

THE CLOSE OF SUMMER.

SUMMER's gone, and the flowers are dead ;
Birds are vanished, and songs have fled ;
But hid in the seeds the flowers' souls lie,
And the birds still sing in the southern sky !

Life's drear Autumn may hold us fast,
Youth and pleasure and hope be past—
Weep not ! Death, that spares birds and flowers,
Cannot chill aught of these souls of ours.

JAMES BUCKHAM.

PROMINENT CANADIANS.—III.

THE REV. GEORGE M. GRANT, D.D., *Principal of Queen's University.*

IN an age too prone to rank mere material good above the higher well-being of man, it is well for Canada that she can claim in Principal Grant a representative Canadian—representative at least of her higher, purer, and more generous life. The Principal of Queen's University is emphatically what the late editor of the *Century* magazine once styled him—"a strong man," having that union of diverse qualities that constitutes strength. He comes of the fine old Celtic stock which, when its intensity and enthusiasm are blended with an infusion of Anglo-Saxon breadth, energy, and common sense, has produced not a few of the leaders of men. He is a native of the county of Pictou, Nova Scotia, somewhat remarkable for the number of eminent men it has already produced. His patriotic and passionate love for his country in all her magnificent proportions is one of his leading traits, and has much the same influence on his mind which the love of Scotland had on that of Burns, when, in his generous youth, he desired, for her dear sake, to "sing a sang at least," if he could do no more.

Principal Grant's early days were passed in a quiet country home, amid the influences of Nature, to which he is strongly susceptible. He was led by circumstances, and doubtless by that "divinity that shapes our ends," to study for the ministry, and won honourable distinction in his preliminary course at the Seminary. His studies were pursued chiefly at Glasgow University, where he came under the strong personal influence and inspiration of the high-souled and large-hearted Norman McLeod, whom in some of his characteristics he strangely resembles. While a student in Glasgow he became a labourer in the mission work carried on amid the degraded inhabitants of its closes and wynds, gaining there an insight into life and character which has been most valuable to him in fitting him for his later work among men. He did not remain long in Scotland, however, for though the beauty and culture of the land of his fathers had many attractions for him, he felt that to Canada his heart and his duty called him. He ministered for a time to the quiet country charge of Georgetown, in Prince Edward Island, from which he was soon called to the pastorate of St. Matthew's Church, Halifax, one of the oldest congregations in the Dominion. His gifts as a pulpit orator were soon recognised. The force, directness, and reality of his preaching strongly attracted to him thoughtful young men, who found in him one who could understand their own difficulties, and who never gave them a "stone" for the "bread" they craved. His charge grew and prospered, and a new church was built during his pastorate. His ministerial relations were so happy that it was a real pain when a voice that he could not resist called him to another sphere.

When his friend and parishioner, Mr. Sandford Fleming, was about to start on a surveying expedition for the proposed Canadian Pacific Railway he accompanied the party for a much-needed holiday. The novel experiences of the long canoe journey, through what was then a "great lone land" with unknown capabilities, strongly impressed his own imagination, and were communicated to thousands of readers through the hastily-written but graphic pages of *From Ocean to Ocean*. This glimpse of the extent and grandeur of the national heritage of Canadians—the fit home of a great people—made him still more emphatically a Canadian, and gave him a still stronger impulse and more earnest aim to use all the powers he possessed to aid in moulding the still plastic life of a young nation born to such privileges and responsibilities.

The popularity attained by the publication of *From Ocean to Ocean* called attention to Principal Grant as a writer, and though his time and strength have been too much taxed in other fields to leave him leisure for much literary labour, his vivid and forceful style has made him a welcome contributor to Canadian and American periodical literature, as well as to *Good Words* and the *Contemporary Review*. Several articles of his in the *Century* magazine have given American readers some idea of the extent and grandeur of the Canadian Pacific. His happy associations with the inception of this enterprise, and repeated visits during its progress, have given him an almost romantic interest in an achievement worthy of the "brave days of old." If in the judgment of some he seems to exaggerate its utility, and to lose sight of serious drawbacks and evils which have become connected with an enterprise too heavy for the present resources of the country, the explanation is to be found in the fascination which, to his patriotic heart, invests a work that connects the extremities of our vast Canadian territory and helps to unite its far-scattered people.

