miles in length, and which flows in a north-easterly direction, empties into the Niagara River, about six miles above Chippewa. The angle made by the union of these waters was admirably adapted by nature for his purpose. The bank of the Black River, on the north, was low, and its bed was marshy and unfordable; while on the south it rose some ten or twelve feet, and was high and dry, very suitable for his camp, and well adapted for defence. In fact, holding the bridge across the stream made his position impregnable, so far as any forces immediately available against him were concerned, and afforded him an opportunity of entrapping Colonel Peacock if he should continue his advance south along the river road. About three o'clock in the morning, his scouts reported that Lieutenant-Colonel Booker had placed his force upon the cars at Port Colborne, and evidently intended shortly to move towards Fort Erie, but as the bridge between Ridgeway and Fort Erie had, under orders from himself, been destroyed early in the day, he felt assured that the movement was intended as a combination one with the forces of Colonel Peacock, and that the troops from the west would, in all probability, disembark at Ridgeway station, and attempt to make a juncture along the ridge road with the forces from the north. Appreciating at once the

situation, and exercising that supreme vigilance which alone can win success, he, at day dawn, hastily breakfasted his troops, and moved south-westerly along the south bank of the Black River for some five miles, during which his movements were completely concealed from his enemy by the shrubbery and trees which formed the bank of the river on his right, and he always had the river as a complete protection against any attack from Colonel Peacock's forces on the north.

Having advanced a sufficient distance to the south-west, he moved his little army eastwards along a cross road, until he struck the Ridge road, the main highway from Ridgeway to Chippewa. He then moved forward along this road until, about seven o'clock, his patrols, when within a few miles of Ridgeway station, heard the whistle of Colonel Booker's train, and he immediately prepared his troops for the impending battle.

The Ridge road, as the name implies, is a highway which follows generally in a north-easterly direction a ridge or elevation that extends from Ridgeway to Chippewa. At some places it is quite narrow, only fifty or sixty feet wide, but at the intersection of the Garrison road, about two miles from Ridgeway, which road leads directly to Fort Erie, the summit of the ridge widens to about half a mile.

Col. O'Neil placed his reserves on the south-east side of the Ridge road, about a mile in rear of the Garrison road, drew up his first line immediately south of the latter road, and extended his skirmishers some half a mile still further in advance, and now prepared, which had been the entire object of his advance, to destroy one-half of his enemy before any assistance could be given it by the other, and thus defeat them in detail.

We return now to the troops under Colonel Booker. These had been needlessly entrained on the cars the night before, and having been carried on to Ridgeway early in the morning, were moved forward along the Ridge road, tired and hungry, no time being allowed for breakfast. Colonel Booker placed his men in the following formation: The Queen's Own in advance, with one company extended on each side of the road as skirmishers. Immediately behind them the 13th, and his other troops marched along the road itself. As the whole force approached the Concession road, south of the Garrison road, where a belt of woods crosses the highway, the advance was suddenly and unexpectedly met by the sharp reports of some hundreds of rifles and wreaths of smoke curling up amongst the trees, disclosed the presence of the hostile force. Two additional companies of the Queen's Own were now deployed in support of the skirmishing line, and the Highland Company and the University Rifles shortly afterwards were advanced so as to extend this line still farther to the right. Taking advantage of all cover that offered, the Queen's Own steadily moved forward, forcing back the enemy's skirmishers upon their first line, and in the course of an hour pressed back the opposing force upon its reserves. • Up to this point nothing could have been finer than the martial courage shown by this untried volunteer force. An error, however, was made in not deploying the 13th Battalion instead of keeping them massed on the road, where they could do no effective work, and were not even in a proper position to support the advanced line. The spirited manner in which the firing was kept up rapidly exhausted the ammunition, which only consisted of forty rounds per man, but before it had become absolutely necessary to replace the Queen's Own by the 13th, who still retained their supplies of ammunition, some of the scouts reported

to Colonel Booker that horses could be seen among the trees, and that the enemy evidently had cavalry, and was preparing to charge. At this point Colonel Booker made an error in judgment, as a little consideration would have assured him how impossible it was that any important body of cavalry could be opposed to him. Unable, however, from his position, to verify this information, he accepted it as true, and ordered his buglers to sound the recall and prepare for cavalry. The nearest companies obeyed the order. Some of them rallied upon the main body; others rallied upon squares hastily formed on the field, and afterwards fell back upon the reserves. While in this position they afforded a perfect mark for the rifles of the enemy, and men began to fall on all hands. It was soon perceived the order had been improperly given, and an effort was made to extend the Queen's Own, but the position of the ground, intersected as it was with fences, orchards and clumps of trees, made this very difficult. The rear side of the square at this point began to dissolve under the enemy's fire, and the commander, considering himself overpowered, gave the order to retreat to the base of operations at Port Colborne.

While these occurrences took place with the main body, the Highland Company and the University Rifles, far advanced to the right of the skirmishing line, at first did not hear the bugle sounding the recall, but noticing the supports in retreat, also began to fall back, and in doing so had to pass diagonally across the front of the enemy's fire. As a result, they suffered most severely, in fact one-half of the entire loss in this engagement was borne by that little body of students from the University of Toronto. The retreat was effected successfully, and a creditable rear guard action was carried on between Major Gilmour

and the advancing line of the enemy. The total loss was four killed and forty-four wounded.

It is but fair to say, however, that Colonel Booker was completely exonerated with regard to his conduct in this engagement, although during the few years he yet had to live, he was the subject of much unmerited obloquy in his native city of Hamilton and throughout the country. It should be remembered that the mobilization of the volunteers at Port Colborne was done so hastily that neither commissariat was provided nor reserve ammunition; that Colonel Booker himself was the only mounted officer in the field; that he had no orderlies, no artillery, and no cavalry. He had only a few raw and untrained levies, with which he was called upon to meet an enemy superior in number, and composed of trained and experienced soldiers. A military commission, consisting of Colonel Denison, Lt.-Colonel Chisholm and Lt.-Colonel Shanly, who, at his request, were appointed by the Militia Department to investigate into his conduct, unanimously reported that "there was not the slightest foundation for the unfavourable imputation cast upon Lt.-Colonel Booker in the public prints. That having fallen into error, he promptly exerted himself to repair the effects of his error in person, and in a manner which could leave no stain upon his personal courage or conduct. That from the time the expedition started until it came out of action, it was under disadvantages with which Her Majesty's forces seldom ever have to contend. That more than half of the two battalions were youths under twenty years of age, very few accustomed to drill, and many had never shot anything but a blank cartridge."

While Colonel O'Neil was engaged with Colonel Booker's forces, as above described, early the same morning, Colonel Dennis, who had been sent in com-

mand of the Queen's Own from Toronto, and Captain Akers, contrary to the instructions of Colonel Peacock, obtained the tug boat "Rpb" at Port Colborne, and loading it with the Welland Field Battery, and some other small bodies of troops, proceeded to Fort Erie, where they landed the artillery, and eighteen men of the naval corps, all under the command of Captain King, of Port Robinson. This little body of troops first moved up the river road a short distance, but perceiving the Fenians returning in overpowering numbers from Ridgeway, retraced their steps, and took up such defensive positions as they were able to find in the immediate neighbourhood of the wharf. Captain King ordered the men to break and make for cover, and fight it out in detachments as best they could. Thirty of the men occupied the postmaster's house, a frame building, and fought desperately for nearly half an hour. The walls and windows of the building were perforated with the enemy's bullets, and finding it impossible to prolong the resistance, they finally surrendered. A portion of the force, under Captain King, barricaded themselves behind some piles of cordwood on the wharf, and fought against desperate and overwhelming odds with great gallantry, the enemy losing more men in this small engagement than they did in the entire fight at Ridgeway. At length their resistance was overcome, but Captain King, although badly wounded in the leg, which necessitated subsequently its amputation, and unable to stand, after having emptied all the chambers of his revolver upon the enemy approaching to capture him, rolled himself over the edge of the wharf into the river. He was carried by the current under a neighbouring wharf, where he succeeded in holding his head above water by grasping one of the supports of that structure, until, finally, when the enemy had left, he was extricated from his precarious position by

some of the citizens. This little episode casts a ray of brightness upon the operations, which, on the whole, were not such as to be a subject of much congratulation.

