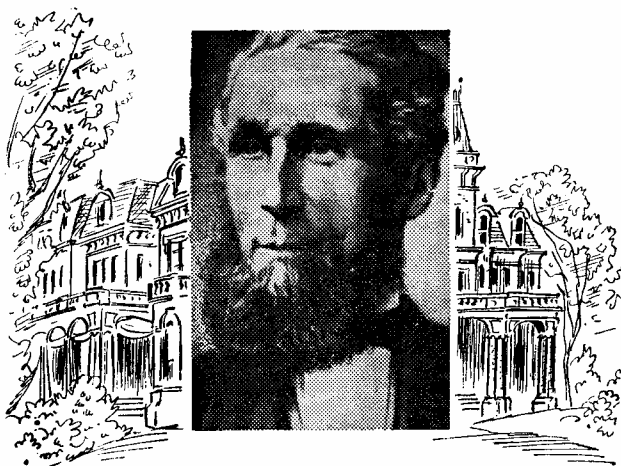


FAMOUS LETTERS IN CANADIAN HISTORY



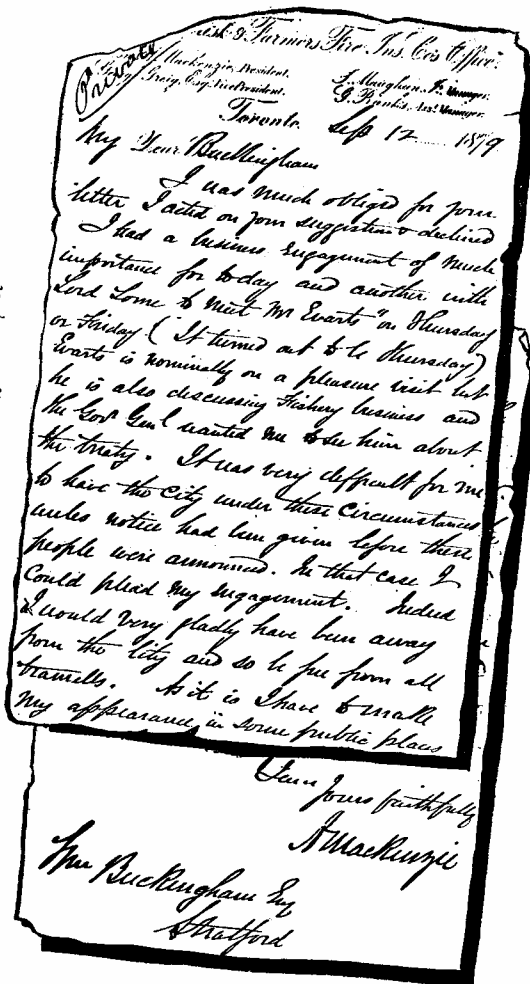
Defeat Stings

It was a bitter Alexander Mackenzie who wrote this letter to his former secretary William Buckingham.

He had only recently been turned out of office as Canada's second prime minister and was highly critical of the actions of Sir John A. Macdonald who was re-elected to replace him.

Mackenzie, who was born in Scotland, was a building contractor at Sarnia when he became active in the reform movement as a supporter of George Brown.

When Sir John A. Macdonald was defeated in 1873 Mackenzie formed the first Liberal administration and was prime minister for five years.



He is remembered for his great integrity and three times he turned down an offer of a knighthood.

Alexander Mackenzie Writes to Secretary

Toronto, Sept. 12, 1879.

My Dear Buckingham:
I was much obliged for your letter. I acted on your suggestion and declined.
I had a business engagement of much importance for today and another with Lord Lorne to meet Mr. Ewarts on Thursday or Friday (it turned out to be Thursday). Ewart is nominally on a pleasure visit but he is also discussing the fishery business and the Governor General wanted me to see him about the treaty. It was very difficult for me to leave the city under these circumstances unless notice had been given before these people were announced. In that case I could plead my engagement. Indeed I would very gladly have been away from the city

and so be free from all the trammels. As it is, I have to make my appearance in some public places. The parties seem to look out very sharply for one's presence.

I am not quite sure of the governor's ground in the Letellier matter but I had Toby's account of his interviews with Sir M. H. Beach and the letters which passed . . . Beach said among other things that if the Federal Government ordained that Lieutenant Governors should wear blue neckties and that they wore white it was quite competent for the government to dismiss them for disobedience . . .

I am yours faithfully,
A. MACKENZIE.