
CHAPTER XIX

THE GOVERNORS-GENERAL OF SCOTTISH EXTRACTION CONNECTED WITH CANADA

*Such were our memories. May they yet
Be shared by others sent to be
Signs of the union of the free
And kindred peoples God hath set
O'er famous isles, and fertile zones
Of continents! Or if new thrones
And mighty states arise; may He,
Whose potent hand yon river owns,
Smooth their great future's shrouded sea!*

“Quebec,” a poem by the Duke of Argyll.

NO stronger link has bound Canada to the Motherland than that of her Governors-General, who have so ably and faithfully represented the British Sovereign in the Western world. It must naturally be a matter of pride to all men of Scottish descent in Canada to realise that the greater majority of our viceregal representatives have been of Scottish birth or extraction. Certainly, in a work of this nature, it is but right to lay stress upon this remarkable fact, which is but one more witness to the proof that Canada is, indeed, newer Scotland.

When we go back in our Canadian history to

The Scotsman in Canada

the first quarter of the seventeenth century, down a period of nearly three hundred years, we find that Canada, or New Scotland, is made part of, or an outlying extension of, Scotland ; that even then our country was connected with the Scottish race ; and the object of movements and ambitions arising among and influencing that ancient people. Ever since, in some manner, Canada has been connected with Scottish success or Scottish failure. Scottish dreams, having their birth in the Old Land of mountain and glen, have had more than their fulfilment in the forests and plains and seaports of the Caledonia of the West. From Alexander to Strathcona Canada has been closely woven into the web of Scottish life and its trusteeship of the outer-lands of the broad earth. Likewise can it be said that the history of Canada is but an extension of that of Scotland, and that during a period of three hundred years past the secret of the greatness and weakness of the greater portion of our Canadian peoples is to be sought for and found, not so much in our borders, as in the misty mountains and glens, the castles and sheilings of the loved Old Land. The pride and race-ideal of the Canadian boy and girl should, if truly inculcated, go back beyond Wolfe and Brock and Queenston and the Heights of Abraham to Bruce and Bannockburn. Truly if the race and the blood count for anything (and if they do not, what else should?), the greater majority of our people have in their veins that fierce and hot blood which brooked no conqueror, either martial

The Governors-General

or religious, for the glorious period of a thousand years of Scotland's greatness ; and it would seem worse than madness to expect to build up on this continent a new race-patriotism from which so much of splendid achievement and venerable race-memory were excluded.

Therefore, from this important standpoint, it will be more than merely interesting to the Scottish Canadian to know that the greater number of our viceregal representatives were of Scottish blood, and connected with, or representatives of, families renowned in the splendid history of North Britain.

Whatever may be the future fate of the country now called Canada, she will never, so long as the present race predominates, be separated from the history and dominant spirit of Scotland ; and if we but travel from Nova Scotia to the Fraser River, we will find many a name of place or treasured chronicle as lingering witness to the conquering will and fearless spirit of those, her missionaries of material advancement and intellectual and spiritual enlightenment, whom she has sent forth into all lands.

The first Scotsman appointed a Governor in Canada was the famous Raleigh, of Scotland ; Sir William Alexander, Viscount Canada, and Earl of Stirling, who was in 1621 by James the Sixth and the Scottish Parliament appointed hereditary Lieutenant of New Scotland. Alexander's Governorship was over all that country now known as the Maritime Provinces, including Prince Edward Island and all the islands in the Gulf, except New-

The Scotsman in Canada

foundland, with all of what is now Quebec south of the river St. Lawrence. Canada has every reason to look back with pride upon this her first Governor, who was also her first founder.

It is about time that a statue to this great man should be erected in the Dominion ; and it is no credit to the Canadians of Scottish extraction and no witness to their exact knowledge of Scottish and Canadian history that long ere this no monument to him as the real founder of British Canada has been thought of or deemed necessary.

It is a disgrace to British Canadians to have to say that while monuments to Champlain have been erected in the Maritime Provinces and Quebec—and one is soon to be placed in the capital at the expense of the Canadian Government—that no monument has ever been suggested to this great Scotsman.

The second Governor, if we except the second Earl of Stirling, who, like his illustrious father, was deeply interested in the founding and colonisation of early Canada, was Sir David Kirke, another distinguished man of Scottish extraction.