Colonel O'Neil having defeated the right half of his enemy's force, had now to consider what course he should pursue with respect to the left, which was advancing, as his scouts reported to him, from Chipewa. He had been promised large reinforcements, and he knew many thousands of Fenians had arrived in Buffalo since he crossed the river. He thought it advisable first to fall back towards Ridgeway and communicate with Colonel Sweeney, who was in command at Buffalo, and urge upon him the necessity of his being reinforced at once. His messengers received but little encouragement. It was now known that the American Government had decided to interfere, and would arrest any armed band attempting to cross, and after much discussion and recrimination between the leaders, it was finally decided not to support the movement, but to recall the troops that had already crossed the border. Accordingly, about 3 o'clock in the morning, and while Colonel Peacock, with his forces, was only a few miles distant, bivouacking for the night, within striking distance of the enemy, two large tugs crossed from Black Rock to Fort Erie, took on board the invading forces, and returned them to Buffalo. A few stragglers and patrols up the river road, who were not warned of the intended movement, fell into the hands of the Canadian troops.

In reviewing this episode, now that the mists of prejudice and ignorance which enveloped the affair at the time has disappeared, it must be admitted that, so far as military ability is concerned, Colonel O'Neil showed himself a much more capable and efficient officer than any of those opposed to him. It is an élé-

mentary principle in the art of war, that no greater mistake can be made by a general in the field than to separate his forces to such an extent that one is unable to support the other, if an engagement is brought on. The greatest general of all ages, Napoleon, frequently defeated his adversaries by taking advantage of this very error, and being superior in force at the point of attack, succeeded often in defeating first one and then the other division of the army opposed to him. In separating his forces, and placing one half at Chippewa and the other at Port Colborne, Colonel Peacock violated this fundamental principle, and Colonel O'Neil promptly took advantage of his error. The excuse offered by those who have defended his conduct is, that it was necessary to guard the Welland Canal, and that he being the officer in command of the joint Canadian and regular forces, and unable to know what particular point on the canal would be the object of attack, was compelled to divide his small army the way he did. The answer to this is, that the Welland Canal required no defence except in the neighbourhood of St. Catharines, where the main locks are situated; and, in addition, it was placing a most serious responsibility upon an untried colonial officer, to put him in a position where he might be, and as the occasion proved, was compelled to fight a battle with the enemy without the assistance of an experienced and trained superior officer, and without the support of men accustomed to war.

CHAPTER 34.

FENIANISM—AFTERMATH.

Having finally decided that to permit large bodies of armed men to make the United States territory a base for operations against a part of the British Empire might be in violation of the American Neutrality Laws, as it clearly was, the United States Government at length took efficient means to prevent further infractions. General Meade disarmed large numbers of Fenians who were preparing to cross the border in the neighbourhood of Malone, and also at Buffalo, and arrested the leaders of the movement, together with many of the Fenians who had just returned from Fort Erie. All of these, however, were, under instructions of the American Attorney General, released upon their own bail, and subsequently a *nolle prosequi* was entered on all the indictments. The American Government perceived that the prosecution of the Fenians was not a wise proceeding politically, and General Banks introduced a Bill in Congress modifying the neutrality laws, so as to facilitate further raids, and at the same time introduced a Bill offering exceptionally favourable terms to any of the colonies which should desire to be annexed to the United States.

Encouraged by these proceedings in Congress, Roberts and Sweeney continued, during the summer, their agitation for further operations against Canada, and continued their calls for funds, arms and men. On this account a condition of anxiety prevailed throughout Canada, and to allay this feeling, volunteers were kept in camp for some time, at various points along the border. However, no overt act of invasion was committed, although, in September, when Roberts was re-elected President of the Irish

Republic, his address stated there were six hundred and twenty Circles in the United States and Canada; that he had in the treasury one hundred and thirty-six thousand dollars, and in depot twenty-eight thousand muskets, besides a quarter of a million dollars worth of ammunition, and other warlike materials.

During the summer and fall of this same year, Mr. McGee continued his denunciations of Fenianism in addresses which he delivered at Aylmer, Kingston, London, Hamilton and Toronto. In one of these, he said; "The civil war, as was natural, bred a class of men averse to returning to the paths of peace. These fighting men wanted a cry, a cause, and a field of plunder. They borrowed the Irish cry, caricatured the Irish cause, and selected Canada as their field of plunder. Do not flatter yourselves, however, that you have done with Fenianism. Either President Johnston must put it down in good earnest, with its ringleaders, or we ourselves must put it down in blood on Canadian soil. These seem to me the only ends in store for the American Fenians, and this having been my conviction, I need hardly add that my present politics for Canada are, plenty of breach-loaders for our volunteers, and complete union amongst our people."

The Fenians did not forget Mr. McGee at their meetings, and we find Colonel O'Neil, at Buffalo, during the fall, saying: "We have a floating population in the United States of half a million Irishmen who are willing to express their respects to Canada." (A voice in the audience, "What about McGee?") "We do not bother about such men as McGee; we can get along without them; we have just such traitors amongst ourselves, trafficking upon Irish votes, ready to cross from one party to the other."

During the fall of 1866, the trials of the Fenians captured during the late raid came on for hearing at Toronto, and a number, being convicted, were sen-

tenced to death. This created a great outcry in the United States from their friends and sympathisers, and at their instance, the American Secretary of State memorialized the British Ambassador at Washington, urging a policy of leniency to these political criminals, such as England had strongly urged upon the American Government at the close of the war. At the Fenian headquarters the greatest indignation was expressed, and Colonel Roberts promised to hang two Canadians for every Fenian. Before the sentence could be carried into effect, Her Majesty exercised her prerogative of clemency, and commuted the penalty to twenty years penal servitude, at the same time expressing the hope, that her action would not be misunderstood, for in any similar cases the extreme penalty would be exacted.

When the new year was reached and Colonel Roberts' promise of another invasion failed to be realized, the agitation in the United States rapidly died away, and matters culminated in an anti-climax, at a great meeting in New York, when James Stephens, the idol of his people, and the one man of all others, whose honesty of purpose, it was said, could not be impeached, was branded as a thief and a coward, some even going so far as to claim that he had always been an English agent, selected to shipwreck and ruin the Irish cause.

LAST PARLIAMENT OF OLD CANADA.

On the 8th of June, 1866, the last Parliament of old Canada was held at the city of Ottawa, in the new buildings, now for the first time in condition for occupation by the legislature.

Although opposed to the Government in their financial policy as propounded by Mr. Galt, and to that extent working in harmony with his old associates from Lower Canada, Mr. Brown and his friends opposed them, and supported the Government upon all matters relating to confederation, and during this session complimented the Attorney General West upon his willingness to accept amendments respecting the constitutional questions before the House, expressing his hope that the members of each section would not interfere with matters pertaining particularly to the other section.

This session was especially called for the purpose of dealing with the local constitution of the provinces, but Mr. Galt introduced, at an early stage, his financial policy, which made material alterations in the tariff. This was attacked by Mr. Brown and Mr. McGivern, but the rank and file of the Upper Canadian Reformers voted with the Government. It is, perhaps, worthy of remark, in view of the later policy of the two political parties in 1878, that Mr. Galt, in his speech, expressed himself more strongly in favour of free trade than Mr. McKenzie. Mr. Galt said: "I think that these changes, so far from injuring our manufacturers, will place them in a better position by cheapening every article that goes into the manufactured products. I wish the Government was in a position now to abolish the custom duties on all these

articles, and I hope the day will soon come, when, if not myself, the honourable gentlemen opposite, or some one whom I can support, will be able to make a clean sweep of all duties on manufactured goods."

