

Passing of a Pioneer.

Death of Sir John Logan Campbell—The Father of Auckland and the City's Greatest Benefactor.

It was a beautiful day when we set out. In fact, it was always beautiful weather whenever we started on a journey in those far-off days, because we always waited for a fine day—time was of little account." Thus wrote Sir John Logan Campbell about the setting-out of a little party from Waiau (Coromandel) to visit for the first time the Waitemata, of which they had heard such glorious accounts. And now the Father of Auckland has set out on his last long journey alone, in the chill of the year, with his beloved Waitemata lying grey beneath the winter sun, and Maungakiekie standing out against a sombre western sky.

The Grand Old Man, full of years and honour, passed peacefully away in his sleep on Saturday morning just before the dawn, when the waters of the Waitemata, upon which he has looked out so often from his home on the cliff, were just at the last of the ebb. The tide and his daughterless spirit went out together, but not until the Waitemata forgets to return twice every day to the scenes he loved so well will his name pass into oblivion.

Sir John's connection with Auckland is unique. Perhaps few of us realise the remarkable position he occupied. Over seventy years ago, a young Scotch doctor who had left the Old Country to try his fortune in the new land, he climbed to the top of Mount Hobson with a companion—a man bearing the not uncommon name of Brown. While they were admiring the matchless view they saw a schooner come into the harbour and drop anchor off Orakei. They afterwards learned that on board were the officials from the capital at Kororareka sent down to purchase from the natives a strip of land right across the isthmus for the purpose of building the new capital, it having been decided to remove the centre of affairs from the Bay of Islands. In fact, as Sir John tells very amusingly in his charming book "Poenamo," he handled some of the very sovereigns that formed part of the payment for the land. It seems almost incredible that a man should have witnessed such an incident and lived to see Auckland attain its present size and importance. What was once a waste of fern, with a few scattered Maori whares, has grown into a city of a hundred thousand people, with houses stretching right across the isthmus from water to water. Up till a few days ago the old gentleman, a pathetic figure, almost blind, feeble and tottering, necessitating a strong arm to lean on, but still with his beaming features and snow-white locks, making a picturesque and noble figure, used to be driven down to the dingy little office in Shortland-street, still bearing the well remembered name, "Brown and Campbell," though it had not been a firm for many years. Nothing prevented him making his daily pilgrimage to the spot, dingy but cluttered with many memories, where, in 1840, the firm set up business in a tent.

Sir John had never been really ill in his life before he had to take his bed a few days ago. He had a wonderful constitution, and in spite of the strenuous life he led in the old pioneering days, he was an absolute stranger to the hundred and one infirmities which are usually accepted as the inevitable companions of advancing years. The gallant old man just faded away in the end, and it was never written, with more truth, "His end was peace."

The past history of such a man is full of interest. Sir John L. Campbell, M.D., M.R.C.S., born in November, 1817, was the only son of the late John Campbell, Esq., M.D., of Edinburgh, and grandson of the late Sir James Campbell, Bart., of Abernethy and Kilbride, Perthshire. Sir John came of an ancient and honourable Scottish line. He was educated in Edinburgh, and took the degree of M.D. at its University, then the first medical school of the Kingdom. Having been bitten with the mania which prevailed in the Old Country in 1834-39 for emigrating to Australia, where everyone was to make a fortune in a few years by wool-growing, he threw up a commission in the East India Company's service and

sailed from Greenock, July, 1839, in the ship Palmyra, Captain Brown, bound for Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney, with emigrants and cargo. He was the medical officer in charge of the ship. The first part of the voyage was rather an exciting one, for a collision occurred six days out, and the foremast and mainmast were carried away, and the ship had to put back to Greenock for repairs. In due course the Palmyra arrived at Sydney. After a visit to the Bathurst Plains (where he had an opportunity of studying the convict element of the colony), he gave up the idea of sheep and cattle-raising and farming in Australia, and determined to try his fortunes in the new colony of New Zealand.

First Business Venture.

Sir John and his partner were so depressed with the idea on the slopes of the Waitemata the future capital would be fixed that they purchased from the natives the little island of Motu-Korea (Brown's Island) and came up in their canoe in August and lived there.

In December, 1840, Sir John left the island and pitched his tent in Commercial Bay, Auckland. The tide then washed the beach where the Post Office in Shortland-street now stands. The doctor threw aside his profession and started the firm of Brown and Campbell. The firm purchased at the first town sale (April, 1841) the allotment on which it has ever since conducted its business. In 1848, after a nine years' absence from the Old Country, he left the colony on a visit home, going through Torres Straits to India, thence via the Red Sea to Suez, and making the ascent of the Nile to the second Cataract in Nubia. Thereafter he toured Greece, the Bosphorus, and went through Europe, travelling continuously for 15 months before reaching home. He returned to Auckland at the end of 1850, and in 1851 paid a short business visit to San Francisco.

