



TORONTO, October 23, 1891.



AM am glad to see a good portrait of Mr. George Martin embellishing the *Magazine of Poetry* (C. W. Moulton, Buffalo, N.Y.,) for October. It is accompanied by a biographical notice written by Mr. Martin's old friend and fellow-poet, John Reade, who is also a fellow-Irishman. Among the selections given as specimens of Mr. Martin's muse is, perhaps, the finest thing he ever wrote, the stanzas to Keats:

"Full late in life I found thee, glorious Keats!
Some chance-blown verse had visited my ear
And careless eye, once in some sliding year
Like some rare plumaged bird one rarely meets.

And when it came that o'er thy page I bent
A sudden gladness smote upon my blood—
Wonder and joy, an aromatic flood
Distilled from an enchanted firmament.

And on this flood I floated, hours and hours,
Unconscious of the world's perplexing din,
Its blackened crust of misery and sin,
Rocked in a shallop of elysian flowers.

O had I missed this Hippocrene, and slept
Without full measure of the choicest draught
That ever mortal man divinely quaffed,
What depths of bliss the gods from me had kept."

As Mr. Reade says, and whoever has read "Marguerite, or the Isle of Demons," will heartily endorse his words, "Of one thing there can be no doubt—that Mr. Martin is a true poet and a true man." We will add, and a true Canadian also, for though not born in Canada, all but a few years of his childhood have been lived here, and all his endeavour has been for Canada's welfare.

Another Irish-Canadian, not yet known to fame, but who must be eventually, was spoken of to me casually the other day; the gentleman is Mr. Royal, of Weston, Ont., whose comedy, *Irish Honour*, was presented at the Grand Opera House the early part of this week. I did not hear of it in time to see the play, and newspaper opinions dealt not so much with the play itself as with the company that performed it; and here, like doctors on a serious case, they differed. It is, nevertheless, a matter of congratulation to the public and Mr. Royal that anything good enough to be put upon Canadian boards has come out of Canada. It shews that we are, as a people, beginning to believe in ourselves.

Our able Chief Librarian of the Public Library tells me, in a note, "I received yesterday the original warrant conferring the office of Chaplain to the Legislative Council on the Rev. John Strachan, signed by Isaac Brock, July 28, 1812, and hope to shew in our new proposed museum a number of other documents equally interesting."

The removal of all the treasures, archaeological, geological, mineralogical, ethnological, social and domestic, that have been collected by the York Pioneer Society, and the Canadian Institute, a highly valuable and expensive collection indeed, to a museum under the care of the public library board is being talked of.

There are, however, many persons who think that such a museum should be regarded as an institution in itself, be laid down on lines of expansibility such as would permit and encourage the fullest development in all its sections, and have a building, equipment, and superintendence of its own.

The buildings of the old Upper Canada College find favour in many eyes for this purpose, the site being most convenient and the apartments readily adapted to such an end, while sufficient of the grounds could be retained to form very attractive surroundings, after large slices had been taken off from all sides save the south for building purposes.

Among the treasures of the York Pioneers are an ancient piano, a legacy from the widow of one of their oldest members, and a flour-mill, the gift of Mr. Sherriff McKellar, of Hamilton. This mill is a section of a trunk of a tree, and the hopper is a cavity burned into it by means of a red-hot

cannon-ball, or some similar method, the meal being made by pounding the wheat or corn with a pestle made of a stick of iron-wood. It will thus be seen that the museum would be of a very heterogeneous nature, while of exceeding value to the student and writer.

But to make the museum as useful as it might be it must be made popular, and to this end must be easy of access and readily got at, which it could hardly be in the top storey of our public library building.

In a kind editorial paragraph of the issue for the 15th inst. the editor of *The Canadian Militia Gazette* alludes to my strictures on the report in his paper to the effect that Col. Anderson had "complimented" his men on dismissing them at the close of the Hull riots, on their good behaviour. The editor says, "If instead of the compliment reported, the Colonel rather expressed his appreciation of the spirit in which orders had been obeyed, how would that sound?"