Mr. McKenzie said: "I do not believe in building up manufactures by a protective tariff, but, at the same time, if the United States has adopted a policy whereby we lose them as a market, we are bound to adopt such means as will make a market for ourselves. Under the policy of the Finance Minister, manufactures have grown up in the country, and it is most unjust to those who have embarked their capital in them, that the protection should now be withdrawn without a moment's warning." Mr. Dorion expressed himself in favour of free trade, and said he believed this was the true policy for our country, while Mr. Holton announced himself also as in favour of free trade, but said he did not believe in bringing about violent and sudden changes.

When the system of government to be adopted for the new province of Lower Canada came up for discussion, Mr. Dorion moved to have a single legislature, as in Upper Canada, but this was opposed to the wishes of a majority of that province.

The most serious difficulty in settling the local powers arose over the matter of protection to the minorities in both provinces in the matter of education. There was no particular difficulty with the provision to be made applicable in the Lower Province, but the Bill to give similar protection to the minority in Upper Canada, at once raised the old battle cry of sectarian schools, about which Mr. Brown and the Reform party had so long struggled. The knot, however, was finally cut by the Government withdrawing both Bills, against the wishes of Mr. Galt, who had the interests of the Protestant minority of Lower Canada especially under his care, and who felt it necessary

under these circumstances, to resign his portfolio. Subsequently, however, he became one of the delegates sent to England to settle the terms of the British North America Act, and when the clauses came up for final adoption, a section, protecting the rights and privileges of the minorities with reference to education, was inserted at his instance.

As a final effort, when the clauses had all been passed, Mr. Dorion moved an amendment, that if the provisions for local constitutions, as passed by the Imperial Government, should differ in any respect, from the resolutions adopted by the House, they should not be put into force until finally submitted for approval to the Canadian Parliament. This was opposed by Mr. Brown, who replied that such an amendment would place the colonial legislature above the Imperial Parliament, and the amendment was accordingly voted down by a large majority.

The 14th of August was the last day of the last session of the Parliament of old Canada, but instead of this fact drawing forth all the better feelings of the members, it witnessed one of the most unpleasant episodes in my parliamentary experience. Mr. Sandfield Macdonald accused the Government of keeping a number of offices dangling before the eyes of certain hungry members of the House, for many months, so as to make sure of their votes, and to avoid the possibility, as he expressed it himself, *of their playing Turk on them*, in case the distribution of patronage should not be satisfactory. Mr. Holton followed along the same line, when the following colloquy took place:

Mr. Powell—What about Judge Sicotte's appointment?

Mr. Holton—What is the point of that enquiry?

Mr. John A. Macdonald—You bought him.

Mr. Holton—There is no analogy between the present case and Sicotte's.

Mr. John A. Macdonald—Did you or did you not buy him? If you did not, he sold himself.

Mr. Holton—We never bought him or any other member; we appointed him because he was fit for the office.

Mr. Macdonald—You withdrew his vote to make a majority of two a minority of one; you gave him office, and degraded justice, and the bench, by appointing a man who would take a judgeship at such a time.

Mr. Holton—Degrade the bench by appointing an ex-Attorney General? He was your colleague at one time, and if to appoint such a person is to degrade the bench, the bench was degraded, and not otherwise.

A few days afterwards the House adjourned, and making use of the incident just mentioned, the *Globe* proceeded to criticize the personal habits of Mr. Macdonald and Mr. McGee, which, in an impartial account, requires to be noted.

It will be observed by those acquainted with these two gentlemen, that I have not in any way adverted to the fact, well known to all, that at times, like Mr. Fox and many distinguished statesmen of an earlier day, as well as some of a more recent period, these gentlemen, who were of a social disposition, when in the company of friends were at times intoxicated. The condemnation to be attached to this failing will largely depend upon the mental and moral constitution of the critic. One can readily imagine the view which would be held by men like Mr. Brown or Mr. McKenzie, total abstainers, who, either from training or heredity, viewed life in all its aspects in a serious light. The moral fibre which some call *puritanic* was characteristic of their natures, and in their eyes, a habit of this kind was not a venial folly, but a culpable fault in any person, and in a public man, in whose hands were great public interests, which might suffer by his con-

duct, it was almost criminal in its character. Their opinions, no doubt, were most conscientiously held, and they cannot be blamed for them.

Mr. Macdonald never forgave Mr. Brown for his attack at this time.

On the 17th instant, the *Globe* published an editorial headed "Scandalous," and after referring to the occurrence on the day the House was dissolved, said the only explanation of Mr. Macdonald's conduct in attacking a judge of the Superior Court in Lower Canada was, that the speaker was not sober, and expressed the hope that this disgrace would not again occur in a Canadian Parliament. The ministerial press took up the cudgels in defence of Mr. Macdonald, which led to the *Globe*, on the 22nd, returning to the charge, and alleging that during the fortnight in which the country was invaded by the Fenians, and the lives and property of our people imperilled, Mr. Macdonald, although Minister of Militia, was not in a position to transact business by reason of his failing, and that his condition, during the last ten days of the session, if disclosed, would shock the country. The church papers took the matter up; the result was a most painful scandal, and for some weeks this was the principle topic of discussion in the papers and in the country. Mr. Brown disclaimed any personal animosity in his disclosures, claiming that his attack had been governed solely by a deep sense of public duty; that, in fact, the earlier editorials had been written by the staff of his paper, without his knowledge, but, at the same time, he concurred now in all they said. Of the propriety of his action in animadverting upon the private failings of public men, each person will judge for himself. The opinion of the majority of mankind, I imagine, will be against the propriety of such disclosures, except it be clearly made out that the failing is detrimental, and likely to result in great injury to

the public interests, and that anyone violating a convention known and recognized by public men in all countries, takes upon himself a very grave responsibility.

CHAPTER 36.

THE BIRTH OF A NEW EMPIRE.

On the 7th of November, the Canadian delegation appointed to represent Canada on the final drafting of the Bill for the federation of the provinces, sailed for England, and on the 4th December, the first conference of delegates was held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, London. From this time onwards, until the 9th of February, the delegates, with the assistance of the Governor General, Lord Monk, the Colonial Secretary, Lord Carnarvon, and particularly the law officers of the Crown, moulded the Quebec Resolutions into the form of the Act as we now find it in the statutes. The colonial members of the conference were drawn from both political parties in each province. McDougall and Howland from Canada; Archibald and McCully from Nova Scotia, and Tilley, Mitchell and Fisher from New Brunswick, having always been representative members of the Reform party in their respective provinces. Finally, the Bill became law on the 29th of March, 1867, to take effect on a day to be fixed by Royal Proclamation.

On the 27th of May, Lord Monk wrote to Mr. Macdonald, entrusting him with the formation of a ministry to carry on the Government in the new confederation, which, by a Royal Proclamation, was ap-

pointed to come into being on the 1st day of July, 1867. Mr. Macdonald at once wrote to Mr. Tilley and Dr. Tupper to come to Ottawa on the 1st of July, and instructed the latter to bring with him Mr. Archibald, saying, in his communication: "I am glad to say that we are to continue the Government, *quoad* Canada proper, on the old coalition principle." Finally, by the end of June, the new Government was announced, carrying out the proposed principle of coalition, and Mr. Macdonald gave portfolios to Blair, Howland and McDougall from Ontario; Archibald from Nova Scotia, and Tilley and Mitchell from New Brunswick, as representatives of the Reform party. The new Government was, by Mr. Macdonald, styled, and it was subsequently known by, the name Liberal-Conservative, to indicate its coalition character, and the fifteenth resolution of the Quebec conference was conformed to, by appointing the new Senators equally from the two political parties.

