

*tère*. Perhaps you do not know the interior of a *presbytère* of this Catholic country. Imagine, then, a stoutly-built square room, with a generous opening in the wall through which protrudes one half the huge "wood" stove that sputters and crackles cheerily on the other. An old-fashioned glass-fronted book-case or two, the contents of which are leather-bound, musty, and chiefly historical and religious, a desk, a cumbrous old sofa, a wooden armchair or two, some photographs of church dignitaries, and a few strips of rag carpet. Very little more that I remember, and yet the room seemed well furnished, when our host sat in it, with his ecclesiastical skirts about him, and talked to us in delightful broken English, which it would be sacrilege to reproduce, about the Bible history he was writing in Iroquois, and the varied experiences of life in an Indian mission. In the deep-windowed room on the other side the good *curé's* flowers were thriving well, and on the walls hung many blackening portraits of his predecessors. In a little sleeping room adjoining stood the painted pine desk at which Père Charlevoix wrote when he tarried here for a season; and near it hangs what is said to be an excellent picture in oils of the famous historian. We pass the kitchen on the way to the dining room, and glance in at the deep-mouthed fireplace, down which the winter winds must come roaring much as they did one hundred and fifty years ago, when this house was built. Through the tiny, well-guarded window panes of the passage we get broken glimpses of the tattered brown garden with its currant bushes gesticulating mournfully in the wind, and its rows of China-asters looking raggedly ashamed, and all its forsaken cabbages becoming mere stalks of their former selves, and the two plaster saint ladies sitting in the midst apparently as battered and uncomfortable as the vegetation. A gracious garden, in the time of gardens, surely, with much gentle joyance to be had in the society of its white-robed patronesses when the jonquils unsheath beside them, and the yellow rosebuds come, and the bluebird sings his lusty admiration from the nearest of the *curé's* raspberry bushes. But to dinner!

Of course we have grace in the Latin tongue, and equally of course cabbage in the soup. It is excellent soup, however, despite the cabbage, and upon hearing us say so the countenance of the lay brother who officiates as butler is inflated with emotions of pride that threaten the staying power of whatever a lay brother uses instead of a collar-button. The lay brother is about four feet in height, broad and ruddy, with twinkling blue eyes much wrinkled about the corners by the widespread and inveterate smile that seems to have crowded his features irrecoverably out of place. He takes an important part in the conversation when not engaged in changing the plates, and, after our voluntary encomium of the soup, insists upon hearing our opinion of every individual dish.

*Le poulet* comes next, dexterously carved and sent around the table so that each guest may be helped to his favourite part without the formality of enquiry. And with *le poulet* we have beans from the garden, kept in brine, and a French-Canadian vegetable of the parsnip family I think, and *le vin du pays*, which is very good indeed, made from the wild grapes of the region. And then some sort of *paté*, and then the wonderful salad of the chicory plant—or the brother from La Prairie errs—flavoured in quite an indescribable way, with tiny scraps of the crust broken into it, against which our host had rubbed some magical seasoning and said *Voilà!* Then a remarkable compound in the way of a pudding with cloudlets of white of egg floating upon it, and grapes also from that all producing garden, a trifle shrunken now, whereat the schoolmaster jocularly observes that they have suffered from *picot*.<sup>\*</sup> And a tiny glass of—Chartreuse? Not quite, but something nearly as good in the home-made *liqueur* that our reverend host himself has somehow contrived to abstract from the currants in his garden. But this is all the body of the repast and nothing at all of its soul you say. Truly my friend, but the soul was almost exclusively French, and so indifferent was my understanding of it that I would not report it in the fear of misinterpreting the sentiment of the feast. But *Monsieur le Curé* told some innocent little stories—how he had once sent a dollar to a man who advertised teaching writing without pen or ink, and received by return mail directions for the use of a lead pencil—and other similar exploits. And he sang a chant for us in Iroquois too, much to his own enjoyment and ours, leaning back in his wooden arm chair and sending his fine old voice up among the beams and rafters in excellent style. And that was all. But was it not kindly and simple and honest and hospitable, and altogether to be remembered with a sense of distinct pleasure and lively gratitude?

SARA J. DUNCAN.

### SOMETIME, I FEAR.

SOMETIME, I fear, but God alone knows when,  
 Mine eyes shall gaze on your unseeing eyes,  
 On your unheeding ears shall fall my cries,  
 Your clasp shall cease, your soul go from my ken,  
 Your great heart be a fire burned out; ah, then,  
 What shall remain for me beneath the skies  
 Of glad or good, of beautiful or wise,  
 That can relume and thrill my life again?

This shall remain, a love that cannot fail,  
 A life that joys in your great joy, yet grieves  
 In memory of sweet days that fled too soon,  
 Sadness divine! as when November pale  
 Sits broken-hearted 'mong her withered leaves,  
 And feels the wind about her warm as June.

A. ETHELWYN WETHERALD.

<sup>\*</sup> Small-pox.

