

**SIR JOHN BEVERLY ROBINSON,
BART.**

The subject of our present notice was the son of Christopher Robinson, Esq., a British Officer who served in the Revolutionary War of the United States, and afterwards resided in New Brunswick.

He was born at Berthier, Lower Canada, 26th July, 1791, and received a Grammar School education at Cornwall from the present Bishop Strachan. He entered as a law student, and whilst in that capacity served as Clerk of the House of Assembly of Upper Canada. On being admitted to the Bar, he attained the distinguished position of Attorney General for Upper Canada, at the early age of 21.

He belonged to one of the few families who, having fought under the British flag during the American War of Independence, took up their residence in Upper Canada. The loyalty, as he expressed it, of the U. E. Loyalists was of no doubtful origin. He did not depend upon any hereditary claim to superior loyalty, for when the war of 1812 broke out, he was one of a company of 100 volunteers, who followed Sir Isaac Brock in the expedition which led to the capture of Detroit.

He was raised to the Baronetcy in 1854, and created Hon. D.C.L. of Oxford in 1855.

He sat about 18 years in the Legislature, serving about an equal time in each House.

During the term of his political career he was identified with the party known as the 'Family Compact,' and of course was strenuously opposed to Responsible Government.

In 1829 he was appointed Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench, a position which he filled with great ability until last year, when he was appointed President of the Court of Error and Appeal.

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EMIGRATION.

If Canada is to become a populous and powerful nation in a few years, as we are apt to believe, in our more hopeful moods, it must be chiefly by emigration. It would be a long time, indeed, before the natural increase of our population would penetrate and remove those vast forests, which everywhere fringe the tract brought under cultivation by the heroic struggles of the backwoodsman. Many generations would succeed each other before our rich deposits of mineral wealth were developed, if the overflowings of European population did not do a share of the work. Every judicious step then for promoting emigration deserves encouragement, but unfortunately every step in this direction, is not judicious. Accustomed to rush into extremes in other matters, it is not to be wondered at if we occasionally do so in this, and as there seems some prospect of our doing so at present, it would not be amiss calmly to consider the responsibility we thereby incur.

An association, it seems, has been formed in England for the purpose of encouraging emigration to the Colonies, whereupon some of our contemporaries strongly urge the Government and people of Canada to exert their influence in securing as much as possible of the intended emigration for this country. Now, if there is nothing within the scope of this undertaking but the mere emigration of these suffering families, it is

only an arrangement for changing the locality of the distress. If these unwilling idlers—or any considerable proportion of them—were placed upon our shores to-morrow we could not give them employment, without seriously reducing the means of our present working population, or making inroads upon the substance of our capitalists. There have been for some years past—and still are—unemployed men in all our towns and cities, unable to obtain work; while the remuneration for the labor which has been employed in all, or nearly all, branches, has considerably declined, how then are the new-comers to obtain employment, our fields of industry of course are not exhausted, in fact scarcely entered upon, but capital is just as necessary to labour as natural resources are, and of this unfortunately we have but a limited supply. A country has at any time but a certain sum—which has been called its wages fund—out of which its labour can be remunerated. If the number dependent on this fund increases more rapidly than the fund itself, either the surplus number of labourers must be without employment, or the proportion received by each will be lessened. In plainer terms, wages will fall. One of these results is precisely what would take place if any considerable augmentation were made to our present working population. Is this state of things desirable? It will not seem so to any man of true patriotism or of true humanity, for let us not forget, that in speaking of our working population—that is those working for hire—we are speaking of nine-tenths of our people, and that any prosperity obtained by the sacrifice of their comforts, is not national prosperity, but only the temporary enrichment of the few, and the impoverishment of the many. But there is another consideration to be noticed in this connection, the stream of emigration flows towards this country, instead of from it, only because we can offer to the emigrant a greater share of the comforts of life than he can obtain in his native country. So soon as we fail to do this, immigration will stop; our reputation as a desirable place for settlement will fall, and it may take many years to raise it. Let us be quite sure then that in exerting our influence to promote emigration, we can honestly offer the immigrant a comfortable home.