The confederation of the British North American provinces may be likened to a ship, of which many foresaw the importance, and recommended the building. The time, however, had not arrived, when those who should do the work, felt the necessity of such an ark of safety. At length it was given to one man to realize that the time was at hand, and indeed actually present. The burden was placed upon his heart and mind, to announce, in clarion tones, the duty of the hour. Soon another takes up the cry, and by their united efforts, the ship's keel is laid. Many hands take part in the work, and soon the ribs are sprung, the sides and deck are planked, and, finally, she is launched upon the bosom of a stream that empties its waters into the great ocean. Many a dangerous rapid lies ahead; to some it is given to safely pilot the precious vessel by the rocks and shoals, until at length, in all her majesty, with sails full set, and glistening in

the morning sun, she proudly speeds upon her way amongst the stately ships of empire, that float upon the Ocean of Time.

As far back as the beginning of the last century, confederation of all the British possessions in America was recommended by such men as Mr. Uniacke of Nova Scotia, and Chief Justice Sewell, of Quebec. Later, in 1822, Sir John Beverley Robinson, in Upper Canada, at the request of the Colonial Office, submitted such a plan, and Lord Durham gave it his approval in 1839, when Canada was emerging from the throes of a rebellion. In 1854, the Premier of Nova Scotia, the Honourable Mr. Johnston, proposed a federal union of all the provinces; in the legislature of his province, and in 1859, Messrs. Cartier, Galt and Ross proposed it to the British Government; but the time was not yet arrived when it could be accomplished. During the next few years this cure for our national ills was overlooked or forgotten, until Mr. McGee, fully conscious of the disease, disclosed the remedy, and aroused the national mind to a full conception of the danger which would result from letting our national constitution crumble to ruin, as it was rapidly doing, owing to the racial and religious animosities that divided Upper and Lower Canada.

An awakening from this slumber could be seen to follow his great speeches on this topic, in Halifax and St. John in the Maritime Provinces, and at Port Robinson, Ottawa, London and Toronto in the Upper Province, during the years 1862 and 1863, coupled with his letters to the press, which were copied and scattered broadcast throughout the colonies. Then followed Mr. Brown's resolution in October, 1863, which finally was carried in March, 1864, and which made the question at last one of practical politics. To these two may we fairly ascribe the first place amongst the fathers of confederation. To them was

it given to make the building of a ship of state a possibility, by concentrating public opinion upon this as a cure for our national ills. But another birth pang was needed before the work of building was forced upon our legislators, and not until the new Tache-Macdonald Government, only in office six weeks, was defeated, were the members of that Government convinced that no other means could be devised to preserve our institutions, except that advocated by Mr. McGee and Mr. Brown; and with them accordingly they joined hands. From that moment they loyally and heartily took part in the work of building. The keel was laid at Charlottetown, the hull was launched at Quebec. To the friends of confederation in the three provinces, irrespective of party affiliation, was it given to direct the ship through the 'rapids which, from time to time, appeared, as the Confederation Bill was pushed through the legislative halls of the respective provinces, until at length, when the masts had been placed, the canvas spread, and everything had received its finishing touch in England, on the 29th day of March, 1867, having surmounted all obstacles and dangers, she safely floats, fully equipped for her voyage, by the passing of the British North America Act in the Imperial Parliament.

CHAPTER 37.

FENIANISM IN MONTREAL.

It becomes necessary to retrace our steps somewhat for the purpose of dealing, as a whole, with the subject indicated at the head of this chapter.

The Irish Catholics in Montreal, in the early years of the '60's, were said to number upwards of thirty thousand, and included many wealthy and influential citizens. The principal national organization was St. Patrick's Society.

About 1862, and when the headquarters in New York was full of funds, and its staff full of confidence, stealthy attempts were made to introduce Fenianism into the city. The Hibernian Society was first organized, but this body never grew to any very large proportions, and the publicity given to its work, and the unenviable notoriety obtained by its members through the rank treason talked at a dinner given by it at the Exchange Hotel, in March, 1864, speedily led to its extinction. It was found the work could be more successfully accomplished in the St. Patrick's Society, of which some of the principal spirits in the Hibernian Society were also leading members. Their efforts first became apparent in 1863, when the executive of the society was considering the propriety of getting up a course of winter lectures. At this time McKenna was president, and McShane vice-president, men of high standing in the community. To them a leading spirit of the Fenian organization, who was also a prominent member of the society, suggested the propriety of his getting a lecturer in New York, which city he was about to visit. He obtained from the officers a written authority for that purpose, and suggested O'Mahoney's name to the president, who, being unacquainted with the Fenian organization or its aims,

readily consented. Carrying these credentials, this person readily obtained access to the head of the brotherhood, and received from O'Mahoney a letter, which was read in the society on his return, expressing his satisfaction with the communication now begun between the Fenian brotherhood and St. Patrick's Society. This letter was placed upon the minutes of the society in spite of the president's protest.

Finding that the evil was spreading, in January, 1865, at the annual St. Patrick's Society festival, Mr. McGee felt it necessary to denounce Fenianism with his usual energy. He then urged the members, that if there was the least proof this foreign disease had seized on any the least amongst them, that they establish at once, for their own sake, a *cordon sanitaire* around their people, and establish a committee which would purge their ranks of this political leprosy. Let them weed out and cast off those rotten members who, without a single governmental grievance to complain of in Canada, would yet weaken and divide the Irish Catholics in these days of danger and anxiety.

Soon after this, by systematic and persistent efforts, the Fenian element gained control of the society, and the president and the better element resigned. The extent to which the evil had spread may be realized when it is stated, that at this time, the winter of 1865, when Mr. Brydges undertook to form his employees (mainly Irish Catholics) into a special corps to defend their country, ninety men refused to take the oath of allegiance.

It was now felt that Mr. McGee was a serious obstacle to the success of their plans. All his personal friends were strong anti-Fenians. He himself had frequently denounced the brotherhood by voice and pen. He was the author of the anti-Fenian test of membership, and was believed to have facilitated the extinguishment of the Hibernian Society. It

was, however, thought necessary to obtain some prominent person willing to be put forward as an antagonist to Mr. McGee's policy and politics, as well as to that gentleman personally, and Mr. Bernard Devlin, an energetic and clever criminal lawyer, was selected for that purpose. A sufficient infusion of the wrong sort of members having been, month by month, recruited and enlisted into the society, Mr. Devlin was, in April, 1865, elected President. Shortly after this Mr. McGee made his Wexford speech, which has been previously referred to, and in which, among other things, he said:

"The Fenians have deluded each other, and many of them are ready to betray each other. I have myself seen letters from some of the brethren in Chicago, Cincinnati and other places, offering their secret minutes and members roll for sale. It is the same infamous old business. As sure as filth produces vermin, it is of the very nature of such conspiracies as this to breed informers and approvers."

This speech was met by the disclaimer, which I have previously referred to, said to have been signed by six hundred Irish Catholics in Montreal, and although the first names on the document, who were prominent in Montreal circles, repudiated their signatures, it seems apparent that the bulk of them were *bona fide*, and the document truthfully indicated the fact that Devlin had by this time supplanted Mr. McGee in the hearts and affections of a large number of his former supporters.

