

FRASER ALEXANDER

THE CLAN FRASER IN
CANADA: SOUVENIR OF
THE FIRST ANNUAL
GATHERING

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First Annual Gathering

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Alexander Fraser

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Prefatory Note

The chief object aimed at by the publication of this little volume is to furnish, in a concise and inexpensive form, information regarding the Clan Fraser not readily accessible to clansmen in Canada. It is also hoped a perusal of the contents will strengthen the clan sentiment, and deepen the interest in the ancient clan bond and in the long and illustrious history of the Clan. But the book being essentially an account of the first Annual Gathering held by the Clan in the Province of Ontario, it will be an interesting souvenir of that pleasant event; and probably the hope may not be too sanguine that its appearance will mark an onward step in the record of the Clan in the Dominion.

The publication has been undertaken under the auspices of the newly-formed Clan Fraser in Canada, and the thanks of the editor are due to Professor W. H. Fraser, of Toronto University,

and to Mr. Alexander Fraser (of Fraserfield, Glengarry), the Printing Committee of the Clan; also to Mr. J. Lewis Browne, for the music to which the "Fraser Drinking Song," written by Mrs. Georgina Fraser-Newhall, has been set.

A. F.

Toronto, February, 1895.

Introductory

THE Gael has proved himself not less a pioneer of civilization, and adaptable to changing conditions of living, than a lover of the traditions of his race, holding tenaciously by ancient usages and manners, and stirred profoundly by racial sentiment. As a pioneer he has reached "the ends of the earth," possessing the unoccupied parts of the world. As a patriot he has established not a few of his cherished customs in the land of his adoption. His love of kindred is probably his most notable characteristic; it found embodiment in the clan system, under which his race achieved its greatest triumphs and enjoyed its greatest glories, and the bond of clanship, with its inspiring memories, the true clansman will never disregard. While the clan system, as such, would be impracticable in the British colonies under present-day conditions, even more so than in its old home in the Highlands of Scotland, its spirit lives, leavening the system of government and exercising no small influence in the fusion of heterogeneous elements into new and distinct peoples.

These observations are applicable in a peculiar degree to Canada, where a very large number of clansmen have found a second Highland home. Many of the forests which rang with the clash of the claymore in the struggle for British supremacy, fell afterwards to the axe of the Gaelic settler. His trail lies across the continent, from ocean to ocean. His energy and intelligence

have been honorably felt in every walk of life, and his enterprise and skill have done much to develop and upbuild the Dominion. No body of people occupies a more distinguished place in this respect than the Frasers; indeed, even among the clans, no name is more closely identified than that of "Fraser" with the early days of Canada. To tell of their services on the field, in government, in commerce, in the professions, would occupy a large volume, as would a similar story of other clans, and an attempt to do so, in an introductory chapter, would be altogether out of place, but there are a few events of importance to the country in which the Frasers figured to which it will be well to allude with fitting brevity.

Those who hold the Norman theory believe the first of the name of "Fraser" in Scotland, "came over with William the Conqueror," and they ask no better proof of the antiquity of the name. If the early connection of the Clan with Canada be any satisfaction to clansmen there, then it may be stated with truth that the first settlers of the name "came over with Wolfe the Conqueror," and their services were as conspicuous in the military operations conducted by the intrepid young General, who gave his life for his country on the Plains of Abraham, as were those performed by any brave knight, whose name may be found on the roll of Battle Abbey.

The story of Fraser's Highlanders forms one of the most romantic chapters in the annals of the clans, and should the time come when it is fairly and fully given to the world, it will prove

a valuable addition to the history of Highland life and of early Canada.

For the part taken by the Clan in the uprising of 1745, Lord Simon was beheaded on Tower Hill and the Fraser estates were forfeited to the Crown. The Master of Lovat appeared at the head of the Clan on the Stuart side; but, as he was young at the time and had acted by his father's command, he was pardoned, and in 1757, in accordance with the wise, conciliatory policy of Mr. Pitt, he was commissioned to raise a regiment of his clansmen, of which he was appointed Lieutenant-Colonel commanding. In General Stewart's Sketches a brief but interesting account of this, the old Seventy-Eighth Regiment, is given, an extract from which will show the strength of the clan ties then existing, and the high character of the men who were raised on the Lovat territory. General Stewart says: "Without estate, money or influence, beyond that influence which flowed from attachment to his family, person and name, this gentleman (the Master of Lovat), in a few weeks found himself at the head of 800 men, recruited by himself. The gentlemen of the country and the officers of the regiment added more than 700, and thus a battalion was formed of 13 companies of 105 rank and file each, making in all 1,460 men, including 65 sergeants and 30 pipers and drummers." All accounts concur in describing this regiment as a superior body of men; their character and actions raised the military reputation and gave a favorable impression of the moral virtues of the sons of the mountains. The uniform was the full

Highland dress, with musket and broadsword, dirk and sporran of badger's or otter's skin. The bonnet was raised or cocked on one side, with a slight bend inclining down to the right ear, over which were suspended two or more black feathers.