But there are the backwoods, it is replied, is there any glut of the labour market there? None certainly; and if the present scheme would effect the settlement of these wild lands, it could scarcely be carried to excess. But here the old difficulty meets us; a life in the bush requires capital to begin with. Where is the capital to come from? Some think the Government should supply it; but the Government can only do so by diverting it from some other channel where it is equally required. Government is not a self-sustaining source of wealth, it can only make use of amounts of capital as the country can spare. There is yet another argument to be noticed. It is said that labour is scarce in the agricultural districts. On this point we have no very definite information, nor do we think those who assert it have. We know of men, who, in the autumn of the present year, offered their services to farmers for no other remuneration than their board and lodging, and could not obtain employment even on these terms. These may have been exceptional cases; but it is difficult to believe that any great scarcity of labour can exist in the agricultural districts, while there is a surplus of it in our towns and cities. Farmers, of course, experience some inconvenience for want of 'hands' at harvest time, and this they must continue to experience, unless we have a sufficient number of men ready to serve them at these times, who, from want of employment, will be a burden on the community for the remainder of the year.

The kind of immigration which Can-

ada requires at present is men of moderate capital. To these she offers a field unsurpassed by any country in the world. If farmers, there is abundance of cleared land to be had on easy terms, and a ready market for their products; if manufacturers, they have an excellent opportunity of turning a moderate income into an independent fortune. In this branch of industry we are yet mainly dependent for our supply on foreign production. We want more manufacturers in textile fabrics, iron work, pottery, glassware, leather, &c. We have abundance of raw material for all these, and an extensive market as well, and only require the capital in order to commence their manufacture on a large scale. Let us secure that, and laborers will follow it in abundance, without any spasmodic efforts on our part to increase them.

AMERICAN WAR.

The road to Richmond is a hard one to travel for the Northern army. Checks, defeats, retreats, meet them at every turn, and when they do appear to those at a distance from the scene of operations to have gained an advantage, it is soon found to be more imaginary than real. The soldiers are brave and enduring, but they have no one to lead them—no one in whom they can place confidence. They are often led to slaughter, but never to victory. It is impossible that the spirits of men, however courageous, can always be proof against such misfortunes. Sink they must, and the numerous desertions from the army may be regarded not as an unwillingness to fight, but as an aversion to be set out as targets for the enemy's bullets.

The fight at Fredericksburg is quite in keeping with the other doings of the Federal generals. They determine to capture the city. Bridges are thrown across the Rappahannock, and because they meet with little opposition, they suppose that the enemy, afraid to meet them, has retired. Experience might have taught them before this time, that if the passage of the river was not opposed, it was because nothing could be gained by it. Well, after having opened a terrific fire upon the city, levelling many of its houses with the ground, they take possession of it, but soon find that they have gained nothing, and now seem to think themselves fortunate in being permitted to return unmolested.

A correspondent of the 'Tribune,' gives a graphic description of the wreck and ruin which they brought upon the city.

I have just returned, he says, from this once quiet and attractive city, now a deserted, ruined, demolished town, a heap of smouldering ruins and falling dwellings, which have for weeks been tenantless. Who would recognize it to-night? The heavens are red with the flames of the old mansions; the atmosphere is full of the smoke from the smouldering embers. The desolating blasts of war prayed and sought for, have at last been visited upon her. What she chose, rather than surrender, has been her portion.

But upon entering Fredericksburg and groping through streets choked with burning timber and the mangled bodies of those who stayed until it was too late to flee into the mountains, allow me to return to this side of the Rappahannock, and review the events of the past few days.

The evening of the day upon which the struggle was to commence approached. The cold, from which the troops had been suffering for the past few days, had made the roads hard and firm, so that transportation of all kinds could be easily moved.