During the spring of 1866, the crisis in Fenian affairs, which indicated a speedy attack upon Canada, created a great ferment amongst the Montreal Fenians. It was noticed at the review of the benevolent societies of Montreal, on St. Patrick's day, before the Governor General (Lord Monk), many members of the St. Patrick's Society refused to take part

when cheers were called for the Queen, while much hissing was carried on when the band played the National Anthem. As the spring wore on, many Fenians left Montreal for the United States, some of whom returned after the raid had ended; others remained permanently on the other side of the line. One of the latter, in writing subsequently to a friend in whom he had confidence, confessed that the intention had been arrived at by the Montreal Fenians, as soon as the invading army had advanced within striking distance, to rise in the night, and hold the city, and that one of the first acts would have been to put Mr. McGee out of the way. The future showed these expressed intentions were not wholly braggadocia. During October, a Fenian organizer visited the various lodges of the brotherhood in Montreal and Ottawa, and made notes of his journey, which were entrusted by him to another brother, and subsequently, for a proper compensation, reached the hands of Mr. McGee, and by him were handed to the Executive Council of the Government. This and other evidence of the widespread ramifications of the conspiracy, led to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and the adoption of a new Felony Act, making the training and drilling of armed men an unlawful act. Early in November of this same year—1866—Mr. McGee delivered a speech in Montreal, at a banquet given in honour of Mr. Cartier, in which he referred to the attempts of some Irish Catholics to make capital out of the death in Quebec of one Felix Prior, in which he said: "I thought we had got the demon of class-discord pretty well laid in our city, but I saw the crazed attempt made to make a national question, of a late deplorable homicide, to coin the blood of a slaughtered countryman, into the small currency of a political intrigue." To this the new executive of the society passed a resolution, expressing pain and re-

gret, that attempts had been made to grossly misrepresent their action in reference to the shooting of Prior, and to fasten on it a desire to mix up questions of nationality with the administration of justice. These strained relations culminated on the 14th of November, when Mr. McGee made a speech at an Irish concert in Montreal. Referring to the Fenians who had been sentenced to be hanged, he said: "These men deserve death." (This was met by hisses. Going forward to the footlights, he repeated): "These men deserve death." (Hisses were here renewed. Again he said): "I repeat deliberately, these men deserve death, but I will add, the spirit of our times is opposed to the infliction of capital punishment, when any other punishment can reach the case, and in these cases, I hope it may be possible to temper justice with mercy. As to the handful who hissed just now in the far corner, if I had not stood between them and the machinations of these men and their emissaries; if I had not stood between them and the consequences of their criminal sympathies, some of them would be sharing to-day the fate of those fairly tried and justly condemned. Yes, I have had in these hands evidences of your criminal folly, and I could have put some of you where you could not hiss or hear much, but you were not worth prosecuting. You may be worth watching, and there are amongst yourselves, I can tell you, as there were amongst the Toronto Fenians, men who are keeping a good account of all your outgoings and incomings."

This speech created a great sensation, and still more strongly embittered the feeling with which he was held by the Fenian element in the city, and created a fear amongst them that Mr. McGee might have in his possession some disclosures of informers and spies, which, at a moment's notice, might land them in prison. The knowledge that the sword of Damocles

was suspended over their heads, and the belief that perhaps his destruction might prevent such a catastrophe to themselves, begot the wish, at first and now, perhaps, only vaguely formed, that his life must be put an end to, if they were hereafter to enjoy a moment's peace. That his life was now in constant peril was believed by Mr. McGee and his friends, and the knowledge of the sacrifice he was making in the interests of his country, added poignancy to the feeling of wrong he experienced, at the callous way in which his quondam friend, Mr. Brown, treated a communication from a Montreal correspondent, accusing him of disloyalty, in a speech made by him in November of this year, and which led to a very acrimonious newspaper battle in the month of December. In his correspondence in this connection, Mr. McGee said:

"If there is any ground on which an honest Canadian journalist ought not to have attacked me, it is precisely this ground, of Fenianism, for if ever a public man, with my antecedents, had a bitter and painful duty to discharge, assuredly on that subject I had. It is now over two years since I first sounded the note of warning on that subject, in answer to an address of the St. Patrick's Society of Peterborough. Ever since, in season and out of season, through the American and Irish press, as well as nearer home, I have never ceased making war on that infamous conspiracy. At a time when, as it is well known to my friends here, I have had to risk even my personal safety in doing battle against the miserable delusion; at a time when the secret enemy, who never sleeps, as is perfectly well known here; has tried every resource of intimidation against me in vain. At such a time, you, with whom I have acted for many years as a friend, and for many months as a colleague, you choose this time to throw in your testimony against me, as being untrue to Canada on the subject of Fenianism.

On the eve of leaving this city for three or four months, I thought it politic to throw out a salutary menace to the handful of Fenian sympathisers we have here unfortunately amongst us, and you, instead of backing me up, which you should have done, whatever you may think of the Government of which I am a member, you volunteer to play the Fenian game, and run me down, rather than lose an opportunity of damaging a person, whom you happen just at present to consider a political enemy."

In February Mr. McGee set out for Paris to represent Canada at the great international exposition being held in that city. In Halifax, while waiting for the ship to sail, he was presented with an address, signed by four hundred of the principal public men, thanking him for his efforts to put down Fenianism.

After visiting Rome and other cities on the continent Mr. McGee returned in May, and was welcomed by his friends at the railway station in Montreal, on his arrival, and presented with an address, which was significant of the great falling off of his old following, in that the address stated the delegation spoke for his constituents, and a *large number* of his countrymen, and congratulating him upon the political union of the principal British North American colonies, said:

"We cannot but remember that since your entering into public life in this province, you have steadily and zealously laboured to realize the idea of such a union. We know no one who has laboured more, or with greater success, to bring about the result just achieved, whether by establishing social intercourse between the colonies themselves, or by your continuous advocacy of the general design through the press, on the platform, and in your place in Parliament."

In his reply Mr. McGee said:

"Many of the young men here to-day will live to see the proof of what I am about to state, that all other politics that have been preached in British America will grow old and lose their lustre, but the conciliation of class and class, the policy of linking together all our people in one solid chain, and making up for the comparative paucity of our members, being as we are a small people in this respect, by the moral influence of our unity; the policy of smoothing down the sharp and wounding edges of hostile prejudices; the policy of making all feel an interest in the country, and each man in the character of each section of the community, and of each other—each for all, and all for each—this policy never will grow old, never will lose its lustre. The day never will come when the excellency of its beauty will depart, so long as there is a geographical denomination as Canada."

Not long after his return, it became known that Mr. McGee would not be in the new Cabinet, of which Mr. Macdonald was now busily selecting the members, and immediately a delegation of his friends from Montreal went to Ottawa to formally protest against this action on the part of the leader of the new Government. They found, however, their protest unnecessary, and that Mr. McGee had voluntarily withdrawn all claims to a portfolio, under such circumstances as will always redound to his credit, particularly in these days when self-renunciation is not a virtue largely found amongst politicians.

It became necessary, in Mr. McGee's campaign, just about to begin in Montreal, to explain the circumstances of the case, to meet the attacks of his opponents, who alleged that Mr. Macdonald had purposely left him out of his administration. A deadlock had arrived in the organization of the new Cabinet, owing to the number of conflicting claims, all of

which it was quite impossible to satisfy. To pave the way for the speedy solution of the difficulty, Mr. McGee withdrew his claims in favour of Mr. Kenny, an Irish Catholic member from Nova Scotia, saying: "By no act of mine can a moment's embarrassment, or a particle of impediment, be placed in the way of the first union Government. If there has been a sacrifice of personal feeling on my part, I rejoice that I have had in my power to make that sacrifice, for the sake of this dear adopted country, which has been so good and so generous a mistress, and a patron of mine." That Mr. Macdonald appreciated his self-sacrifice is apparent from the following letter written to Mr. McGee, in reply to his letter of withdrawal: "As I have offered you a seat in the Government, you should, I think, have consulted with me before taking the course you did. I quite appreciate the generous feeling which induced you and Dr. Tupper to throw yourselves into the breach. Your disinterested and patriotic conduct has, however, undoubtedly removed great difficulties."

The approval with which his public course was viewed by the great body of the people of this country, was indicated, upon his arrival in Ottawa, when he was presented with an address by the mayor, in the name of the citizens of that city, and also one from St. Patrick's Society, and another from the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society, all expressing, in the strongest terms their appreciation of his services in the cause of confederation.

CHAPTER 38.

MR. MCGEE'S LAST ELECTION.

It became necessary now to organize for the first election to be held for the Parliament of the new Dominion of Canada. Mr. McGee had been tendered and had accepted the nomination of his party for the House of Commons, and Mr. Ogilvie for the Provincial Assembly, in Montreal West. The campaign was carried on jointly, the friends of one supporting the other in most instances. Fenianism became the battle cry, and was the dominant issue in the election, so far as Mr. McGee and his opponent, Mr. Devlin, were concerned.

