

The struggle between the two great leaders which began after Papineau's return from France continued for a period of nearly ten years. Neither of the two eminent participants seemed to succeed. Then suddenly Papineau voluntarily withdrew from public life. The true reason for his abdication history has not been able to ascertain. Even the fact that the tasks in which public men engage may be assumed or relinquished at pleasure fails adequately to account for the withdrawal. Possibly the consciousness of the great and guilty part which he bore in the rebellion may have settled deeply in his soul. Being human, perhaps even a greater incentive was the recollection that he once had been a rebel. A grosser nature than his might not have cared, but his feelings were fine almost to the point of breaking. A giant error made by a man who feels oppresses with a weight which cannot be understood or appreciated by those who neither feel nor care.

Papineau's labours, however, had borne fruit. He had arrested the progress of the courtly system of irresponsible government, which had oppressed Lower Canada for more than a generation. But complete deliverance was yet afar. Other patriots were to fully free the Province from the grasp of strange governors, whose designs upon the country were neither well omened nor well meant. But if other patriots were to effect the emancipation their task was rendered immeasurably lighter because of influences which had gone before. And not the least among these influences which contributed to the freeing of Quebec from her taskmasters was the eloquence, and perhaps the exile, of Papineau.

Here, at the age of sixty-six, a time when the sun of many a life is still high above the horizon, the public greatness of Papineau ends, except that as long as a famous man still survives, he is of interest to the multitudes, and of importance to the race. For seventeen years after his retire-

ment from public life, he dwelt in a little village, which preserves in its name a memory of his greatness, and which is situated not far from the mighty metropolis of Montreal. Occasionally, and with almost oracular grandeur, he emerged from his mysterious seclusion, and spoke to the people whom he had served, and whom he still loved. Whenever he appeared in public, he lifted his eloquent voice as of yore, in a triumphant peal of encouragement for humanity. As Morley nobly says of Burke, "His hopes were undimmed to the last for mankind". Even though removed from the storms of political life, he was acclaimed as a tribune of the people; and during the years which elapsed between his retirement and the end, he was venerated as a prophet, and worshipped as an idol. He looked on with silent dignity and with almost sphinx-like inscrutability, but he spake no word, as the mighty achievement of Canadian Confederation unfolded its vast magnificence into being. It was the consummation of his unfulfilled, and perhaps even unconceived, desires; for it ended the reign of arrogant autocracy in his native Province, and sublimely and permanently enthroned the supreme sovereignty of the people. In Confederation a new and united destiny was about to open to two Provinces, warring within themselves, as well as warring against one another. Or was it the inevitable solving of the time-worn problem, and perhaps made easier of solution by being baptized with a newer and more fanciful name?

In 1871, at the advanced age of eighty-two years, Papineau passed away even from his latest abode upon earth. The representative men of the new Dominion followed his remains to the grave. In addition to representative men, who wore top hats and frock coats, many thousands of the humble and common people, who understood that a great man was no more, moved likewise in the sad procession. A man, who, not without making serious mistakes, had served