The regiment embarked at Greenock, and landed at Halifax in June, 1757, and followed the fortunes of the war for six years. "On all occasions," says Stewart, "this brave body of men sustained a uniform character for unshaken firmness, incorruptible probity and a strict regard both to military and moral duties." Their chaplain was a man of note as of stature. His name was Robert Macpherson, but he was known in the regiment as *An Caipeal Mor*, being of large physique. He exercised the traditional authority of a Highland minister, and we are told that the men were always anxious to conceal their misdemeanors from him.

The cold climate, it was feared, would prove too severe to the Frasers, who wore the kilt, and an attempt, kindly conceived, no doubt, was made to change the "garb of old Gaul" for the trews. The proposal aroused strenuous opposition; officers and men opposed the change and finally were successful. The strength of feeling awakened may be judged from the words of one of the soldiers in the regiment: "Thanks to our generous chief, we were allowed to wear the garb of our fathers, and, in the course of six winters, showed the doctors that they did not understand our constitution; for in the coldest winters our men were more healthy than those regiments that wore breeches and

warm clothing." A somewhat amusing anecdote is related of how the Nuns of the Ursuline Convent, where the Frasers were quartered in 1759-60, endeavored to induce Governor Murray to be allowed to provide sufficient raiment for the kilted soldiers, but, of course, without success.

At Louisburg, Montmorenci, Ste. Foye and on the Plains of Abraham, the Frasers distinguished themselves greatly. One of the most eloquent tributes to their prowess was spoken by the Hon. P. J. O. Chauveau, the French-Canadian, at the inauguration in 1855 of the Statue of Bellona sent by Prince Napoleon for the monument erected on the famous battlefield. The French-Canadian historian Garneau, and other writers in whose veins courses the blood of the vanquished at Quebec, have borne generous testimony to their military bearing and good conduct. Garneau writes of the battle of Carillon, 1758: "It was the right of the trench works that was longest and most obstinately assailed; in that quarter the combat was most sanguinary. The British Grenadiers and Highlanders there persevered in the attack for three hours, without flinching or breaking rank. The Highlanders above all, under Lord John Murray, covered themselves with glory. They formed the troops confronting the Canadians, their light and picturesque costumes distinguishing them from all other soldiers amid the flames and smoke. The corps lost the half of its men, and twenty-five of its officers were killed or severely wounded;" and the genial Le Moine, half Highland and half French, says: "The Frasers

of 1759 and of 1775 readily courted danger or death in that great duel which was to graft progress and liberty on that loved emblem of Canada, the pride of its forests – the Maple Tree. If at times one feels pained at the ferocity which marked the conflict and which won for Fraser's Highlanders at Quebec, the name *Les Sauvages d'Ecosse*,¹ one feels relieved, seeing that the meeting was inevitable, that the sturdy sons of Caledonia, in Levis' heroic Grenadiers, did find a foe worthy of their steel. Scotchmen, on the field of Ste. Foye, in deadly encounter with France's impetuous warriors, doubtless acknowledged that the latter were not unworthy descendants of those whom they had helped to rout England's soldiery on the fields of Brangé, Crevant and Verneuil."

At the close of the war many of the officers and men settled in the Provinces of Quebec and Nova Scotia, having obtained their discharge and grants of land in the New World. It was not long ago computed that the descendants of these Highlanders in the Province of Quebec numbered 3,000, but merged in the French-Canadian peasantry to such an extent that even the names have lost their original form. In Nova Scotia the name Fraser flourishes in every township of every county. There have been many accessions to the Clan since the days of the Seventy-Eighth and the Battle of the Plains, but at least four-fifths of those

¹ It is but fair to state that Fraser's Highlanders showed no more ferocity than the usages of war justified. There were barbarous atrocities committed, undoubtedly, but for these, the Highlanders were not responsible. – A.F.

bearing the Clan name in Canada to-day, trace their descent from the victorious clansmen of Cape Breton and Quebec.