The animosity with which he was viewed by this treasonable faction speedily displayed itself at the first meeting of the electors, which was an open one, at the corner of St. Catherine and St. Lawrence streets, on the evening of the 2nd of August. A crowd of his opponents assembled, who refused to permit any of the speakers obtaining a hearing. Not satisfied with creating a disturbance by their hootings, shouts and groans, they soon began to use stones, which were thrown at his party even after they had left the building, and were proceeding to their homes. This feeling was aroused entirely by Mr. McGee's presence, and some of the voters told Mr. Ogilvie, who went down amongst them to expostulate, that he would be heard if he would come out without Mr. McGee. This, of course, he refused to do. Amongst others mentioned in the papers as creating the row was a prominent contractor for the new St. Patrick's Hall. In his letter in the *Herald* denying the charge, he said: "I am not one of those political weathercocks, with a chameleon conscience, ready to join any side that the sun shines on. I was present to hear the lucubrations of

a man I had long ceased, with dozens of others, to entertain even a ghost of a shadow of respect. Cooper has told us of the last of the Mohicans, and the death struggle of the final representative of a defunct race, and probably the press will ere long have to chronicle *the terminating oration of one*—to give the devil his due—who is as great a political trickster as ever favoured Canada with his presence."

At this day it seems scarcely credible that a man should so publicly announce the determination of his faction to speedily put an end to Mr. McGee's career, but the conflict now had reached so pointed a stage, that prudence seems to have been thrown to the winds.

Next evening, at Point St. Charles, Mr. McGee, who now had police protection, took up the gage of battle, saying: "As to Fenianism, I have strangled it when it first attempted to concentrate in Canada, and I am not going to be annoyed at the carcass. If it is necessary to face domestic conspiracy, I will do so. I will not temporize with the introduction of firebrands and foreign schemes for the destruction of the Government. I have been told if I would let the Fenians alone I would be let alone, but I drove the man from me. Before this day week, man for man, the organizers of that mob will repent. For two years I have had documents in my possession sufficient to have destroyed them, but I thought it was *an ill bird that fouled its own nest*; but next week I will commence in the *Daily News* and *Gazette*, and give documents which will put in their proper place the Fenians of Montreal. I now feel released from every obligation with the lawless band, and you will see, before the end of the week, if Canada has not been exposed to a violent conspiracy, which, during the last few years, has been countermined by me, and which has caused all this rage."

About the middle of August, Mr. McGee published a series of three letters, reviewing the history of Fenianism, from its organization down to the date of his communications, particularly the growth of the brotherhood in Montreal. Throwing off all concealment, he specifically named the men who had been foremost in the movement, and were now its ringleaders. He detailed the communications between them and the headquarters in New York, and alleged that the minute books had subsequently been deliberately burned to destroy all evidence of complicity between St. Patrick's Society executive and the Fenian leaders in the United States. This exposure caused the wildest excitement amongst the Fenians and their sympathizers in Montreal.

CHAPTER 39.

FENIANISM IN MONTREAL.—Continued.

As in some marshy jungle, where poisonous vapours rise, in secret lurks the deadly cobra, monstrous in size, horrid in appearance; he drags along his slimy body, harmless if undisturbed. A fearless hunter pelts him while yet afar, with twigs and stones, to which the reptile pays but little heed. At length, marking his chance, the hunter's spear transfixes the mighty trunk, and gives a mortal wound. Where now the sluggish body? Note the movement of his powerful muscles. Quickly he unrolls his endless coils, and raising his head high above the ground, eyes his foe with watchful glance, always hissing and darting his forked tongue with furious rage. No longer an enemy to be despised; active, alert, filled with deadly hate, he awaits a chance to strike. Failing to appreciate his danger, the luckless youth comes within range of that long and sinuous neck. Quick

as lightning, with jaws agape, the monster leaps upon his unsuspecting foe. The deadly fangs, with poison charged, sink through the brittle shell, crushing all in one hideous mass of blood and brains and splintered bones. So now, this serpent, stricken in a mortal part by Mr. McGee's revelations, emerges from his lair, and two evenings later, at an opposition meeting, voiced by one of the leading speakers, spits poison at his adversary, in these words:

"I ask you, my friends, to read, in connections with the observations I now address to you, the memorable denunciations of the infamous tribe known as political informers, made by the immortal Curran, in the crying time of Ireland's history. You will see how applicable they are to the person of whom I am now speaking. Similar opinions have, time and again, been enunciated by distinguished men of every country. About 1693 there was born in England one of the veriest monsters that ever disgraced humanity. Ancient history records but one (Judas Iscariot) who had passed him in infamy. This degraded wretch was Titus Oates. He declared whilst abroad, also in England, that there had been confided to him, by Catholic traitors, a conspiracy or plot to overturn the Protestant Church of England, and made disclosure of what he termed the Popish plot. He was about as profuse and particular in his information and accusations as *our accuser*; indeed, there is a remarkable likeness between them. (Enthusiastic cheers, again and again repeated.) Political scoundrels of the most abominable principles, amongst them Lord Shaftsbury, of immortal infamy, encouraged and urged on this fiend in human shape to the commission of unparalleled atrocities. The recital of them is the blackest and bloodiest page of English history. In other countries, and in modern times, there have been tools willing to emulate the fame and practice the principles of Titus Oates.

But, gentlemen, until a few days past, the good people of Canada have not known that they were cursed by the presence of such a *foul fiend* in their midst; they were unsuspecting that they were nurturing such a *poisonous serpent* in the bosom of society. An *approver*, an *informer*, a *lurking detective*, and he a quandom minister of the Crown, and a professed Irish Catholic. It is incredible, and yet it is true. Alleging that he has long known of this traitorous conspiracy, he now comes forward, like *Titus Oates*, a swift and willing witness, to make his disclosure and produce his documents."

This kind of language, whether intended so or not, was bound to inflame and excite to madness and violence those who already detested Mr. McGee for his exposures, and convinced them that they were not only pardonable for stoning him a few nights before, but that they would be justified in proceeding to still greater lengths of outrage. He was called an informer evidently with the object of arousing the vilest passions against him, and, as a matter of fact, some of the answers given by the mob during this speech was, "we'll hang him," "we'll cut off his ears."

August the 20th was nomination day. When Mr. McGee was called upon to speak, the crowd created such a great disturbance that it became quite impossible to hear him, and he was compelled to abandon the attempt at that place, but proceeded from the hustings to the Mechanics' Hall, which contained his committee rooms, and addressed his friends from a window. He there expressed his regret that the right of free speech was denied in Montreal, a far more important matter than the question as to who should be the next representative. He said means had been resorted to never before known of at an election contest. He did not mean personal attacks, for he would not deign to notice such, but there were some of his

friends who had received messages threatening to burn their places of business if they ventured to record their votes, or use their influence in his favor.

The line of cleavage became more distinct and pronounced as polling day approached. The cab drivers of the city, who were largely Irish, as a body refused to carry any of Mr. McGee's voters, saying they would not permit their vehicles to be defiled in the service of Titus Oates. On the other hand, the English and Scotch voters in the constituency were almost a unit in their support of Mr. McGee. He had behind him such prominent citizens as Mr. Torrance, Mr. McKenzie, Mr. Molson and Mr. Routh.

The result of the polls on the first day, although not as satisfactory as could have been wished, gave Mr. McGee a majority of five hundred. In St. Anne's ward, popularly called Griffintown, the vote stood, McGee, six hundred and sixty-two; Devlin, six hundred and seventy-eight. Next day, however, the full Irish vote was brought out, and as a result of that day's voting, Mr. McGee had two hundred and seventy, against four hundred and seven for Mr. Devlin, making the total majority in the two days only two hundred and eighty-six, whereas his majority over Mr. Young five years before was seven hundred. All this was indicative of the complete severance of the ties between him and the majority of his race and people in Montreal.