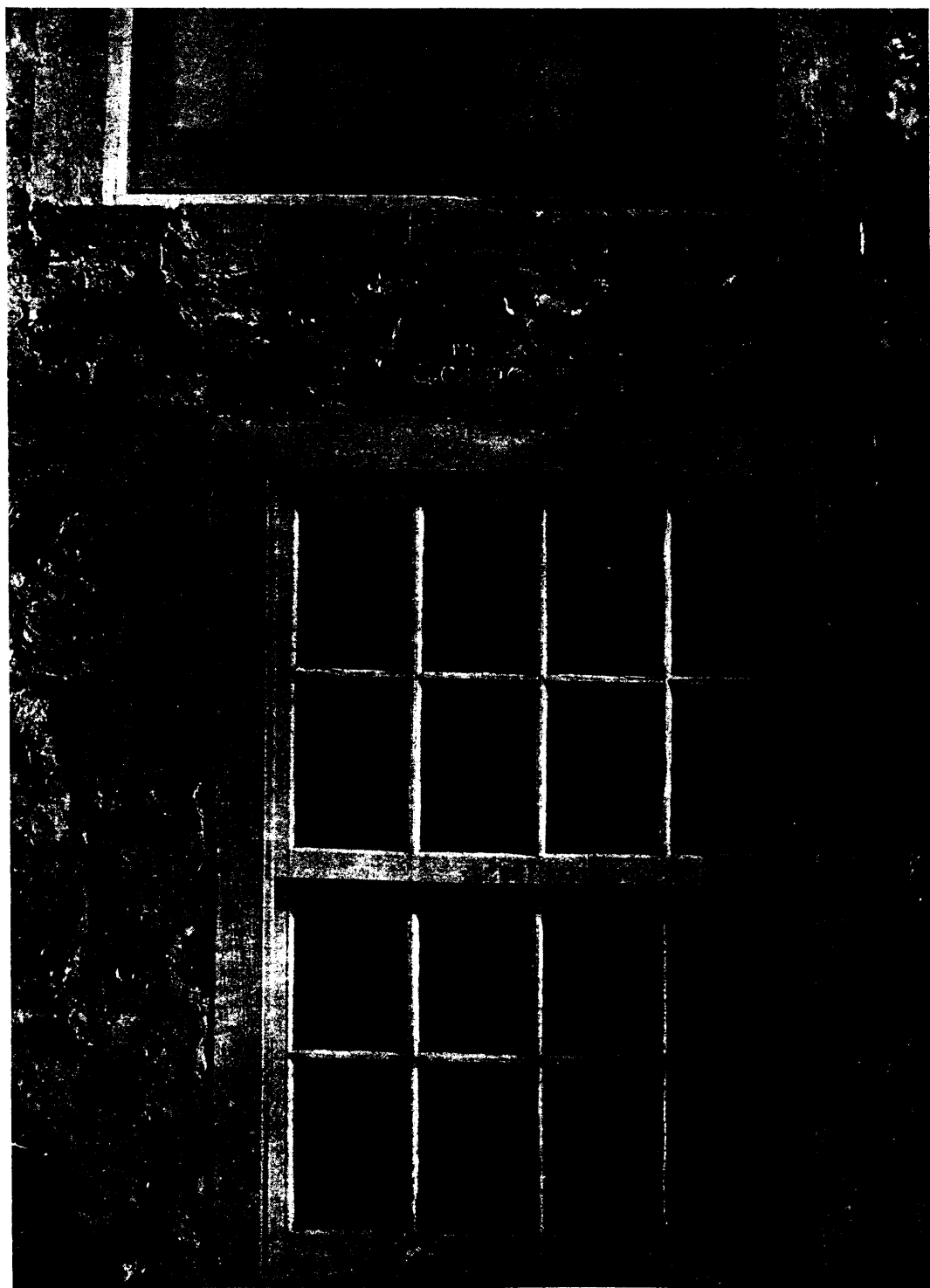
That would have sounded very well, because it would have meant something better than a compliment, a word to which we have come to attach an idea of insincerity, a kind of sop to self-complaisance.

As the editor sympathetically and most kindly says, I am the mother of one who "was a model militia-man," and I know how severe are the duties, how slight the recompense, and how few the rewards of the militia. Moreover, I know

that they can be called out on no uglier duty than riots. Themselves of the people, it is more than likely that some of them will be with the people in the sentiment, or some phase of it, that leads to the rioting and that they should be governed by purely military considerations at such a time would be indeed to their credit. There are also peculiar dangers to be encountered, or at least risked, by the military during riots; the sight of organized legal strength excites a red-hot mob even while it daunts it, and if conflict ensues, the worst passions of an inflamed crowd are sure to be wreaked on the soldiery, whether regular or civilian; so that, as the editor of the *Militia Gazette* clearly understands, it was from no unfriendly or captious motive that my criticism proceeded, only from a desire to see the service stand as high as possible in the public eye, whether on the field of action or in a newspaper report. If we all learn to make our words say what we mean, so that we always mean what we say, the Queen's English will be much the gainer.

The ceremony of the re-interment of the remains of the eleven men lately exhumed at Lundy's Lane was very solemn and impressive. I have just received some account of it from the president of the Lundy's Lane Historical Society, Rev. Canon Bull, but as it deserves a more particular notice than this letter can give, I will send it you in another form.

S. A. CURZON.



WINDOW IN THE OLD MILL, WITH DATE.
VIEW AT CHAMBLY P.Q.