On the outbreak of the American War the Royal Highland Emigrants were embodied, and in that regiment, commanded by the gallant Lieut. – Colonel Allan MacLean (son of Torloisk), 300 men who had belonged to Fraser's regiment enlisted. In the interval between the cession of Canada and the American War, the Lovat estates were restored to the Master of Lovat, for his eminent services (the title was kept in abeyance), and he was asked to raise a regiment, the Seventy-First, of two battalions. This he speedily accomplished and soon found himself at the head of a double regiment numbering 2,340 officers and men. They behaved with the highest distinction throughout the war and earned flattering encomiums from the commanding officers. General Stewart, than whom no more competent authority has written of Highland regiments, and but few who have understood Highland character better, whose Sketches have furnished facts to all subsequent writers on the subject, speaks of the Seventy-First, Fraser's Highlanders, thus: "Their moral conduct was in every way equal to their military character. Disgraceful punishments were unknown. Among men religious, brave, moral and humane, disgraceful punishments are unnecessary. Such being the acknowledged general character of these men, their loyalty was put to the test and proved to be genuine. When prisoners, and solicited by the Americans to join their standard and settle among them, not one individual violated the oath

he had taken, or forgot his fidelity or allegiance, a virtue not generally observed on that occasion, for many soldiers of other corps joined the Americans, and sometimes, indeed, entered their service in a body." The Seventy-First did not leave many behind as settlers, and the reference to it here is only permissible as illustrating the high character of the Clan, of which the Seventy-Eighth, which left its quota of settlers behind, formed an important part. General Simon Fraser's intimate connection with Canada, as commanding officer of Fraser's Highlanders (1757), and in other interesting respects, may suffice as a reason why a good anecdote of him may be here related. When the Seventy-First mustered at Glasgow, Lochiel was absent, being ill at London. His absence had not, evidently, been explained to his company, for they demurred to embark without their chief; they feared some misfortune had befallen him. General Fraser had a command of eloquent speech and he succeeded in persuading them to embark with their comrades. It is related that while he was speaking in Gaelic to the men, an old Highlander, who had accompanied his son to Glasgow, was leaning on his staff gazing at the General with great earnestness. When he had finished, the old man walked up to him and, with that easy familiar intercourse, which in those days subsisted between the Highlanders and their superiors, shook him by the hand, exclaiming "Simon, you are a good soldier, and speak like a man; so long as you live, Simon of Lovat will never die;" alluding to the General's address and manner, which was said to resemble

much that of his father, Lord Lovat, whom the old Highlanders knew perfectly.

The De Berry Organization

We have now seen the origin of the Frasers in Canada; they came in war, but the swords were readily turned into ploughshares, and the arts of peace cultivated with a constancy and success that equalled their intrepidity and valor on the battlefield. Years rolled on, the Clan multiplied and prospered, and, in the course of time, a project was entered upon for the formation of a new Clan Fraser on Canadian soil. The leading spirit of the movement was the Hon. John Fraser de Berry, a member for the Legislative Council of the Province of Quebec. A meeting of Frasers was held in response to the following public advertisement:

FRASER CLAN

The Frasers of the Province of Quebec are respectfully requested to meet at the office of Messrs. Thomas Fraser & Co., at the Lower Town, Quebec, on Saturday, the twenty-fifth day of January, 1868, at ten o'clock a. m., to take into consideration the advisability of organizing the "Clan" for the Dominion of Canada.

	John Fraser de Berry,	A. Fraser,
	A. Fraser, Sr.,	A. Fraser, Jr.,
	J. R. Fraser,	Fred. Fraser,
January 21, 1868.	John Fraser,	J. Fraser.

At this meeting preliminary steps were taken to further the object in view, and another meeting was held on February 8th, 1868, of which the following report has been taken from the *Quebec Mercury*:

At a meeting of the "Frasers" of the Province of Quebec, held at Mrs. Brown's City Hotel, on the 8th February, 1868, Alexander Fraser, Esq., notary, ex-Member for the County of Kamouraska, now resident in Quebec, in the chair; Mr. Omer Fraser, of St. Croix, acting as Secretary.

1. It was unanimously resolved:

That it is desirable that the family of "Frasers" do organize themselves into a clan with a purely and benevolent social object, and, with that view, they do now proceed to

such organization by recommending the choice of

A Chief for the Dominion of Canada;

A Chief for each province;

A Chief for each electoral division;

A Chief for each county;

A Chief for each locality and township.