When the result was known nothing could exceed the passionate rage of his opponents. It was naturally assumed that Mr. McGee would be in his committee rooms at the close of the polls, and evidently under some guiding hands, for the mob was clearly organized with a definite purpose in view, a crowd of fully eight hundred people, with cries of "burn him out," accompanied by showers of stones, made an attack upon the doors of the hall, and attempted to take

possession of the building. This was vigorously resisted, and before the riot ended, bullets were flying, and many people were seriously injured. It was quite clear that if Mr. McGee had fallen into their hands, he would have been given a short shrift, and if to the black catalogue of treason and disloyalty murder was not added, it was on account of lack of opportunity, not lack of intention.

Mr. McGee was not the man to sit quietly under such provocation and outrageous treatment, and on the 10th of September wrote to the *Montreal Gazette*, demanding the punishment of those who were instrumental in the riot on polling day, not as a retaliatory measure, not on account of the past, but for the sake of the future. He said:

"A mob unpunished is a fatal precedent. Every time you permit it to act unpunished it will become stronger and the law weaker. A month ago its weapons were stones and rotten eggs. Last week it had armed itself with axe handles and revolvers. A mob is a compound crime against all society. It contains within itself as its commonest ingredients, pillage, arson and murder. It marches with sacrilege and perjury in its train. It debases the reason of many men, to place them under the command of the evil spirit which possesses a few leaders. There is no dallying with such a spirit in any community or state, where the law, both human and divine, has not lost all executive virtue."

In this way he accepted the challenge of those who planned his destruction.

CHAPTER 40.

THE CLOSING DAYS.

Early in the fall, the St. Patrick's Society, by its executive, invited the Honourable Timothy Anglin, a Roman Catholic member of Parliament from New Brunswick, and some others, to address them, Mr. McGee being intentionally left out of the invitation. Subsequently, the executive took advantage of the occasion to pass a resolution of thanks to Mr. Anglin for his defence of the Irish Catholic element throughout Canada, whose character had been so wantonly assailed by the Honourable T. D. McGee. The latter replied in the press, saying:

"I acknowledge the duel with Fenianism in Canada to be the most unpleasant contest I ever entered upon. I shall never abandon the side which I believe honour and conscience alike demand I should take in this matter."

He then restated his charges against the Fenian faction in Montreal, and specified the individuals most active in the movement, and most prominent now in St. Patrick's Society.

The House met for its first session on the 7th of November. The Hon. Joseph Howe having taken occasion, in speaking upon the address, to attack confederation, Mr. McGee replied, with his accustomed vigour, saying:

"It is in the power of our public men to depress or raise the public spirit, to strengthen or weaken the unity of the commonwealth. I need not illustrate this position by reciting instances of the many countries that have been undermined in their courage and character, conquered within before they were conquered without; to name Greece is enough.

"Enough, no foreign foe could quell
Thy soul, till from itself it fell.
Yes, self-abasement paved the way
For villain bonds and despot sway."

The policy of self-abasement, I cannot see, in the light of policy at all. I trust this first Parliament of the Dominion will stamp its reprobation upon every mention of such a policy, and that while avoiding all bravado on the one hand as unbecoming men in our position, we will, in this place, endeavour to elevate, and not to depress the public spirit of the country. This faith wrongs no one, burthens no one, menaces no one, dishonours no one, and as it was said of old, "faith moves mountains," so I venture reverently to express my own belief, that if the difficulties of our future as a Dominion were, which I cannot yet see, as high as the peaks of Etna, or Tolune, or Illimani, yet the patriotic faith of one united people will be all-sufficient to overcome and triumph over all such difficulties."

During this session, I noticed a marked change in my friend. He was at no time in good health during the last six months of his life. At length he had overcome the failing which his social qualities had made his stumbling block for so many years, and I noted a strain of seriousness in his conversation, with less of his brightness and humour than ever before. It was almost as if an instinctive prescience of his speedy end cast a shadow upon his life. His mind seemed more frequently to revert to his earlier years than I had ever noticed before. During his illness on one occasion, I recited to him some of his earlier poems, written when he was editor of the *Dublin Freeman*, and a leader of the Young Irish Party, repeating such verses as the following, from his "Song of the Sections":

"Up! up! ye banish'd Irishmen,
The soldier's art to learn;
A time will come—will ye be then
Fit for the struggle stern?
A time will come when Britain's flag
From London's Tower shall fall—
Will ye be ready then to strike
For Ireland, once for all?"

And again, from his poem "The Ancient Race":

"What shall become of the ancient race—
The noble Celtic island race?
Like cloud on cloud o'er the azure sky,
When winter storms are loud and high,
Their dark ships shadow the ocean's face—
What shall become of the Celtic race?"

What shall befall the ancient race?
Is treason's stigma on their face?
Be they cowards or traitors? Go
Ask the shade of England's foe;
See the gems her crown that grace;
They tell a tale of the ancient race.

Then why cast out the ancient race?
Grim want dwelt with the ancient race,
And hell-born laws, with prison jaws,
And greedy lords with tiger maws
Have swallow'd—swallow still apace—
The limbs and the blood of the ancient race.

They dig a grave for the ancient race—
And grudge that grave to the ancient race—
On highway side full oft were seen
The wild dogs and the vultures keen
Tug for the limbs and gnaw the face
Of some starved child of the ancient race!

They will not go, the ancient race!
They must not go, the ancient race!
Come, gallant Celts, and take your stand—
The League—the League—will save the land—
The land of faith, the land of grace,
The land of Erin's ancient race!

They will not go, the ancient race!
They *shall* not go, the ancient race!
The cry swells loud from shore to shore,
From em'rald vale to mountain hoar—
From altar high to market place—
They shall not go, the ancient race!"

At this he smiled and said: "It is true, I was an ardent nationalist at that time. Remember, I was scarcely of age. In a few years experience moderated my enthusiasm. Youth is always prone to unbalanced judgment. If youth is honest in its convictions, it should be forgiven. I have no doubt these fugitive poems of mine have had much to do with the charges against me of being a traitor to my people, my later course in life appearing in such contrast with my conduct in 1848, but the future will justify me to my race, when time shall have mollified the passions of the day."

On the 27th January, 1868, the St. Patrick's Society of Montreal expelled Mr. McGee from its membership, and put his name, as his person long had been outside of the pale of mercy. This act was so gratifying to the Fenian brotherhood in the United States that the council of Tarrytown, N.Y., passed a vote of thanks to the society for their action in this regard. On the 10th of February, the papers announced a special meeting of the society, in which a motion was made to reconsider their action in expelling Mr. McGee. It is impossible to follow the de-

vious course of those who were now closing the toils around him. It is impossible to tell whether this resolution was introduced and published to throw off suspicion from that body, when, as they may well have known, the public would be startled and horrified in a few days by the accomplishment of the purpose which some of their numbers were actively promoting. Mr. McGee clearly did not consider this motion as one coming from his friends. He wrote at once to the *Montreal Gazette*, as follows:—

“The second meeting relating to myself was wholly unknown to me, as was the first. The gentlemen mentioned as moving the resolution are personally unknown to me, and their movements equally so; but under no circumstances, short of a thorough reformation of the Society as recently conducted, could I consent to my name being inserted in the new books.”

During most of January and February of the new year, Mr. McGee was confined to his house by illness, but at length, having somewhat recovered, he lectured in Montreal, on the 28th February, to a large and enthusiastic audience of his friends, upon a subject most congenial with his sympathies, namely, “Our New Nation and the Old Empire.” Mr. Ogilvie occupied the chair, and amongst the audience were Major-General Russell and staff, and Sir Henry Havelock and Lady Havelock.