Political and Public Career.

In 1856 Sir John entered the field of politics. He contested successfully the Superintendency of Auckland with Mr Whitaker, and at the same time was returned at the head of the poll as a member of the House of Representatives for Auckland. In 1855, also, he started the rifle-shooting and volunteer movement in Auckland, thus inaugurating at the Antipodes the citizen-soldier movement long before it was begun in England. He was a Minister without portfolio in the Stafford-Richmond-Sewell-Whitaker Cabinet on the introduction of responsible Government. He resigned the Superintendency and seat in the Cabinet towards the end of 1856, and again went to the Mother Country. In 1859 he once more entered the House as member for Parnell (elected unopposed). It was on this occasion that he took an active part with Mr Thos. Russell and Mr James Williamson in starting the Bank of New Zealand.

In 1861 he again returned to Europe, with the intention of taking a long holiday, which was prolonged to nine years, spent chiefly on the Continent, and notably in Italy. In 1871 he returned to Auckland, and has resided ever since.

Among the public positions held by Sir John Campbell in past years was the chairmanship of the Auckland Board of Education, president of the Chamber of Commerce, president of the Northern Club, president of the Scenery Conservation Society, and Mayor of Auckland during the year when the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York visited this city. He was also a prominent member of the Auckland Institute, Acclimatisation Society, and other institutions. He has at various times been chairman of many local bodies, and has conducted a successful business ever since Auckland's inception. He was a vice-president of the Auckland Savings Bank, and chairman of directors of the Campbell-Ehrenfried Brewery Company.

Early Volunteer Movement.

Sir John Campbell resigned the Superintendency of Auckland on November 17, 1856, in order to pay a visit to Europe,

but he made that year memorable by the act of his long life upon which he most prided himself, and for good reason, for by his formation of the Rifle Corps of 1856 he anticipated by some three years the great volunteer movement of the United Kingdom. The local clubs had shot for prizes of honour presented by Sir John Campbell in 1856, which are still shot for to-day, the winner receiving an artistic silver medal, which he retains.

His Marriage.

The doctor claimed his bride at the hands of Judge Wilson of Maradabad (later a prominent personage in Christchurch, and known to New Zealanders as Sir Cracroft Wilson, C.B., K.C.S.T.), the marriage taking place at Meerut. Lady Campbell had been one of the refugees who escaped to the hills at Nainee Tal, where all were shut up for many months until the mutiny was partially quelled.

Mayor in the Royal Year.

When the Prince and Princess of Wales decided to visit Auckland, and the vacancy of the Mayoralty exercised the citizens as to who would be the fitting person to receive their Royal Highnesses and to present the address of welcome, it was held to be natural and right that Auckland's oldest and most prominent citizen should don the Mayoral robes in the Royal year, and the citizens hailed his installation as Mayor on May 8, 1901, with emphatic approval. Sir John accepted office on the condition that he would be allowed to retire three months after holding office and the appointment of a capable deputy, who was Mr Alfred Kidd. Dr. Campbell, for his part, was as proud as any free man who boasted in old times *Civis Romanus sum*. And so not only did he head the citizens as their Chief Magistrate in welcoming the heir to the throne at the gates of the city, but he marked the occasion by a magnificent gift to the people of New Zealand. The doctor was knighted on June 26, 1902, and no honour that has been bestowed by the King has ever given more general satisfaction in New Zealand.

His Residences in Auckland.

The first residence of Sir John Campbell in Auckland was a tent, the next a raupo whare, erected just above the water's edge in Shortland Street, next "Acacia Cottage," followed by "Logan Bank," and finally "Kilbride." "Logan Bank" is still standing in Jernyn Street, and is at present used as a boarding house.

Sir John selected the new site of the future home at One-tree Hill, and the present Cornwall Park drive was planted in anticipation. Thus it is that the avenue then planted has become Cornwall Park Drive, and which will remain so until the future Grand Avenue replaces it. Subsequently he decided to reside nearer the city, and "Kilbride" was erected on a beautiful site in Parnell.