2. That the Chief of the Dominion of Canada be named "The Fraser," and that he be chosen at a general meeting of the Frasers of all the provinces; the said meeting to be held on the second Thursday in the month of May next, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, in such place in the City of Ottawa as will then be designated.

3. That it is desirable that the Chief of the Province of Quebec and the Chiefs of the electoral divisions represented at said meeting be chosen forthwith; and that the Chief elected for this province be authorized and empowered to name the Chiefs for such divisions as are not represented at present, the said selection shall, however, be subject to the approbation of the Frasers of the division interested, who will make the same known at a meeting to be called without delay, by the Chief of the Province of Quebec, with the view to proceed to the nomination of the Chiefs of counties comprehended in the said division.

4. That Chiefs of counties be obliged to convene also without delay, a meeting by which shall be chosen all the Chiefs of parishes or townships.

5. That it shall be the duty of the Chief chosen for a parish or township to report to the Chief of his county as early as possible, the number of Frasers residing in his

parish or township; and of the Chief of the county in his town, to report to the Chief of his electoral division, who will transmit it, together with his own report, to the Chief of his province; the said report to contain the number of Frasers in his division, in order that the force of the Clan in each province may be ascertained on the 14th of May next, at the meeting at Ottawa.

6. That it is advisable that the meeting at Ottawa, representing all the Clan, be composed of all its divers Chiefs from the Chiefs of provinces, even to the Chiefs of parishes or townships inclusively, and any other Frasers who may desire to attend at the same.

7. That the above resolutions and the nominations, which are to take place this day, or which may be made hereafter by the Chief of the province, shall be considered as preliminary and temporary, as they are made with the sole object of organizing the Clan, and not to bind in any manner whatever the Frasers, who will be at perfect liberty to reorganize themselves completely anew at the Ottawa meeting.

8. That the Clan shall not be considered to exist until and after the next anniversary or Dominion Day, the first of July next, under such rules and regulations as will be adopted at the meeting at Ottawa; the Frasers of this meeting protest energetically against any intention, which might be attributed to them, of dictating their will to their namesakes of this province; they are simply attempting to organize and with a benevolent object, to adopt temporarily the above resolutions the better to attain that end.

9. That the sister provinces of Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick be respectfully requested to organize themselves, and to send delegates to the meeting at Ottawa, on the fourteenth of May next, that time having been selected because in all probability the parliament will still be in session, and the members may attend the session before dispersing.

10. That all proceedings be respectfully submitted to the "Fraser" family, which is one of the most ancient, one of the most noble, one of the most influential, and one of the most numerous families of the Dominion of Canada.

11. That all the newspapers throughout the Dominion of Canada, who have subscribers of the name of Fraser, are requested to publish the proceedings of this meeting.

After which the meeting proceeded to the nomination of the following officers, who were unanimously elected:

I. To be the Chief of the Province of Quebec:

The Honorable John Fraser de Berry, Esquire, one of the members of the Legislative Council of the said Province, etc., being the fifty-eighth descendant of Jules de Berry, a rich and powerful lord (seigneur) who feasted sumptuously the Emperor Charlemagne, and his numerous suite, at his castle in Normandy, in the eighth century.

II. For the following electoral divisions:

Lauzon, – Thomas Fraser, Esquire, farmer, of Pointe Levis.

Kennebec, – Simon Fraser, Esquire, of St. Croix.

De la Durantaye, – Alexander Fraser, Esquire, farmer, of St. Vallier.

Les Laurentides, – William Fraser, Esquire, of Lake St. John, Chicoutimi.

Grandville, – Jean Etienne Fraser, Esquire, Notary.

Green Island Stadacona, – Alexander Fraser, Esquire, Notary, St. Roch, Quebec.

The meeting having voted thanks to the President and Secretary, then adjourned.

ALEX. FRASER,

President.

OMER FRASER,

Secretary.

There was a good response to the call for the general meeting, letters having been sent broadcast over the Dominion. As chief of the Frasers of British North America, the Hon. James Fraser de Ferraline, in the Province of Nova Scotia, was elected. He was a scion of the Ferraline and Gorthlic families of the Clan. One hundred and eleven subordinate chieftains of provinces and districts were elected and Mr. John Fraser de Berry was appointed Secretary to the "New Clan Fraser," as it was called. For various reasons, chief among them being, probably, its elaborate constitution and the intangible purposes for which it was called into existence, the organization did not make satisfactory headway and in the course of not many years it failed to attract any public attention whatever, and ceased to exist. In its brief career it gathered some interesting information about the clansmen. In a report drawn up by the Secretary, De Berry,

whose exertions on its behalf were unwearying, it is stated that there were then over 12,000 persons, men, women and children of the name Fraser, some speaking French, not one of whom was a day laborer, or "earning daily wages," but all in comfortable circumstances, many in positions of honour and trust.