The House had adjourned on the 20th of December to the 12th of March, and Mr. McGee now proceeded to Ottawa to attend upon his parliamentary duties. He was received in the most hearty manner by his many friends and admirers, and a banquet was given in his honour on the evening of St. Patrick's Day, at the Russell House. Over one hundred persons were present, including the leader and some prominent members of the new Government. In his reply

to the toast to himself, as the guest of the evening, he expressed his gratification at the spontaneous demonstration of the Irishmen of Ottawa, irrespective of religious creeds. On the same day he spoke at a union Protestant and Catholic Irish concert, where he said: "I wish the enemies of the Dominion of Canada to ask themselves whether a state of society which enables us all to meet as we do in this manner, with the fullest feeling of equal rights, and the strongest sense of equal duties to our common country, is not a state of society, a condition of things, a system of laws and a frame of self-government, worthy even of the *sacrifice of our lives* to perpetuate and preserve."

At this dinner a remark made by one of his friends especially gratified him. It was: "We have heard much in Mr. McGee's praise here to-night, but to me it seems his chiefest glory now, as it will be in the future, that he has been engaged in the God-like task of peace-making, and the peace-maker's reward surely will be his."

This little circumstance but faintly indicates the deep regard with which he was viewed by his friends. They deeply loved him, and he had a larger circle of friends attached to him for personal reasons, rather than for expectation of benefits, than had any other public man of his day.

At the same banquet, another said of him: "More than all our public men put together, he has laboured to increase the interest felt by the people of this country in intellectual pursuits, to foster a love of literature, and elevate the public taste. It is no slight thing to have a man of his ability willing to devote himself to such a work. He seems to take it as a matter of course that all the resources of his mind, and all the powers of his eloquence, should be devoted to every useful cause or institution that appeals to him for aid. In all the principal towns of Canada, and indeed, in

many of the smaller ones, he has lectured repeatedly on behalf of various benevolent and literary societies. He never takes a narrow view of anything. This is the secret of his influence, and this is what makes his presence in the political arena of such value to the country. By the very constitution of his mind, he seems to judge everything upon the widest principles of historical and philosophical criticism."

CHAPTER 41.

THE FINAL ACT.

"With body foul, in many a scaly fold
Voluminous and vast, a serpent armed
With mortal sting, about her middle round
A cry of hell-hounds never ceasing barked
With wide Cerberian mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal. Yet when they list, would creep
If ought disturbed their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there, yet there still barked and howled
Within unseen."—*Paradise Lost*.

We must now again retrace our steps, and follow the doings of the Montreal Fenians. During the fall of 1867, the animosity against Mr. McGee, which his pertinacious and outspoken denunciations of the brotherhood excited amongst its sympathisers, stimulated as it was by some of the executive of St. Patrick's Society, now became devilish in its nature and intensity, and it is not surprising to find that wherever the lowest and most depraved of its members met to discuss their plans, nothing received more hearty approval than suggestions of putting Mr. McGee out of the way.

On William Street, in Montreal, at this time, there stood a small groggery, kept by one Duggan, at which a number of Fenians were accustomed to assemble. Amongst the frequenters was one James Whelan, alias Sullivan, alias Smith, who, at this time, was employed in a Montreal tailor shop. For a long time Whelan was known amongst his companions as an outspoken critic of Mr. McGee. He had frequently said Mr. McGee was a traitor, and ought to be shot; that if he had a chance he would shoot him like a rat; that he would like a chance to blow his brains out, and would do so before the next session of the House. Others there were who, perhaps even more culpable than he, but more careful of their safety, discovered that Whelan was a proper tool for their purpose. The details of the plot were never fully divulged, but this much is known, that by November Whelan had been induced to undertake the murderous exploit. About the middle of this month, Mr. McGee went to Ottawa, and within a day or two Whelan followed, and obtained employment in a tailor shop in that city. He lost no time in making the acquaintance of the members of the local lodge, many of whom, subsequent occurrences showed, were not only fully in sympathy with his purpose, but were actually associated in his design. An opportunity not presenting itself for successfully carrying out the attempt with safety to those taking part in it, Whelan followed Mr. McGee when he returned to Montreal, at the adjournment of the House on the 20th December, and it was then determined to make the attempt at his own house. After midnight of New Year's Day, a rap was heard at the front door of Mr. McGee's house on St. Catharines Street, when all had retired for the night. Mr. McGee's younger brother went to the door, where he found Whelan. On inquiring his errand, Whelan claimed it was to warn Mr. McGee that the house

would be set on fire before four o'clock that morning. He was invited in, and after some conversation, consented to carry a message to the police office, containing this information, but it was discovered subsequently, that although he left Mr. McGee's house at two o'clock, it was after four before he reached the police office, and he afterwards told a companion in the jail, that he had expected Mr. McGee would have come to the door on this occasion, and had he done so, he would have shot him like a dog. This effort not having succeeded, Whelan returned to Ottawa, and consummated, with his friends, their plans for successfully carrying out their intentions, when Mr. McGee should return. At length, the night of the 7th April was selected for the affair. Whelan was seen to enter and leave the gallery of the House of Commons a number of times, and finally left the House shortly before the adjournment at one o'clock. His victim left about the same time, accompanied by Mr. Macfarlane, one of the members, and separating on Sparks Street, Mr. McGee proceeded west towards the Toronto House, where he resided. As he inserted his latchkey in the door, the assassin's revolver was placed at his head; a flash, a report, he falls, and in a few moments his immortal spirit had returned to the God who gave it.

It boots little to refer to the horror with which this devilish deed was received by the public; the rewards offered for the arrest of the assassin, the panegyrics pronounced upon his life by both friends and opponents in the House of Commons, the state funeral given to his remains in Montreal, the arrest of Whelan, his trial, and finally his sentence, and the capital punishment inflicted by outraged justice. I have not the heart to do so, because all such details avail nothing in assuaging the grief of those who loved him as their very selves. If anything could be imagined more

likely than another to exasperate to madness his friends, it was a hypocritical resolution of condolence passed by the executive of St. Patrick's Society, and directed to be sent to his distracted widow, by the very persons whose bitter denunciations of the man had contributed so largely to his final taking off. Had the society expressed regret for its conduct, had it reproached itself for its short-sightedness, some extenuation of its action might be found, but what are we to say of a man who waves a flaming torch around the open mouth of a powder barrel, but that he is guilty of criminal conduct if an explosion should take place? So here, the conduct of those who, for their own purposes, worked upon the passionate natures of his fellow-countrymen, who hurled against him every atrocious charge that could be imagined, who blackened his name, his motives and his conduct, who accused him of the crime most revolting to the minds of those to whom the words were addressed, of being a purchased traitor to his race, an informer who gave up to the law his former friends and associates, and who now lived in affluence upon the price of his infamy. All this cannot be excused. If I write strongly, I feel strongly; and my only regret is, that the Government never probed this affair to the bottom, but thought the public interest best conserved by making a general jail delivery of the seventy persons arrested on suspicion, believing that Mr. McGee's martyrdom for his loyalty to the land of his adoption, and for the Crown, to which he had long been so staunch a supporter, would destroy every vestige of Fenianism in the country, and would so discredit the cause, and those identified with it, that Fenianism would never again be able to hold up its head in this country, as indeed it never has.

FINIS

EPILOGUE.

My task is ended. And now, O spirit of my departed friend, in what sphere soever thou dost have thine abode amongst the chosen ones, I have been upheld in my labours in the hope that I might, in a humble way, portray to another age that knew thee not, something of the great work thou didst accomplish for the land of thine adoption, which land thou didst love to the giving up of thy life, that she might not only be great and strong and noble, but be safe from the machinations of those who plotted her destruction.

O Spirit of Toleration and Moderation, which, for a time, didst become embodied in mortal garments, may thy teachings never be forgotten in the councils of our great men, and may thy martyred life stand forth throughout all ages in the new Empire thou didst help to build, as a beacon light, recalling to all men the words of the great apostle "Though I speak with the tongue of men and of angels, and have not Charity, I am become as a sounding brass and a tinkling symbol, and although I have of Faith so that I could remove mountains and have not Charity, I am nothing. Charity suffereth long and is kind, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things; and now abideth Faith, Hope and Charity, these three, but the greatest of these is Charity," and the words of the Divine Christ himself: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."