

PARLIAMENTARY SILHOUETTES.

A notable example of the success possible in this colony to persevering industry united with business faculty, I select Mr Duthie, one of the members for Wellington, who, by dint of energy, aptitude and ability, has risen step by step from the lower ranges of the social ladder, where his time was that of his employer, until now he rests against the top rails, well pleased, as he may well be, that by his own unaided exertions he has achieved a position—not only in business, but also in social and political circles—shared by comparatively few.

Did space permit, a detailed account of Mr Duthie's career since his arrival in the colony, nearly thirty years ago, would make very interesting reading. Instructive would it be to note the successive steps by which he forged ahead; interesting to record the experiences of the years spent during troublous times in a district harassed by native insurrection, but, instead of this, I must content myself with a brief outline of the leading facts and incidents.

Mr Duthie, like so many of New Zealand's most valuable citizens, hails from the 'land o' cakes,' and was born at Kintore, in Aberdeenshire, where he grew up to manhood in the habits of intelligent thrift, and obtained the rudiments of a business training which was destined to be exercised in a wider field than his boyish ambition could have anticipated. Serving his apprenticeship with a leading hardware firm of Aberdeen, he obtained in the employment of some of the principal warehouses in England a completer and more varied knowledge of the trade than was possible in his native place, and then, full of vigour and determination, he turned his face New Zealandwards, resolved to be, in a new country, the architect of his own fortune.

Auckland was the destination selected by the enterprising young emigrant, and, arrived there, he soon found employment, Messrs Cruickshank, Smart and Co., who were doing a large wholesale trade, readily engaging him to take charge of that department. In Auckland Mr Duthie gave hostages to fortune by taking upon himself the responsibilities of married life, and some little time subsequently he determined to take a bold stride forward by going into business for himself.

Purchasing a business in Taranaki, in which he was associated with Major Brown, his first experiences were of a somewhat anxious character, for native troubles had so unsettled the community, that a widespread business depression was the result; but the ultimate outcome was of a character which proved the indomitable pluck, perseverance, and resourcefulness of the young storekeeper, who, instead of losing heart, or waiting supinely for better days, shewed his national grit by starting another establishment in Wanganui, communication between which and New Plymouth was a matter attended with no little difficulty, and considerable risk in those days. Difficulties, however, only supply a pleasing stimulus to resolute minds, and Mr Duthie, having determined, proceeded to act, undeterred alike by difficulties of transit, and by those arising from native disaffection.

His business in Wanganui was established on a sound basis, but, ere long, personal supervision of both establishments—carried on by means of constant journeyings to and fro over a hundred and forty miles of unsettled country—became an impossibility, owing to the outbreak of old Titokowaru's rebellion. On the restoration of peace Mr Duthie disposed of his Taranaki concern, and settling with his family in Wanganui, developed there a large and profitable business, at the same time identifying himself with the various local institutions, and devoting no inconsiderable portion of his time and attention to the furtherance of their interests.

The activity of his temperament made it impossible for him to hold aloof from local politics, and his capacity soon became too well recognized for his fellow townsmen to feel at all loth about utilising his services, consequently he had at all times, in addition to a constantly increasing business, a good share of public work on his hands. On the formation of the Wanganui Harbour Board, he was elected a member, and was selected as its first chairman, a position he filled with acknowledged ability. He was also a member of the Wanganui Borough Council; and was also chosen to serve on the first Wanganui Education Board elected under the National System, his financial and business knowledge being of essential service in initiatory stages.

Having in many and various ways proved himself possessed in an eminent degree of that desirable, but rather rare, and tantalizingly elusive faculty which unfailingly ensures success, and finding his energies cramped in a district where their exertion was, necessarily, to some extent limited, Mr Duthie, in 1878, resolved to extend his opera-

tions to the Empire City, and in a very short time, spite of keen competition, his success was so pronounced that the Wellington establishment became the import centre for a large district with which its enterprising founder had opened up business relations. His business is now the largest of its kind in the colony, and a few years since he converted it into a joint stock concern, the shares in which are held only by members of his family and of his business staff.

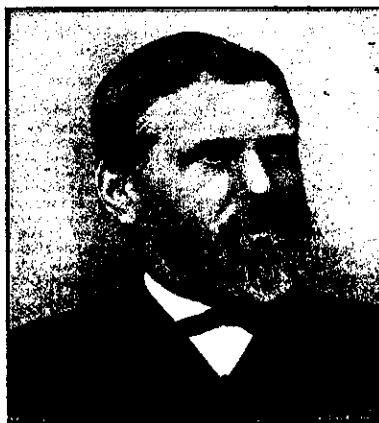
Soon after the successful inauguration of Mr Duthie's Wellington operations, his fine residence in Wanganui was accidentally destroyed by fire, and the family thereupon



Wrigglesworth & Binns, photo. Wellington. MRS DUTHIE.

moved to the Capital, where his well-deserved, but exceptional success put every educational and social advantage within their reach. Thus taking up his residence among them, Mr Duthie's interests quickly became identified with those of the citizens of Wellington, who immediately evinced their goodwill toward, and their appreciation of him by electing him to membership on the Harbour Board, and, subsequently, to the highest position in the gift of ratepayers, viz., the Mayoralty of Wellington, his term of office being made more memorable to himself and family by the fact that in the course of it, he had, on behalf of his fellow citizens, to receive the Earl and Countess of Oaslow, on the former's arrival in the colony as Governor, an occasion which he celebrated with a liberality which was widely extolled.