FORMATION OF THE CLAN FRASER IN CANADA

Although Mr. John Fraser de Berry's scheme failed it was believed that there was room for a less pretentious and more practicable clan organization in Canada. There was little diminution of the clan feeling; the desire of those having the same origin and name, the same glorious clan history, in common, to enjoy a friendly intercourse, was natural and reasonable, and at length it assumed a practical form. Early in the spring of 1894 a meeting was held in the office of the *Toronto Daily Mail*, at which there were present: Messrs. George B. Fraser, commission agent; Robert Lovat Fraser, barrister; Alexander R. Fraser, druggist; Dr. J. B. Fraser, physician; Alexander Fraser (of Fraserfield, Glengarry), Secretary to the Boiler Inspection Company; W. H. Fraser, Professor of Languages at the Toronto University; W. A. Fraser, civil engineer and contractor; W. P. Fraser, clerk, Dominion Bank; Andrew Fraser, commercial traveller; and Alexander Fraser, of the editorial staff of the *Daily Mail*. The last named, descended from the Clan Mhic Fhionnlaidh sept of the Struy Frasers, was appointed chairman of the meeting and Mr. W. A. Fraser, also descended from good Strathglass stock, was appointed Secretary. All agreed that a clan organization ought to be formed and as a

first step it was thought well to test the feeling of the clansmen at a family dinner, which it was decided should be held on May 5th, 1894. Those present formed themselves into a committee to make arrangements for holding the dinner and the chairman and secretary of the meeting were appointed chairman and secretary of the committee. Invitations were sent to every member of the Clan in Ontario, Montreal, New York, Buffalo and Detroit, whose name the committee was able to procure, and about three hundred replies were received, in which, without exception, an earnest hope for the success of the proposed organization was expressed. The dinner took place as had been decided upon, on May 5th, 1894, at Webb's Restaurant, Toronto, and an account of the proceedings will now be given.

THE CLAN DINNER

"MOR FHAICH"



CLAN FRASER
IN
CANADA,
FIRST
ANNUAL DINNER

MAY 5TH

1894



Chapman

*A chuirn sgaoilte; chuaias an ceol
Ard sholas a'n talia nan triath.—*

Oisean.

Menu



Soup.

Scotch Broth

fish.

Boiled Sea Salmon from the Cruives of Lovat

**Sgadan beag Poll-a-Roid.
Pomme Natural, Anchovy Sauce**

Bread and Butter Rolled

Entrees.

H A G G I S

P U N C H A L A R O M A I N .

Joints.

Roast Beef. Spring Lamb

Vegetables.

Mashed Potatoes. Asparagus. French Peas

Entremets.

Fraser Pudding

Curds and Cream. Oat Cakes. Assorted Fine Cakes

Shortbread. Cheese. Biscuits. Radishes

Neapolitan Ice Cream. Nuts. Figs. Dates

FRUITS.

COFFEE.

"Smeorach Stratharaigeig; uiseag an urlair." —

Sean-Fhocai.

Toast **H**ist



"She wrought her people lasting good."

2.

The Chief.

"Tostamaid ar ceann a cinnidh;

Mac-Shimi mor na Morfhaich.

"Master, go on, and I will follow thee
To the last gasp, with truth and loyalty."

Bagpipe Music – "Morar Sim."

3.

The Clan.

"I tell you a thing sickerly,

That yon men will win or die;

For doubt of deid they sall not flee."

"N uair 'thig an cinneadh Frisealach,

Tha fios gur daoine borb iad."

Bagpipe Music – "Caisteal Dunaidh."

4.

Our Guests.

"Sir, you are very welcome to our house."

Bagpipe Music – "Aird Mhic-Shimi."

"Highland Fling," by Master Norman Fraser

5. The Clan in Canada.

"Kindred alike, where'er our skies may shine,
Where'er our sight first drank the vital morn."

Bagpipe Music – "Fhuair Mac-Shimi air ais an Oighearachd."

6. Distinguished Clansmen.

"Of singular integrity and learning,
Yea, the elect o' the land."

(a) In Art; (b) in Science; (c) in Literature; (d) in Theology;
(e) in War; (f) in Political Life.