The promontory now known as Campbell's Point was originally covered with tea-tree and low, tough scrub, and exposed to all the winds that blew. When its owner began building on it it was a bleak place, and not at all inviting to a good many of Sir John's friends, who candidly expressed their views on the subject. But he knew very well what could be made of the place, and almost fore-saw what a beautiful home it would become in time. He could see from the point the little bay where he first landed, in 1840, and he had an uninterrupted view of his first love, Motu-Korea, where he began settlement; looking to the westward he could see the city of Auckland, still growing and extending in every direction, even over the shallow foreshore of the harbour; and he was perfectly content with the prospect.

With his own axe he cut down the scrub and hewed out paths along the edge of the cliff from one side round to the other. He planted macrocarpa, Pinus insignis, and other shade trees, and here and there left native trees to themselves. Sir John was his own architect for "Kilbride." Notwithstanding the Scottish name of the house it is Italian in style, both within and without. This is not to be wondered at, when it is considered that its designer had spent nine years in Italy before he built it, and could not have entirely escaped the influence of the art of that country. Besides, the Waitemata, as seen from "Kilbride," with the symmetrical cone of Rangitoto in the background, immediately suggests the coast of Italy to anyone who has seen it.

The first house built in Auckland was Sir John's home, and it still stands on its original site in O'Connell Street, at the head of Vulcan Lane. It was erected 70 years ago by Sir John and his partner, Mr. Brown, and as the father of Auckland often afterwards related, it was looked upon in those days—1841—as quite a mansion. The timber was *o-sawn heart of kauri*, and was carried by the two builders on their backs from the beach to the site on which the building was erected. It was only a two-roomed house, but it was the very first to be built, and when Sir John moved from his raupo whare to "Acacia Cottage," the occasion was deemed to be indeed a memorable one. The house has been in continuous occupation ever since, and is to-day occupied by one of the Campbell-Ehrenfried employees. The timber is still as sound, apparently, as the day that this historical cottage was built, and the question arises whether, in view of the associations attaching to it, the little building should not be secured and preserved as a historical relic for the city. On its present site it bears strange contrast, and marks with great emphasis the difference between the old and the new. For it is now surrounded by the finest and biggest of Auckland's buildings, and is directly overlooked by the city's tallest sky-scraper—monuments of the wonderful progress of the city in a lifetime.

A Magnificent Gift.

The culminating incident in the great interest always taken by Sir John in Auckland—which he liked to call the "Corinth of the South"—was his truly noble gift of Cornwall Park to the people. This glorious stretch of country, overlooked by Maungakiekie (One-tree Hill), is the gem of the Tamaki Isthmus, and no such heritage has ever been bestowed upon a city in any other part of the Dominion. It was on this grand mountain that Sir John hoped to build the ideal home he had planned for himself, and the pohutukava tree on the terrace near the tea kiosk marks the spot he had chosen as the site. Few people are aware how nearly was this magnificent estate lost to Sir John and so to the people. In the 'eighties Sir John sustained heavy commercial losses, and it looked quite possible that all the labours of his past years would be swept away, but he faced the situation with the determination that marked the rest of his long career, and reducing his personal expenses to an amount equal to a clerk's salary, he withstood the storm, and this priceless park was saved. It was during the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales to Auckland that Sir John handed to them the title deeds of the Park, which he bestowed on Auckland, and he named it after the city's Royal visitors. At the time the event was, perhaps, somewhat overshadowed by the presence of the Prince and Princess, but when the people realised the unexampled munificence of the donor, they were astounded at the grandeur of the benefaction. There is probably not another park like it in the world, the gift of one man to his fellow citizens.

On May 24th, six years ago, there was unveiled at the Epsom entrance to the park a bronze statue of the donor, erected by public subscription as the result of a suggestion from the Hon. E. Mitchell made at the opening of the drive to the park in 1903. Sir John was on the occasion of the unveiling the recipient of an ovation which was most touching in its warmth and spontaneity.

A Fitting Resting-place.

At the request of many leading citizens, who recognised that the only fitting resting-place for the remains of Auckland's benefactor was Maungakiekie, the crowning glory of his noble gift to the people of New Zealand, arrangements were made for his interment there, the necessary permission having been obtained from the Government and the local authorities.

The funeral took place yesterday (Tuesday), and the cortege was the longest and most representative ever seen in Auckland. The mournful procession started from "Kilbride," the deceased gentleman's late residence, and followed a route, crowded with people of reverent demeanour, through Parnell, Newmarket, and Epsom to One Tree Hill, where the burial took place. The whole solemn scene was an impressive tribute to the memory of a citizen who had lived through the vicissitudes of early colonisation, who never shirked serious responsibilities, and gave unflinchingly to the general welfare of the city.