

Town Topics - continued from page 6 .....

This Society was making preparations for a Hallowe'en Festival. It was suggested they should run a competition for Canadians songs or poems to be used on that occasion. The Society inserted advertisements in Ontario newspapers offering prizes of \$100.00, \$50.00, and \$25.00 for the three best entries.

Knowing Mr. Muir's ability to write poetry, Mr. Leslie said, "There you are Alex, you are a poet, this is your chance for glory". Mr. Muir was interested and although the closing date for entries was almost due, he felt he

would like to try. But what would be a suitable theme for such a poem? This was soon forthcoming. The postmaster accompanied his friend along the street toward the school. Suddenly a tiny leaf from a Maple tree fluttered down and attached itself to Mr. Leslie's coat sleeve. He tried to shake it off, but as it remained he took hold of the leaf noting its exquisite coloring. Turning to his friend he said, "Here's your inspiration Alex-Canada's national emblem, the Maple Leaf. Build your poem on that." Muir was greatly impressed and on arriving at school, he kept musing on the theme of the maple leaf.

It is thought that the scholars had an easy time that day and wondered at their tutor's mental abstraction, for at 4:30 p.m. Mr. Muir again entered the post office with his poem completed. The melody to accompany the verses was already teasing his imagination and he later set the words to music. A copy was sent immediately, reaching the judges just in time and he was awarded second prize of \$50.00. Other entries including first prize winner for a poem on Ontario by Sir J.D. Edgar, have long been forgotten. But Alexander Muir's song "THE MAPLE LEAF FOREVER" lives on. It immediately became popular when published. While the song did not bring him any financial returns, it gained for him a place in Canadian history.

Being a great patriot, the knowledge that his song was so favorably accepted and used widely wherever the english language is spoken by old and young alike, would be for him ample recompense.

He was principal of the ALEXANDER MUIR school on Gladstone Avenue in Toronto at the time of his death, June 26th, 1906 at the age of 76 years and is buried in the Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Toronto.

continued page 8 .....

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