7. The Ladies.

"Disguise our bondage as we will,
'Tis woman, woman, rules us still."
"And when a lady's in the case,
You know, all other things give place."

8.

Deoch an Doruis.

Air (fonn) "Clementine."

Deoch an doruis, deoch an doruis,
Deoch an doruis, 's i tha ann;
Deoch an doruis, sguab as i,
Cha'n eil Mac-na-Bracha gann.

Auld Lang Syne.



God Save the Queen.

The bagpipe music will be furnished by Mr. Robert Ireland, Pipe Major of the 48th Highlanders, Toronto



Although the number that sat around the festive board was much smaller than had been expected, the elements requisite for a successful gathering were strongly in evidence, and, as a matter of fact, the inaugural dinner of the Clan turned out to be a most satisfactory event. Many of the absentees had conveyed good reasons for their absence, and hearty greetings to the assembled company. From a large number of letters it would be difficult to make a selection for the reader and the demands of space would prevent it, although some of them are really worth reproducing. Of special interest were the letters from Messrs. O. K. Fraser, Brockville; John Fraser, Wm. Lewis Fraser and Thomas Fraser, New York; P. M. Fraser, St. Thomas; Donald Fraser, Windsor; R. J. Fraser, Barrie; R. M. Fraser, Goderich; Rev. R. D. Fraser, Bowmanville; Rev. J. B. Fraser, M.D., Annan; John Fraser, Montreal; W. G. Fraser, Buffalo; Hon. Christopher Finlay Fraser, and B. Homer Dixon, K.N.L., Toronto; the last named a Fraser on the maternal side and a gentleman deeply versed in the history of the Clan.

The dining hall presented a very attractive appearance. The table was made beautiful with a tastefully arranged and selected display of flowers and plants, and appropriate to the occasion there were stags' heads on the walls, and the Fraser Clan tartan draped the pillars, doorway and windows. There were a number of articles of interest sent by friends, such as finely executed mezzo-tint pictures of Simon Lord Lovat, beheaded in 1747, and

of Brigadier Simon Fraser, the hero of Saratoga; and a water-color of the Clan arms, from Mr. B. Homer Dixon; a map of Inverness-shire, showing the Clan possessions at various stages of its history, with the lands in the hands of cadets of the Clan, a life-size copy of Hogarth's picture of Simon Lord Lovat, the "last of the martyrs," a life-size copy of an engraving of Sir Alexander Fraser of Phillorth, founder of the University of Fraserburgh, sent by the Chairman.

The menu card, a copy of which has been reproduced for this volume, will be found to have been a clever effort of the artist, Mr. W. A. Fraser, Secretary of Committee. A representation of the Falls of Foyers is given on the cover, and on the last page a celtic armorial device surrounded by the names of a number of old Fraser estates.

The Chairman was Mr. Alexander Fraser (MacFhionnlaidh); and the vice-chairs were occupied by Mr. Robert Lovat Fraser, Barrister, Toronto, and ex-Mayor Fraser of Petrolea. A picture of the company is given on another page, which will form an interesting reminiscence of the happy gathering. From the picture, the face of one who was present at the dinner is unfortunately absent, that of Mr. Henry Sandham Fraser, and that of Mr. Wm. Fraser, of whom a brief notice is given on another page, appears, although he was not present, as he would have been were it not that he was just then stricken down with illness, to which, not long afterwards, he succumbed. The dinner was excellently served, and then came the toast list with the

speeches. The first toast was that of:

"THE QUEEN."

The Chairman in proposing the health of the Queen said: – Our Clan has invariably been a loyal one, even in the rising which terminated so fatally on the battlefield of Culloden, the Clan Fraser took part, believing that they were striking a blow for the rightful king. I am sure we all agree that no sovereign has ever held sway over the British Empire who is more worthy of the regard of men of Highland blood than Her Majesty Queen Victoria. She who has given so many proofs of regard for the Highland people is beloved by them in return. Her volumes of her life in the Highlands, one of which has been well translated into Gaelic and the other indifferently so, bear testimony to the deep interest with which she regards that portion of her ancient kingdom of Scotland, to which we lay claim as our native land. She has gone in and out among the peasantry and gentry with perfect confidence in their loyalty and in their attachment to her person. She surrounded herself by faithful Highlanders, and their services to her, whether in the household or in positions of public preferment, have been uniformly of a high character and invariable success. That she may long live and rule in the hearts of her people, no body of men can wish more strongly than this company that has given to her name its just place of honor at the head of the toast list.

The toast was cordially honored.