The first Governor of Canada under British rule after the capture of Quebec was another Scotsman, General Murray, a brother of Lord Elibank, who succeeded to the command on the death of Wolfe ; and when the civil Government was formed in 1763 he became the first civil Governor. In 1782 Henry Hamilton, a Scotsman, was Lieutenant-Governor ; and he was Administrator in 1784. In 1805 Thomas Dunn was President and

The Governors-General

Administrator of the Government of Lower Canada. In 1797 Peter Hunter was Administrator of Upper Canada ; and in 1814 Sir Gordon Drummond, a distinguished soldier, occupied the same position.

The Duke of Richmond, who was Governor-General from 1818 to 1819, when his able career was ended in so sudden and tragic a manner, was of royal Scottish extraction on the paternal side, being descended from Charles the Second, while his mother was the daughter of the fourth Marquess of Lothian, head of the great House of Kerr. When the Duke died in so sad a manner, the result of the bite of a mad fox, he was on a journey through the Ottawa district, studying the country in the interests of development and emigration. The privations consequent on his journey in the wilderness, where he succumbed, must have added much to his sufferings in his last hours. He died literally in the performance of his duty, as so many faithful Britons have done in connection with the upbuilding of Canada.

The Duke's daughter, the Lady Sarah Lennox, married Sir Peregrine Maitland, a scion of another noted Scottish family. He became Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, and was Administrator of the Canadian Government in 1820, following the Duke's death. He was fated to govern in a difficult period when restless spirits, suffering under some real grievances, were being influenced by less sincere intriguers to break the bond to the Motherland. There is proof that ever since the

The Scotsman in Canada

early years of the nineteenth century, when Wilcox was sent over from the United States as a paid emissary of insurrection, there was always such an influence in the country.

Lord Dalhousie was appointed Governor-General in 1820, as successor to the Duke of Richmond. He was the representative of the noble Scottish House of Ramsay, and his mother was of the old family of Glen in Linlithgowshire. He was a distinguished scholar and statesman, and a successful Governor in that difficult period which preceded the Lower Canadian Rebellion. History shows this Governor to have been a kindly and refined gentleman, with a fine mind and a strong ideal to serve his Sovereign and the country well. Lord Dalhousie was recalled and sent to India as Governor, where his son, the tenth Earl, went later, in 1847, and remained until 1856.

Lord Gosford, who became Governor-General in 1835, and remained up to 1837, was of the ancient Scottish family of Acheson of Gosford, county of Haddington, Scotland; from which place the family take their title as Earls of Gosford, though the title belongs to the Irish peerage. He was also a baronet of Nova Scotia. His ancestor, Sir Archibald Acheson, of Gosford in Haddington, was one of the noted undertakers for land in the great Scottish settlement in Ulster in the seventeenth century.

Lord Gosford was fated to be a Governor in a critical period of our history, when no Governor could cope with the extreme conditions which

The Governors-General

existed in both Upper and Lower Canada, and which evidently had to come to a sharp ending in the Civil War which ensued. It has now been proved that much of the so-called misrule of the Governors was really traceable to the local politicians, whose several factions each strove to use the Sovereign's representative for their own particular uses. Lord Gosford strove to do his duty under a trying ordeal which neither he nor any other single man could prevent. In Lower Canada it was a plain case of a clever demagogue and his short-sighted allies, who foolishly dreamed that they could destroy British rule and set up a pocket republic of their own on the St. Lawrence. The "representative Government" plea as the cause of this rebellion was just as much a pretence as was the "no tax without representation" of the American rebels in 1776. In Upper Canada it was different; but the Upper Canadian Rebellion would never have come to a real active head had there been no previous outbreak in Lower Canada.

Lord Cathcart, 1845-46, was the next Scottish Governor. He belonged to one of the oldest Scottish families, who were Barons since 1447. His mother was of the Border Scottish family of Elliot, and was first cousin to the Earl of Minto. His connection with Canada was during the interesting period of the Union, the last and vain political experiment before Confederation. During this period the seat of Government was removed from place to place in both provinces, and the

The Scotsman in Canada

continual race jealousy between Upper and Lower Canada was becoming stronger year by year. The truth was that the great growth of the Upper Province demanded an adequate representation not agreeable to the claims and privileges of the Lower.