Mr Duthie was one of the members chosen for Wellington at the last General Election, and has ever since identified himself with the Conservative party, the Government of the day having no stronger, nor steadier opponent. Mr Duthie's commercial knowledge and proved business capacity gives him acknowledged status in the House, but as a public speaker he is not likely ever to achieve distinction, his articulation is faulty and his delivery is so rapid, especially when his feel-



MR DUTHIE, M.H.R.

ings are excited, that he is the despair of the *Hansard* reporters; while, as for the galleries, they scarcely catch two words in ten; his manner, more particularly when speaking on party questions, is so intensely provocative of antagonism that it would be mere flattery to say that it is a pleasure to listen to him. However, this much at least may be said, that, although uncompromising and even bitter in opposition, he makes it his business to avoid scurrilities, while the matter of his speeches is vastly superior to the manner of them. The resolute will, however, which has conquered so many difficulties ought, even in this matter, to stand him in good stead.

Mrs Duthie, like her husband, is of Scottish parentage, although she herself was born in the Emerald Isle, in county Westmeath. As before indicated, her marriage took place soon after Mr Duthie's arrival in Auckland, she having been a passenger in the same vessel, on board of which the acquaintance was begun which was to end in life-long union. Sharing his early fortunes and his first home in the beautiful city on the banks of the Waitemata, she has tasted at her husband's side a more than common allowance of worldly prosperity, yet still retains the quiet tastes of one unspoiled by fortune, and finds her chief happiness in home pleasures, and her greatest joy in the advancement and well-being of her children, of whom there are nine, six sons and three daughters.

ZOLA ON GAMBLING AND GAMBLERS.

It was reported some time ago that Zola was about to write a novel on Monte Carlo. In an interview upon the subject with a *Figaro* reporter, he said: 'The rumour is without foundation; but will give you my impression of games and gamblers. I went two or three times to the gambling rooms of Monte Carlo. I am acquainted with no games of chance or of skill. In my house I keep a billiard table for my guests, but I play very badly. I am too nervous; my hands tremble. I have also been a hunter; a poor hunter. When I fire a shot I hit about two meters from the mark. I have seen a great many people in the gaming rooms. I have seen the roulette tables and the trente-et-quarante, but I couldn't understand the things. The play seemed tiresome to me; I saw nothing in it. Certainly I could remark the *restagouere* and the gambler who manages to make a living by playing cautiously; but the whole affair seemed dull and unattractive. I bought a little book giving the rules of the game and returned again to the place. Those peculiar people had very little interest for me.

'As a moralist I am against gambling. It is a solitary passion. The gambler thinks only of himself. From a psychological point of view he has nothing to do, except to fall into the old ruts which lead to suicide after playing away the marriage portion of his daughter or ruining his family. But the whole thing is stupid, flat, dull. 'There was one thing in it, however, that astonished me. The windows of my apartment opened almost over the Casino, and from morning till night I heard an incessant and continual noise—the sound of the money they were counting. At Monte Carlo money has no value. They would pay there 100 francs for a chop without a murmur. 'The writer who would try to describe Monte Carlo could only make a monograph of each player and study each type.'

MONOLOGUE—O DEATH!

BY REV. CHARLES R. CURREY.

AUGUST Reaper of Creation,
Thy mighty scythe, remorseless sweeps
To dread Oblivion's awful bourne,
All mundane forms of sentient life
Which spring from dust, to dust return,
Darkness gathers at Thy presence;
Destruction marks Thy swift career;
All before Thee grimly vanish—
O Death!

From primal dawn of new-born Light,
Throughout fair Nature's vast expanse,
Corruption throws its ghastly pall
O'er buoyant youth and trembling age.
Earth's vain grandeur, wealth, and power,
Delusive glory, pomp, and pride,
Sink into abject nothingness,
Dissolving at Thy fatal breath,
O Death!

Thy ruthless empire knows no bounds,
No rival heeds, but quenchless Life
Renewed with strength, from age to age
Thy desolations to efface,
And clothe again with richest forms
Of beauty, majesty and grace,
Thy dismal realm—to proudly wrest
From Thy stern brow Thy victory,
O Death!

Mysterious Law, which mortals daze,
And baffled Reason ne'er can solve;
Dread Death from Life, rich life from death,
Whilst Time its cycles endless roll,
Hope ever gilds the Future's page,
With radiant beams of fateless joy;
The Grave with holy light illumed,
Where then Thy final triumph? Where?
O Death!

Ah! who the problem shall unfold,
And soothe for Aye the human heart;
Which throbs and groans in anguish wild,
And shrinks from Thy unsparring hand,
Earth has no answer—no response
Breaks the weird silence of the Tomb.
Thy wondrous secrets only shall be known
When Man within Thy portals stand,
O Death!

Auckland, New Zealand, February 15th, 1893.

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