### MONTREAL LETTER.

THE French-Canadians have certainly scored a decided success. Those of us whose ancestors, unportrayed and unsung, lie in nameless graves under the shadow of some old kirk or decaying parish church, safely hidden forever from any disconcerting "fierce white light," feel, I trust, a becoming humility, not to say awe and wonder, in the presence of their more fortunate brother, who can point his proud finger now here, now there—"My great-grandmother's second cousin; the intimate friend of my wife's grand uncle; my own grandfather!"

There are advantages and disadvantages in having lost one's relations through the denseness of old country fogs. For the nonce many may believe the disadvantages preponderate, and such an idea must certainly be strengthened by a visit to our collection of the portraits of celebrated Canadians, and even a cursory glance at its catalogue. Don't imagine, however, that celebrities alone figure in this exhibition; several ladies and gentlemen, I assure you, can boast no other claim to fame than the bare fact that they were fortunate enough to have their portraits painted; and others again solicit a glance from us merely on the ground that they were the wife, sister, or father "of the preceding." But among many whose names will never be found in any encyclopædia—unless such be compiled by their relatives—there are those whose history is really of world-wide interest. A tout seigneur, tout honneur, François de Laval de Montmorenci, Abbé de Montigny, first Roman Catholic Bishop of Canada, must first be considered. He was ordained Vicar Apostolic of Nouvelle France, by Pope Alexander VII. on July 5th, 1658, and arrived in Quebec June 16th, 1659. Having resigned the Bishopric of Quebec in 1688; he retired to his seminary in that town, where he died in 1708. Looking at the pale face before us, with its long nose, slightly distended nostril, cold, reddish, obstinate eyes, but half uncovered by lids perfectly free from any sign of lashes, one can understand Monsieur Garneau's opinion that this eminent prelate was "rather hardened than subdued by religious zeal; and firm in the belief that whatever he did for the supposed weal of the Church, in any contingency, he could not err."

QUITE near Monseigneur de Laval is General James Wolfe, of very haughty mien, but a right honest, brave Englishman withal. Then comes Louis Joseph Montcalm de Saint Veran. His face forms no slight contrast to that of the British soldier, while this latter looks out upon us with—one might almost say disdain. The Frenchman's whole expression is so delightfully cordial, nobody would be at all surprised to see him come forth bowing from his canvas, smiles and *bons mots* on his lips.

AN ecclesiastical group of four portraits placed, in rather too close proximity to the floor, reveals so cleverly the very essence of clericalism that were it not for certain sins against colour and anatomy, we could pronounce them worthy of Raphael. The first produces the strange impression that canvas and paint have had no power to stay the hand of time, so the old priest's cheeks have grown more and more sallow, his hair whiter and whiter as the years rolled on. Nevertheless, he was doubtless a man of no small influence, judging from the really magnificent vestment, a mass of gold and silk embroidery, pious hands worked for him over a hundred years ago, and that now lies before us under glass. Quite contrary is the effect of the painter's art upon the reverend father whose very comfortable appearance and outstretched hand suggest nightly visits from ministering angels. He of the quill, crossed hands, and meek, patient, upturned eyes—would the picture be misnamed: *A Fugitive Thought?* Lastly, a spare figure expressing, dogmatism at every muscle, turns sharply from breviary and crucifix, with fatherly ire to refute the argument of any heretic who may venture near.

THE De Lotbinières, De Montignys, De Salaberrys, De Lérays, De Longueuils, governors, seigneurs, "warriors," greet us at every turn. Particularly melancholy is the portraits of the last of the De Lotbinières, an infant of two summers, whose pallid complexion and great, beady eyes must, however, have aroused dark forebodings from the first. There is nothing perhaps in the whole exhibition more charming than the *Monsieur le Vicomte de Léry, Jeun*. Indeed I question whether this ideal head, with its oval face, exquisite mouth, delicate nose, and glowing eyes, could not be hung as a pendant to the handsomest saint in the calendar—the perfection of fleshy beauty.

I CONTEMPLATED long and earnestly the portraits of two individuals who bore every indication of being the most enviable of ancestors; and yet "Inconnus," said the catalogue. Surely any noble seigneur would have acknowledged with pride so very handsome a dame and so courtly a gentleman. Can this explain why they find themselves strangers in a strange land?

OPPOSITE the mysterious pair is Monsieur Louis Joseph Papineau, of 1837 fame. "His early indications led him to take an interest in political affairs, and he started in opposition to the government." Beginning life after this fashion, there is certainly no telling where one may arrive.

AH! Monsieur Louis Charland, "geographer and antiquarian, Inspector of Highways in Montreal," would you were with us to-day—and yet no. I fear your heart might be very sore at the contemplation of modern inspection of highways.

A VERY intelligent, highly communicative, and most obliging gentleman, whose name I don't know, but who kindly placed his services at my disposal, gave me much interesting information concerning the curious several glass cases contained. This I shall endeavour to impart to you, together with some idea of the remaining pictures of interest, next week.

Montreal.

LOUIS LLOYD.