Lord Cathcart's successor was Lord Elgin, during whose tenure of office the party and race feeling reached their climax for the second time. Lord Elgin was one of the finest of our Governors ; but he was made the victim of extreme party hatred, and was hooted and insulted in the streets. In spite of this he did his duty as he conceived it ; and history has justified him and now condemns the actions of both parties in the country, who made his position as Governor almost impossible. The idea has been instilled into the minds of our people that the whole trouble arose out of what was called the family compact, and the cruel tyranny of withholding from the people the free boon of responsible Government. Since Confederation we have had this glorious gift so much expatiated upon by cheap orators. But alas for human consistency and the much-be-praised democracy ! Has it improved matters ? Have we not now even more than formerly of party strife and mutual abuse ? Does not the Press of each party continually educate us into the idea that the party in power is robbing and ruining the rest of the country ? Have we not had enough land-grabbing and fraud on the part of public officers ventilated in our present-day Press during the last twenty

The Governors-General

years to totally eclipse all the charges brought against any Government official since that arch-grafter, Benjamin Franklin, first inaugurated such nefarious practices upon this unfortunate continent? Then, when we think of the present day and the much-abused family compact of the 1837 period, it is much to be feared that if Lyon McKenzie were living to-day he would feel that the inter-married ruling class of his day sank almost into insignificance before its counterpart of the present time.

It is for the Scottish Canadian to correct this grave evil, and to explain this strange failure in the infallibility of this democracy, which he has so long regarded as the sole panacea for all social and political ills. It is now becoming realised that the early British Governors in this country had a good deal of right on their side, and had often only acted for the best. Lord Elgin's experience of Canada was, however, not a pleasant one; and he was glad to leave the country, where he had striven to do his duty. He was in no way to blame for the stormy period, as both Provinces had, at the Union, one responsible Government; and Elgin had full instructions to consult his Ministers. The whole difficulty was in the people themselves. His distinguished father-in-law, Lord Durham, who had so much to do with the granting of responsible Government, had an equally disagreeable experience as Governor.

Lord Elgin was male representative of the famous family of Bruce, renowned in Scottish

The Scotsman in Canada

history, because one of its greatest kings, Robert Bruce, whose daughter married a Stuart, and through lack of male heirs of Robert Bruce carried the royal line of Scotland into that family. Lord Elgin's ancestor was a cousin of the illustrious monarch whose name is immortal in Scottish history.

The next Canadian viceregal representative of Scottish extraction was Lord Lisgar, 1868-72.

This statesman and nobleman was in the male line the descendant and representative of the Scottish family of Young of Auldbar, who removed into Ulster at the settlement of that province. He was also descended of the Houses of Douglas and of Knox of Ranfurly, kinsman of John Knox. Lord Lisgar thus was strongly Scottish in his descent, and whatever good he did for Canada was owing to his Scottish blood. He was the first Governor-General under the Canadian Confederation, and proved himself a dignified and competent representative of the Queen in the new Dominion of the West.

He was succeeded by one of the most popular of all our Governors, and one who was, like himself, of the Ulster-Scottish stock, Lord Dufferin. In previous accounts these Ulster Governors have been classed as Irishmen. But, as in this chapter I have taken the trouble to show for the first time, this is neither correct nor fair to the Scottish race as a race. Therefore, as this work has for its object to deal with the Scottish peoples in connection with Canada, it is necessary to point

out very definitely the true facts in the cases cited.

Lord Dufferin, though exceedingly proud of his Hamilton descent, was paternally of the Scottish family of Blackwood, of whom the famous Edinburgh publishers of that name are a noted branch. The Blackwoods were originally a Fifeshire family, and Lord Dufferin's ancestors came into Ulster at the Settlement.

On the maternal side the distinguished Governor was representative and senior heir-general of the Hamiltons, Earls of Clanbrassil. The first of the family to leave Scotland for Ulster was James Hamilton, son of the Rev. Hans Hamilton, Vicar of Dunlop, in Ayrshire, who became the first Viscount Clanbrassil. While Lord Dufferin's titles were Irish, he was very much of a Scotsman in blood and tradition, and it is interesting to Canadians of Scottish stock to remember that he was Governor at a period of our country's history when the two pre-eminent leaders of Canadian party politics were also of Scottish stock—Sir John A. Macdonald and the Honourable Alexander Mackenzie. It is not necessary in this chapter to go into the whole career of this noted statesman and diplomat, as it is well known to all Canadians.

Other members of the noted clan or family of Hamilton have been associated with Canadian history. One family of merchants of the name were prominent in our history and were associated with Quebec and Hamilton in Upper Canada. The Honourable Robert Hamilton,

The Scotsman in Canada

Member of the Upper Canada Legislative Council, was a leading member of this Canadian family, and the present venerable Anglican Archbishop of Ottawa is of the Quebec branch of this Scottish-Canadian family.

