



THOMAS D'ARCY MCGEE

## THOMAS D'ARCY MCGEE

**T**HOMAS D'ARCY MCGEE, an eloquent Irish-Canadian statesman and orator, was born at Carlingford, County Louth, Ireland, April 13, 1825. At the age of seventeen, seeing little chance of advancement at home, he emigrated to America and arrived at Boston in June, 1842. On the 4th of July he addressed the people and astonished them by his eloquence. Two years later, he became chief editor of the Boston "Pilot." He then accepted the offer of Charles Gavan Duffy to aid in editing the "Nation," in Dublin, which became the mouthpiece of what was called "Young Ireland." This paper having incited the famine-stricken people to rebellion, its editor was forced to escape from Ireland. On Oct. 10, 1848, he reached Philadelphia, and on the 26th of that month the New York "Nation" issued its first number under the editorship of the exile. He removed with his family to Montreal, where he established "The New Era." Before the end of his first year in Montreal, he was returned to the Canadian Parliament as one of the three members for Montreal, and became one of the most popular men in Canada, being elected by acclamation and without any opposition in his second, third, and fourth elections. He took his seat as member for Montreal West in the first Parliament of the Dominion on Nov. 6, 1867. He was assassinated on the 6th of April, 1868, after the delivery of one of the most striking speeches ever heard in the Canadian Parliament. The subject was the cementing of the lately-formed union of the provinces by mutual kindness and good-will. Shortly after midnight he left the House and was shot from behind through the head. He is still regarded as the truest counsellor and guide of the Irish race in North America.

### "THE LAND WE LIVE IN"

[Delivered before the New England Society of Montreal on the Anniversary of "The Landing of the Pilgrims," December 22, 1860.]

**M**R. PRESIDENT, LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN,—  
As one of the representatives of the city of Montreal, I feel it to be an act of duty, and a most agreeable duty it is, to attend the reunions of our various national societies, and to contribute anything in my power to their gratification. My respect for all these societies, and my own sense of what is decorous and fit to be said, have, I hope, always confined me to the proprieties of such occasions; but still, if I speak at all, I must speak with freedom, and free speech, I trust, will never be asserted in vain among a society composed of the men of New England and their descendants.



I congratulate you and the society over which you preside, Mr. President, on the recurrence of your favorite anniversary, and not only for your own gratification as our fellow citizens of Montreal, but in the best interests of all humanity in the New World, let us join in hope that not only the sons of New England, but Americans from all other States settled amongst us, will long be able to join harmoniously in the celebration of the arrival of the first shipload of emigrants in Massachusetts Bay on this day, 240 years ago,— a ship which wafted over the sea as large a cargo of the seeds of the new civilization as any ship ever did since the famous voyage recorded in the legends of the Greeks.

It is rather a hard task, this you have set me, Mr. President, of extolling the excellencies of "the land we live in,"— that is, praising ourselves,— especially at this particular season of the year. If it were midsummer instead of midwinter, when our rapids are flashing, and our glorious river sings its triumphal song from Ontario to the ocean; when the northern summer, like the resurrection of the just, clothes every lineament of the landscape in beauty and serenity; it might be easy to say fine things for ourselves, without conflicting with the evidence of our senses.

But to eulogize Canada about Christmas time requires a patriotism akin to the Laplander, when, luxuriating in his train oil, he declares that "there is no land like Lapland under the sun." Our consolation, however, is that all the snows of the season fall upon our soil for wise and providential purposes. The great workman, Jack Frost, wraps the ploughed land in a warm covering, preserving the late-sown wheat for the first ripening influence of the spring. He macadamizes roads and bridges, brooks and rivers, better than could the manual labor of 100,000 workmen. He

forms and lubricates the track through the wilderness by which those sailors of the forest—lumbermen—are enabled to draw down the annual supply of one of our chief staples to the margins of frozen rivers, which are to bear their rafts to Quebec at the first opening of the navigation.

This climate of ours though rigorous, is not unhealthful, since the average of human life in this Province is seven per cent higher than in any other portion of North America; and if the lowness of the glass does sometimes inconvenience individuals, we ought to be compensated and consoled by remembering of how much benefit these annual falls of snow are to the country at large. So much for our climatic difficulties. Let me say a word or two on our geographical position.