"THE CHIEF."

The Chairman next proposed the toast of the Chief. He said: It is stated that a man of the name of Cameron, who had fought at the Battle of Falkirk with the Royal Army, his clan being on the side of the Prince, joined his kinsmen after the battle, but still wore the Royal uniform in the bonnet of which there was a cockade. Lord Kilmarnock, coming up and seeing an armed Royalist, as he thought, suspected danger to the Prince, and in an altercation he snatched the cockade from the soldier's hat and trampled upon it. This aroused the ire of the Camerons who saw their comrade maltreated, and they resented Kilmarnock's interference, saying, "No Colonel nor General in the Prince's army can take that cockade out of the hat of a Cameron except Lochiel himself." I mention this incident as affording a good example of the bond of fealty by which the clansman was held to his chief. To him the chief was supreme in all things. He was not only the head of his family, but the provider and protector of the clan. His authority he derived from his position, his position he secured, sometimes by the goodwill of the clan, but generally on account of birth. The clansmen considered themselves as the children of the chief, and the system demanded that they subordinate themselves to his rule. Without a chief or his substitute there could be no organized clan, and it is rightly understood how important was his position under the clan

system. Chiefs of our Clan proved themselves to be worthy of the position, as a rule, and Simon Joseph, Lord Lovat, the young nobleman who now holds the chiefship, already gives promise of faithfully following in the footsteps of his forefathers. At the celebration of his majority, not long ago, there was a considerable gathering of clansmen and others to do him honor, and the manner in which he performed his part as host on that occasion is an augury of a distinguished future. It is said that he shows a deep interest in the welfare of his people, that he is a young man of highly patriotic feelings, and, as his sphere of usefulness is a wide one, he, no doubt, will have ample opportunity of filling the highest expectations of the Clan. Following the traditions of his house he has entered the army, and, should he decide to follow arms as a profession, no doubt the military genius of his race, bequeathed to him through a long line of ancestors, will win for him honorable distinction as a soldier. I now ask you to charge your glasses and to drink to the health of our young chief with Highland honors.

The toast was drunk with Highland honors; the company singing "He's a Jolly Good Fellow," after which the piper played the Clan welcome, "Morar Sim."

Mrs. Charles Gordon Fraser was at this stage introduced, and her little boy, Master Norman Fraser, attired in Highland costume, gave a spirited and clever execution of the Highland fling, for which he was enthusiastically cheered.

"THE CLAN."

The Chairman proposed the next toast, that of the Clan. He said: – In rising to propose the toast of the evening, my first duty, it seems to me, is to express my sense of the great honor done me by my clansmen in asking me to preside over the first family dinner of the Clan in this Province. Many there be with us, who, from age and distinction and fitness in every respect, ought to have come before me, and who would have done greater honor to the position on such an occasion as this, than I can hope to do, even with your kind indulgence. The rather active part it has been my privilege to take in bringing about this happy gathering may have suggested your choice, and should I be right in this conjecture, that fact but deepens the feeling with which I regard the honor. But a still more arduous duty laid upon me was to give the toast of the evening, that of "The Clan." I can assure you it required all the courage I could muster to undertake the task. The motto of the Clan was held up to me, but I did not forget that *Je suis prest* ought to be the corollary of *Paratus sum*, and I fear that but few could step into the breach and do full justice to the great Clan Fraser. In assigning the toast, moreover, the request was made that I should give as much information regarding the Clan, as could well be packed into a speech, even if the limit of time should have to be extended over that which is usually allowable for an after dinner effort; but, as I understand the information

is intended for a wider circle of clansmen than is here, I feel assured of your patience and forbearance while I struggle through a narrative, the length of which under other circumstances would have been an unpardonable breach of good taste.

The clan system holds an intermediate position between the patriarchal and feudal systems. It is sometimes confused with the former, more rarely with the latter. The feudal lordship, in its genius and scope of operation, was diametrically opposed to the salient characteristics of the clan system. The distinctions need not be enlarged upon here, let it suffice to draw attention to the fact that clanship was a distinct form of government, under well recognized and applied principles. In modern literature we find the characteristic most emphasized to be the loyalty with which the clansman followed and served his chief, as in the words of the quotation on our toast list, "Master, go on and I will follow thee, to the last gasp, with truth and loyalty." That truth and loyalty, however, was not born of a servile, but of a highly patriotic feeling, for the bond which united chief and clansman was that of kindred and common interest, and not of hire and servitude. This explains why a people so highly sensitive, fiery and impetuous as the Celts, gave such loyal and perfect allegiance to the chief of the clan.