Lord Dufferin had for his successor another distinguished Viceroy, and the heir of one of the few Scottish princely houses. The Marquis of Lorne, now Duke of Argyll, is of royal extraction not only by descent from Robert Bruce and the royal house of Stuart through many female ancestors, but it is not generally known that he is the male representative of the old princely line of O'Duin, Kings of Ulster and Argyll in an ancient period of Scotland's history. Even down to the days of Mary Queen of Scots the Earls of Argyll lived in regality within their own borders, and were regarded by the Scottish monarchs rather as powerful allies than as subjects. In the time of Queen Mary, the Earl of Argyll was living as a prince in Argyll, with barons or lords under him, of whom the three mentioned in history were Lord Glenorchy, ancestor of the Marquess of Breadalbane ; Lord Auchinbreck, head of that noted house of soldiers and baronets ; and Lord Ardkinglas ; the heads of the three great cadet houses of the family, and all Baronets of Nova Scotia.

The present writer has seen an original letter written by King Charles the First to the great Marquess of Argyll, in which he treated him rather as an important ally and influential

The Governors-General

Scottish leader than as a subject ; and appealed to him to give his aid and influence to the Royal cause in the trouble with the Roundheads. Down to that period the chiefs of Argyll had held the hereditary justiciaryship of all Scotland, which placed them in an almost regal position. This, the eight Earl and Marquess resigned into the hands of the King, retaining, however, to himself and his heirs the jurisdiction of the Western Isles and Argyll, and wherever else he had lands in Scotland, which was ratified by an Act of Parliament in 1633. It was, therefore, quite meet that the heir of such a great historic house should marry a princess of the reigning Royal House. But it was especially interesting to Canadians that they should be sent to represent the monarch in the young Dominion. The Marquis of Lorne and the Princess Louise did much in Canada to forward the intellectual and material interests of the country. He had much to do with the opening up of the Far West, which he traversed to the shores of the Western Ocean at a time when it was a most difficult undertaking ; and he has keenly appreciated the great lifework, in this connection, of his close and distinguished friend and fellow Empire-builder, Lord Strathcona.

The Duke of Argyll, like his distinguished father, is a statesman and a scholar, and is one of the ablest and greatest Imperialists in the British Empire. He has, ever since his viceregal term in Canada, been deeply interested in the welfare

The Scotsman in Canada

of this country. In his many speeches, when here, and since on Imperial occasions, he has ever expressed a firm belief in the great possibilities of this country as a nation in the Empire. In addition to his other notable qualities he possesses the poetical gift in no small degree, a gift that seems hereditary in the blood of the great family of which he is the head. Some of his finest verses were written about Canada, and during his stay in this country. Notable examples are his poem, the finest ever written on the subject, "Quebec," and his "Hymn for Confederation." He and the Princess were the founders of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts and the Royal Society of Canada.

The Duke's ancestors and the cadet houses of his family contain a long list of noted statesmen, patriots, soldiers, scholars, and divines who have been closely associated with the history of Scotland and the Empire. Many of his name, and some of his blood, have borne a prominent part in the history of Canada; and thousands of good Canadian citizens bear his name and are worthy members of the famous clan.

The Earl of Aberdeen, who was Governor-General from 1893 to 1898, was also the head of another distinguished Scottish house, and the male representative of the great clan Gordon. This name, like that of Campbell, has for centuries been connected with the history of Scotland, as represented in the noble houses of the Dukes of Gordon, the Earls of Huntly, Sutherland, Aberdeen, and Kenmure. To merely mention those houses is to

The Governors-General

suggest to the reader of Scottish and British history a whole host of associations with all that is noble, chivalrous, tragic, and moving in the past centuries of Britain.

A few personalities stand out prominently on the frescoes of memory, such as George Gordon, fourth Earl of Huntly, the famous "Cock of the North," who virtually held Northern Scotland in his grasp, and was, for all his sad end, considered to have been the wealthiest, wisest, and most powerful subject in Scotland in his day. His famous ancestor, Sir Adam Gordon, who in 1305 sat at Westminster as one of the representatives of Scotland; Sir George Gordon, first Earl of Aberdeen, Lord High Chancellor of Scotland; the famous poet, Lord Byron, whose mother was a Gordon of Gight; the great Earl of Aberdeen, grandfather of the present Earl, Premier of England; and last, but not least, the famous General Gordon of Khartoum, one of the greatest saints and heroes in British history. Lord Aberdeen has had a distinguished career as a vice-regal representative—twice in Ireland and once in Canada. He is also Lord-Lieutenant of Aberdeenshire. He and his noted Countess were among the most intimate friends and followers of the famous Liberal leader, the late Right Hon. William Ewart Gladstone, whose son has become the first Governor of United South Africa. (It might be not out of place here to mention that Gladstone was of Scottish descent. His father's family were Gledstones, of Southern Scotland, and

The Scotsman in Canada

his mother was a Robertson of Stornoway, Isle of Lewis. Her maternal grandfather was Colin McKenzie, Bailie of Dingwall, of the Coul family of McKenzie. There are members of this family living in Canada.) Lady Aberdeen, who is known throughout the world as an active leader in many organisations to raise and alleviate humanity, comes also of a noted Scottish stock. Her father was Sir Dudley Coutts Majoribanks, first Lord Tweedmouth, and representative of the old family of Majoribanks of Holly and Leuchie and that Ilk ; and through her mother she is of the Ulster-Scottish branch of the Hoggs and Swintons of Berwickshire.