Whoever looks at the map — a good map is an invaluable public instructor — not such maps as we used to have, in which Canada was stuck away up at the North Pole, but such maps as have lately appeared in this country — will be tempted to regard the Gulf of St. Lawrence as the first of the Canadian lakes, and our magnificent river as only a longer Niagara or Detroit. His eye will follow up through the greater tidal volume of that river the same parallel of latitude — the 46° — which intersects Germany and cuts through the British Channel; if he pursues that parallel, it will lead him to the valley of the Saskatchewan, and through the Rocky Mountain passes, to the rising settlements of our fellow subjects on the Pacific. It will lead him through that most interesting country — the Red River territory, 500,000 square miles in extent, with a white population of less than 10,000 souls; a territory which ought to be "the Out-West" of our youth — where American enterprise has lately taught us a salutary, though a rebuking lesson, for while we were



debating about its true limits and the title by which it is held, they were steaming down to Fort Garry with mails and merchandise from St. Paul's.

The position of Canada is not only important in itself, but it is important as a "*via media*" to the Pacific; from a given point on our side of Lake Superior to navigable water on the Fraser River has been shown to be not more than 2,000 miles — about double the distance from Boston to Chicago. A railway route with gradients not much, if at all, exceeding those of the Vermont Central, or the Philadelphia and Pittsburg, has been traced throughout by Mr. Fleming, Mr. Hind, Mr. Dawson, Captain Synge and Colonel Pailisser; and though neither Canada nor Columbia are able of themselves to undertake the connection, we cannot believe that British and American enterprise, which risked so many precious lives to find a practicable passage nearer to the Pole, will long leave untried this safest, shortest and most expeditious overland Northwest passage. We cannot despair that the dream of Jacques Cartier may yet be fulfilled, and the shortest route from Europe to China be found through the valley of the St. Lawrence. Straight on to the west lies Vancouver's Island, the Cuba of the Pacific; a little to the north, the Amur, which may be called the Amazon of the Arctic; farther off, but in a right line, the rich and populous Japanese group, which for wealth and enterprise have not been inaptly called the British Isles of Asia. These, Mr. President, are some of our geographical advantages. There are others which I might refer to, but on an occasion of this kind I know the fewer details the better.

Now, one word more as to our people; the decennial census to be taken next month will probably show us to be nearly equal in numbers to the six States of New England,

or the great State of New York, deducting New York City. An element, over a third, but less than one half of that total, will be found to be of French-Canadian origin; the remainder is made up, as the population of New York and New England has been, by British, Irish, German, and other immigrants and their descendants. Have we advanced materially in the ratio of our American neighbors? I cannot say that we have. Montreal is an older city than Boston, and Kingston an older town than Oswego or Buffalo. Let us confess frankly that in many material things we are half a century behind the Americans, while at the same time — not to give way altogether too much — let us modestly assert that we possess some social advantages which they, perhaps, do not. For example we believed until lately — we still believe — that such a fiction as a slave, as one man being another man's chattel, was wholly unknown in Canada. And we still hope that may ever continue to be our boast. In material progress we have something to show, and we trust to have more.

All we need, Mr. President, mixed up and divided as we naturally are, is, in my humble opinion, the cultivation of a tolerant spirit on all the delicate controversies of race and religion, the maintenance of an upright public opinion in our politics and commerce, the cordial encouragement of every talent and every charity which reveals itself among us, the expansion of those narrow views and small ambitions which are apt to attend upon provincialism, and with these amendments, I do think we might make for Christian men, desirous to bring up their posterity in the love and fear of God and the law, one of the most desirable residences in the world, of this "land we live in."



## THE POLICY OF CONCILIATION

REMARKS MADE AT A DINNER GIVEN HIM BY HIS CONSTITUENTS  
AT MONTREAL, MARCH, 1861

THE career I have had in Canada led me chiefly into those parts of the country inhabited by men who speak the English language, and using the opportunities I have had between the time when I ceased to be a newspaper publisher to that of my admission as a member of the Lower Canada bar, I trust I have learned something which may be profitable to me in the position to which you elevated me on trust and in advance.

The result of my observations thus made, is, that there is nothing to be more dreaded in this country than feuds arising from exaggerated feelings of religion and nationality. On the other hand, the one thing needed for making Canada the happiest of homes is to rub down all sharp angles, and to remove those asperities which divide our people on questions of origin and religious profession. The man who says this cannot be done consistently with any set of principles founded on the charity of the Gospel or on the right use of human reason is a blockhead, as every bigot is, while under the influence of his bigotry he sees no further than his nose. For a man who has grown to years of discretion — though some never do come to those years — who has not become wedded to one idea, who, like Coleridge, is as ready to regulate his conduct as to set his watch when the parish clock declares it wrong; who is ready to be taught by high as well as by low, and to receive any stamp of truth — I may say that such a man will come to this conclusion: that there are in all origins men good, bad and indifferent; yet for my own part,

my experience is that in all classes the good predominate. I believe that there have come out of Ireland, noble as she is, those whom she would not recognize as her children; and so with other countries celebrated for the noble characteristics of their population as a whole.