It need hardly be said that Principal Grant heartily rejoiced over the Confederation of the Canadian Provinces, or that he has always been a warm supporter of its integrity, and a staunch opponent of every suggestion of dismemberment. He thinks it not all a dream that this young, sturdy "Canada of ours" should indeed become the youngest Anglo-Saxon nation,

working out for herself an individual character and destiny of her own on the last of the continents where such an experiment is practicable. It is his hope that such a nation might grow up side by side with the neighbouring Republic and in the closest fraternal relations with it, free to mould its life into the form most useful and natural and therefore most enduring, but yet remaining a member of the great British commonwealth, bound to it by firm though elastic bonds of political unity, as well as by unity of tradition, thought, and literature. This hope and belief makes him a warm supporter of Imperial Federation—a scheme which he thinks full of promise, both for Great Britain herself and for her scattered colonies, as well as for the world at large, in which such a federation might be a potent influence, leading possibly to a still greater Anglo-Saxon federation. To such a consummation his wide and catholic sympathies would give a hearty God-speed. But he believes intensely that, in order to secure a noble destiny, there must be a noble and healthy political life, and that for this there must be a high and healthy tone of public opinion, a pure and lofty patriotism. And this he earnestly seeks to promote so far as in him lies.

The following stirring words recently published in the *Mail* are a good illustration of the spirit in which he seeks to arouse Canadians to their responsibilities: "Duty demands that we shall be true to our history. Duty also demands that we shall be true to our home. All of us must be Canada-first men. O, for something of the spirit that has animated the sons of Scotland for centuries, and that breathes in the fervent prayer, 'God save Ireland,' uttered by the poorest peasant and the servant girl far away from green Erin! Think what a home we have. Every province is fair to see. Its sons and daughters are proud of the dear natal soil. Why then should not all taken together inspire loyalty in souls least capable of patriotic emotion! I have sat on blocks of coal in the Pictou mines, wandered through glens of Cape Breton and around Cape North, and driven for a hundred miles under apple blossoms in the Cornwallis and Annapolis valleys. I have seen the glory of our Western mountains, and toiled through passes where the great cedars and Douglas pines of the Pacific slope hid sun and sky at noonday, and I say that, in the four thousand miles that extend between, there is everything that man can desire, and the promise of a mighty future. If we cannot make a country out of such materials it is because we are not true to ourselves; and if we are not be sure our sins will find us out."

All narrow partisanship he hates, and every kind of wire-pulling and corruption he most emphatically denounces, whether the purchase be that of a vote, a constituency, or a province. The evils inflicted on the country by the virulence of blind party spirit he has again and again exposed, with a frankness that finds no favour from the thorough-going partisans of either side. During the last election his voice and pen urged on all whom he could reach the honest discharge of the most sacred trust of citizenship, the paramount duty of maintaining political purity—of opposing, as an insult to manhood itself, every approach to bribery, direct or indirect. Nor were his eloquent appeals to conscience quite in vain. Some elections at least were in some degree the purer because, leaving the beaten track to which some preachers too often confine themselves, he followed the example of the old Hebrew prophets in denouncing the moral evils that threaten to sap the public conscience, and seeking at a public crisis, to uphold the "righteousness that exalteth a nation."

In 1877 Principal Grant was called from his pastorate at Halifax, to take the responsible office of Principal of Queen's University, Kingston. It was no sinecure that was offered him, and considerations of personal happiness and comfort would have led him to decline the call. But the University had urgent need of just such a man to preside over its interests, and he could not refuse what he felt a call of duty. The institution was passing through a financial crisis, and it was imperatively necessary that it should be at once placed on a secure basis, with a more satisfactory equipment. Principal Grant threw himself into his new work with characteristic energy, and his great talent for organisation and comprehensive plans, soon made itself felt. It is mainly due to his counsels and efforts that the University has been able to lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes, as in the last ten years she has done. His eloquence stirred up the city of Kingston to provide a beautiful and commodious building to replace her former cramped and inconvenient habitation. But the gifts that he secured for her treasury were of less account than the stimulus imparted to the college life by his overflowing vitality and enthusiasm—a stimulus felt alike by professors and students. The attendance of the latter largely increased, and the high aims and ideals of the Head of the University could not fail to have their influence on all its grades, down to the youngest freshman. He has always treated the students not as boys, but as gentlemen, seeking to lead rather than to coerce, and under his sway there has been no need of formal discipline.

The application of female students for admission to the University led him to grant their request without reluctance or hesitation, from a conviction that public educational institutions should be open to the needs of the community as a whole, and, in supplying these, know no demarcations of sex. Without taking any special part in the movement for the "Higher Education of Women,"—he believes that every individual who desires a thorough mental training should have the opportunity of procuring it. He has a firm faith in the power of the ineradicable laws of human nature to prevent any real confusion of "spheres," and believes that it is as beneficial to the race as to the individual, that each should receive the fullest training and development of which he or she is susceptible.

On the subject of University Federation Principal Grant has maintained a strongly conservative attitude. He believes firmly in the wisdom of respecting historic growth and continuity of organisation, and in the