Lord Aberdeen's military secretary in Canada was another noted Scotsman and a scion of an ancient Caithness family, Captain John Sinclair, since then Member of Parliament for Forfarshire, and now Secretary of State for Scotland, lately raised to the peerage as Lord Pentland. He is married to Lady Marjorie Gordon, only daughter of Lord Aberdeen. Lord Pentland has had a successful career as a statesman, and is a fine scholar. He is of the Dunbeath branch of the family of the Earls of Caithness. His father was the late Capt. George Sinclair. Lord Pentland was also Member of Parliament for Dunbarton County and Assistant Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for War and a Captain of the 5th Lancers, and also a member of the London County Council.

It is very significant of Scotland's part in the

The Governors-General

building and destiny of Canada to turn from the historic families of Gordon and Sinclair to that of Elliot.

The Earl of Minto, who succeeded the Earl of Aberdeen as Governor-General, represents this old historic Scottish house. Like Lord Aberdeen, he is also a Baronet of Nova Scotia. His ancestor was Gilbert Elliot, of Stobs, who was also ancestor of the famous Lord Heathfield, the defender of Gibraltar. Lord Minto's ancestors were distinguished jurists, governors, naval and military officers, and ambassadors. Prominent in his family were Sir Gilbert Elliot, Lord Justice Minto; the Honourable Andrew Elliot; Admiral George Elliot; the Right Honourable Hugh Elliot, Governor of Madras; the first Earl of Minto, successively Viceroy of Correea, Ambassador at Vienna, Governor of Bengal, and President of the Board of Control. The present Earl has been one of the most successful Viceroys both in Canada and India. His first connection with our country was as military Secretary to the Marquess of Lansdowne, from 1883 to 1886. Lord Minto is Viscount Melgund of Melgund, County Forfar, and Baron Minto of Minto, County Roxburgh, and Earl of Minto. Lady Minto is a sister of Lord Grey, the present Governor-General of Canada; and is through her mother of the old Scottish family of Farquhar of that Ilk.

The present distinguished Governor-General of Canada, Earl Grey, has accomplished a great deal for the welfare of the Empire in Africa,

The Scotsman in Canada

England and Canada. He is, to-day, one of the most noted personalities in the Empire. As Governor of Canada, he has not only wisely and firmly represented his Sovereign, but he has also from the first held before the Canadian people a high ideal of citizenship and responsibility to the Empire and the Canadian community. Lord Grey, while, as is well known, the representative of a great historical house of Northern England, noted for its statesmen, soldiers, and sailors, is also, on the maternal side, of Scottish extraction, his mother being a daughter of Sir Thomas Harvie Farquhar, Baronet, representative of the ancient family of Gilmanscroft in North Britain. When one visits the beautiful county of Northumberland, on the borders of Scotland, the ancient home of Lord Grey's paternal ancestors, and his present family seat, and sees the wonderful heather-clad hills extending down over the border, well into the middle of the northern county, it is hard to realise that one is not in Scotland. And when we remember that the name of "Grey" has been a great one in Scotland from the earliest days, and that original Scottish origin is claimed for this noted family, it is not difficult for our Scottish historian to lay some claim to our distinguished Governor as a representative of the great mother of peoples scattered throughout the world. Lord Grey has also added to his many achievements in a unique way by his memorable journey overland to and through the famous Hudson Bay and Straits, being the first Governor-General of Canada

The Governors-General

to essay or accomplish this difficult journey. The result of this trip has been, however, to show to the outside world that Canada has a great ocean gateway in the north that may some day rival the St. Lawrence, and become a great shipping port for the grains and other products of the ever-growing West. Lady Grey, who has so endeared herself to the Canadian people, is also through her mother of the blood of the great historic House of Lindsay of Balcarres, one of Scotland's most noted families.

Our next Governor is to be of the Royal Stuart blood, in the person of his Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, uncle of the King. This will add but a more illustrious example to the long list of Viceroys of Scottish blood who have represented their Sovereign in this the Scotland of the New World.