In Canada, with men of all origins and all kinds of culture, if we do not bear and forbear; if we do not get rid of old quarrels, but on the contrary make fresh ones, whereas we ought to have lost sight of the old when we lost sight of the capes and headlands of the old country; if we will carefully convey across the Atlantic half-extinguished embers of strife in order that we may by them light up the flames of our inflammable forests; if each neighbor will try not only to nurse up old animosities, but to invent new grounds of hostility to his neighbor, then, gentlemen, we shall return to what Hobbes considered the state of nature — I mean a state of war. In society we must sacrifice something, as we do when we go through a crowd, and not only must we yield to old age, to the fairer and better sex, and to that youth, which, in its weakness, is entitled to some of the respect which we accord to age; but we must sometimes make way for men like ourselves, though we could prove by the most faultless syllogism our right to push them from the path.

In his great speech respecting the Unitarians, Edmund Burke declared that he did not govern himself by abstractions or universals, and he maintained in that same argument (I think) that what is not possible is not desirable — that the possible best is the absolute best — the best for the generation, the best for the man, since the shortness of life makes it impossible for him to achieve all that he could wish.

I believe the possible best for us is peace and good will. With this belief I did my part to heal up those feuds which



prevailed in Montreal and westward before and at the election of 1857; I felt that someone must condone the past, and I determined, so far as I could be supposed to represent your principles, to lead the way. I tried to allay irritated feeling, and I hope not altogether without success.

We have a country, which, being the land of our choice, should also have our first consideration. I know, and you know, that I can never cease to regard with an affection which amounts almost to idolatry the land where I spent my best, my first years, where I obtained the partner of my life, and where my first-born saw the light. I cannot but regard that land even with increased love because she has not been prosperous.

Yet I hold we have no right to intrude our Irish patriotism on this soil; for our first duty is to the land where we live and have fixed our homes, and where, while we live, we must find the true sphere of our duties. While always ready therefore to say the right word, and to do the right act for the land of my forefathers, I am bound above all to the land where I reside; and especially am I bound to put down, so far as one humble layman can, the insensate spread of a strife which can only tend to prolong our period of provincialism and make the country an undesirable home for those who would otherwise willingly cast in their lot among us. We have acres enough; powers mechanical and powers natural; and sources of credit enough to make out of this Province a great nation, and though I wish to commit no one to my opinion, I trust that it will not only be so in itself, but will one day form part of a greater British North American State, existing under the sanction and in perpetual alliance with the empire, under which it has its rise and growth.

## GEORGE H. PENDLETON



GEORGE HUNT PENDLETON, an American politician and diplomat, was born at Cincinnati, O., July 25, 1825, and died at Brussels, Belgium, Nov. 24, 1889. He was educated at the University of Heidelberg, and on his return to the United States studied law and was admitted to the Cincinnati Bar. In 1854, he began his public life as State senator, and in 1856 became Democratic representative to Congress. While in Congress he served on a number of important committees, and in 1864 was candidate for Vice-president on the Democratic ticket with George B. McClellan. In 1866, he was a member of the Philadelphia Loyalist Convention, and three years later an unsuccessful candidate for the governorship of Ohio. About this time he took part in advocating a scheme for the payment of bonds in greenbacks. He was elected United States Senator in 1878, and while in the Senate procured the passage of the Civil Service Law, but his warm support of this reform prevented his reelection to Congress. In 1885, he was appointed minister to Belgium, and died at Brussels while serving in this capacity. Senator Pendleton married a daughter of Francis Scott Key.

### ON RECONSTRUCTION; THE DEMOCRATIC THEORY

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MAY 4, 1864

THE gentleman [Mr. Davis of Maryland] maintains two propositions, which lie at the very basis of his views on this subject. He has explained them to the House, and enforced them on other occasions. He maintains that, by reason of their secession, the seceded States and their citizens "have not ceased to be citizens and States of the United States, though incapable of exercising political privileges under the constitution, but that Congress is charged with a high political power by the constitution to guarantee republican government in the States, and that this is the proper time and the proper mode of exercising it." This act of revolution on the part of the seceding States has evoked the most extraordinary theories upon the relations of the