Alexander Fraser (Mac-Fhionnlaidh)
Chairman.

Since the fact that we were to hold a clan gathering got abroad, I have been asked for information regarding the origin of the clans in the Highlands. How these clans were first established authentic history does not record with clearness. We are left in the task of unravelling the origin of the clans to meagre allusions in classical writings, in genealogies which, to some extent at least, are mythical, and to tradition, ever changing with the progress of the centuries. There can be no question that many of the clans grew gradually from the native population after the consolidation of the Scottish Kingdom. We know that tribes, some bearing names of modern clans, existed in what may be described as prehistoric times, in the ordinary acceptation of that term, in that part of Scotland north of the Forth and Clyde. Amongst these were the Bissets, the Fentons of the Aird, and others, whose names still survive in the County of Inverness, and who must have to some extent merged into the Fraser Clan, by adopting the name of the lord of the manor. I do not like to quote John Hill Burton as an authority, prejudiced, as he manifestly is, and unfair, as a rule, when dealing with the Highlands and the Celts, but a passage from his unreliable *Life of Simon, Lord Lovat*, will show how a surname may impose itself on a community and how clans have been, to some extent, constituted. He says: "In some instances the foreign family adopted a purely Celtic patronymic

from the name of the sept of which they were the leaders. In other cases, such as the Gordons and Frasers, the sept, probably absorbing various small tribes and admitting to its bosom many stray members owning strange varieties of Gaelic names, took the name of the leader; hence we find the purest Gaelic spoken by people enjoying the Norman names of a Gordon or a Cumin. But, whether the imported lord of the soil adopted the name of the tribe or the tribe that of their lord, the unyielding influence of old national customs and peculiarities prevailed, and their families gradually adapted themselves in speech and method of life to the people over whom they held sway." This principle holds good in the case of the composite Fraser Clan, and a curious example is afforded by an extract from the Allangrange MS., with respect to the Rev. Wm. Fraser, of Kilmorack, published in that repository of Highland lore, the Celtic Magazine: —

"Bishop Hay, maternal uncle to Agnes Lovat, carried away by Kenneth Mackenzie (a Bhlair), Seventh Baron of Kintail, when he sent away his first wife Margaret, daughter of John, Earl of Ross, advised Kenneth and the lady's friends that a commission should be sent to the Pope in 1491 to procure the legitimation of their union. This was agreed to, and the following is the account of the commissioners: —

"To that effect one called Donald Dhu McChreggie, priest of Kirkhill, was employed. This priest was a native in Kintail, descended of a clan there called Clan Chreggie, who, being a hopeful boy in his younger days, was educated in Mackenzie's

house, and afterwards at Beullie by the forementioned Dugall Mackenzie (natural son of Alexander 'Ionraic' VI. of Kintail pryor yrof). In the end he was made priest of Kirkhill. His successors to this day are called Frasers. Of this priest are descended Mr. William and Mr. Donald Fraser.'

"The author of the Ardintoul MSS. gives a slightly different version, and says: 'To which end they sent Mr. Andrew Fraser, priest of Kintail, a learned and eloquent man, who took in his company Dugald Mackenzie, natural son of Alexander Inrig, who was a scholar. The Pope entertained them kindly, and very readily granted them what they desired, and were both made knights to the boot by Pope Clement VIII., but when my knights came home they neglected the decree of Pope Innocent III. against the marriage and consentricate of the clergy, or, otherwise, they got a dispensation from the then Pope Clement VIII., for both of them married. Sir Dugal was made priest of Kintail and married Nien (daughter) Dunchy Chaim in Glenmoriston. Sir Andrew likewise married, whose son was Donall Dubh MacIntagard (Black Donald, son of the Priest) and was priest of Kirkhill and chapter of Ross. His tacks of the Vicarage of Kilmorack to John Chisholm, of Comar, stands to this day. His son was Mr. William MacAholding, *alias* Fraser, who died minister of Kiltarlady. His son was Mr. Donald Fraser, who died minister of Kilmorack; so that he is the fifth minister or ecclesiastical person in a lineal and uninterrupted succession, which falls out but seldom, and than which, in my judgment,

nothing can more entitle a man to be really a gentleman; for that blood which runs in the veins of four or five generations of men of piety and learning and breeding cannot but have influence, and it confirms my opinion that the present Mr. Wm. Fraser (who is the fifth) has the virtues and commendable properties of his predecessors all united in him."

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