

There is no necessity for extended comment upon a book that has been read by pretty nearly everybody in Canada. Who is there among us who has not laughed over the account of that marvellous bird that, as the nights became shorter and shorter, never slept for more than five minutes at a stretch, without waking up in a state of nervous agitation lest it might be cock-crow; that was troubled by low spirits, owing to the mysterious manner in which a fresh member of his harem used to disappear daily; and that finally, overburdened by contemplation, went melancholy mad and committed suicide? Or over that extraordinary dog-Latin after-dinner speech made by Lord Dufferin during his stay in the Icelandic capital, as veraciously recorded in Letter VI? And who among us has failed to recognize the graphic power of description displayed in the account of the Geysers? Or the wierd poetic force of "The Black Death of Bergen"? In all these various kinds of composition the author showed great natural aptitude, and his book, as a whole, is one of the most interesting chronicles of travel in our language.

In 1860 Lord Dufferin was for the first time despatched abroad as the head of an important diplomatic mission. In the summer of that year, Great Britain, France, Russia and other European powers united in sending an expedition to Syria to protect the lives and property of Europeans, and to arrest the further effusion of blood in the threatened conflicts between the Druses and the Maronites. The immediate occasion of the expedition was a shocking massacre of Syrian Christians that had recently taken place, and a recurrence of which was considered highly probable. Turkey professed inability to deal effectively with the matter, and it became necessary that the leading European powers should interfere in the cause of humanity. Lord Dufferin was appointed by Lord Palmerston as Com-

missioner on behalf of Great Britain. He went out to Syria, where he remained some months. He proved himself admirably qualified to discharge a delicate diplomatic mission, and by his tact, good-nature and popular manners, no less than by his practical wisdom and good sense, succeeded in effecting a satisfactory settlement of the matter. As a testimony of the Government's appreciation of his services he immediately after his return received the Order of a Knight Commander of the Bath (Civil Division). Another result of his mission was the publication, in 1867, of "Notes on Ancient Syria," a work which, as its title imports, smacks more of reading than of observation.

It fell to Lord Dufferin's lot, in December, 1861, to move the address in the House of Lords, in answer to Her Majesty's Speech from the Throne, referring to the death of the Prince Consort. The occasion was one upon which the speaker might be expected to do his best, and the speech made by him on that occasion drew tears from eyes which had long been unaccustomed to weep. A perusal of it makes one regret that Lord Dufferin's legitimate place was not in the other House, where his talent for oratory would have had an opportunity of growing, and where he would unquestionably have gained a high reputation as a parliamentary speaker. It is a simple matter of fact that in the dull, lifeless atmosphere of the House of Lords, Lord Dufferin's talents were almost thrown away. In the Commons he would have made a figure, with a nation for his audience.

On the 23rd of October, 1862, he married Harriët Georgina, eldest daughter of the late Archibald Rowan Hamilton, of Killyleagh Castle, county Down. This lady, whose lineaments are almost as well known to Canadians as are those of His Lordship, still survives, and is the happy mother of a numerous family. In 1863 Lord Dufferin