It was originally designed to throw across the river five bridges, but late in the afternoon the order was changed to three. The points selected were the old pontoon crossing of the Gen. McDowell, a few rods above the Lacey House, the old ferry below the Railroad Bridge, and a spot about one mile and a half south of the railroad. The distance from the first to the third bridge, or rather from the right to the left, is two miles.

Capt. Brainard, who held command of the bridge on the right, succeeded in completing it to within twenty feet of the opposite shore, when, just as he was having the last boats moved to their places, a murderous volley

from 200 to 300 sharpshooters, concealed in the houses, was poured upon his men. Twenty of his best men were wounded at the first fire—himself, severely, among the number.

The volley from the sharpshooters was fired at precisely half-past five, upon a signal from two guns placed upon the hills below Fredericksburg. The instant the rebels opened this battery and the sharpshooters fired upon the engineers, a tremendous fire from twenty batteries, comprising one hundred and twenty pieces, placed in commanding positions, from Falmouth on the right to half a mile below the city on the left, was poured direct upon Fredericksburg! This order to shell the city never would have been given had not the rebels themselves used the brick and stone dwelling houses on the banks of the river for fortresses for their sharpshooters. The moment this stream of shell from all the batteries in the field fell upon the city, the rebels, by hundreds and thousands, could be seen flying from the dwellings in every direction.

Upon the first slight cessation of the bombardment, and as the smoke and fog lifted, women and children were heard screaming and begging to be brought to this side of the river, and one poor woman was seen wringing her hands and crying, 'Oh, my God! oh, my God! Save my child, it is burning to death.' A shell had exploded in the house and the building was in flames. In a short time other dwellings were on fire, and the scene then became one no pen can describe, no artist picture.

The Rebels, behind their intrenchments on the hills, remained as quiet as the grave. Not a shot had they fired since the signal guns at daylight. Reports ran through the camps that they had fallen back to the second range of hills, and would not offer battle until we had moved upon their own ground.

Gen. Sumner's Division was drawn up in battle line awaiting the order to cross the river. Gen. Howard had been given the place of honor, and was to have the advance. Gen. Dana's old brigade, now commanded by Col. Hall, was to be the first to cross the river. Determined that the bridge should be laid and Gen. Howard's Division over the river before sunset, these brave soldiers sprang into the boats, and under the sharpshooters, with our own shell falling by hundreds all around them, effected a landing on the opposite side, drove the riflemen from their hiding-places, killed and wounded fifteen, and took fifty prisoners. The moment the boats touched shore a shot went up from the cannoniers at our guns, from the soldiers drawn out in line of battle from line and staff officers gathered by hundreds to witness the crossing, and from all spectators of whatever rank or class, that almost drowned the roar of artillery. At this moment Gen. Sumner and his staff came riding up, and seeing what had been accomplished, ordered a band near him to strike up Dixie. The leader said he could not play Dixie, but would give him Yankee Doodle, and the band were about placing their instruments to their mouths, when a round shot from the enemy's battery, which had remained silent all day, fell plump in their midst, and with it fell all the brave band upon their bellies, as if each had been struck on the head with the shot. Discovering however in a moment that they were not hit, they sprang to their feet, dropped their instruments, and ran.

General Burnside, having got his army across the river, drew it up in order of battle in the streets of Fredericksburg, and marched it against the enemies works. All attempts to carry them proved unavailing; and at length convinced that the task was beyond his strength, determined to recross. They are now said to be out of danger, having the Rappahannock between them and the enemy. The withdrawal of the troops is thus described:

The movement commenced at dark on Monday night. All the sick and wounded were removed during the day to hospital tents this side. Burnside inspected the position of the troops at p. m. The withdrawal of our forces had been determined on at a council of all the corps commanders during the day. The undertaking was regarded as perilous, but if successful would rescue the army from another battle which would accomplish little except the destruction of valuable lives. The troops had received no intimation of the intention to retreat, and had laid down on their arms for the night, when the order was given to fall in. The troops supposed it was for a night assault on the enemy's works, and were not undeceived until they found themselves on the pontoons, crossing the stream. The bridges were covered with earth to deaden the sound of artillery.