

Toronto (then the only Catholic church in the city), I think it was in 1845. He it was that established the flourishing mission among the Indians on Manitoulin Island, which Bishop Macdonell wished, but was unable to do. He it was that acquired the property on which the Cathedral and Episcopal Palace now stand. He built the palace and the foundation walls, and I believe laid the corner-stone of the Cathedral, which stands today a glorious monument to his memory, dedicated as it is to the honour of God, under the invocation of his patron, the glorious St. Michael, prince of the heavenly hosts. He died a martyr of charity. Our Lord said, "The good shepherd lays down his life for his flock," in imitation of his Divine Master. Bishop Power laid down his life for his people; it was during the prevalence of the "ship fever" which carried off so many of the "faithful Irish," priests and people. He had a firm conviction that to expose himself to the fever was to take it; to take it was to die. He avoided contact with the fever as long as duty permitted, but when all his available priests (8) lay sick in the palace, a call came at midnight that a poor woman was dying of the fever in the emigrant sheds. The Bishop went, took the fever, died, and is apparently forgotten; but at least one heart is unwilling that his memory should sink in oblivion, and for that reason these lines are written, a feeble tribute to the memory of one who was my *father* when *other father* I had none on earth.

We append the inscription on the tablet above his tomb in St. Michael's Cathedral.

Underneath
lie the remains of
RIGHT REV. DR.
MICHAEL POWER,
born in Halifax, N. S.*
Consecrated first
BISHOP OF TORONTO
on the 8th of May, 1845.

He laid down his life
for his flock on
the 13th of October, 1847,
being the forty-second
of his age.

R. I. P.

CATHOLICS AND CANADIAN LITERATURE.

I.

THE nascent literature of Canada gives ample promise of great future development. Our writers are as numerous, perhaps, in proportion to our years, our circumstances and our opportunities, as might in reason be expected. Healthy germs exist in abundance, but whether it will require a lengthy or brief period to bring them to prolific maturity, must, we opine, entirely depend upon the subtle influences to be presently mentioned. This robust health in literary life seems altogether extraordinary, when we consider the form of Government under which we live. The early labours of a newly established people in all the arts, must necessarily be slow and imitative. In so far as her distinctive social and political institutions are concerned, Canada is a new country. She is, however, a dependency of a foreign country; for, although she enjoys a generous measure of Home Rule, she is by no means a sovereign power. History demonstrates, with monitory alliteration, that the colonial condition of a people is diametrically adverse to intellectual perfection. Exemplifications of this important fact may be plentifully found in the history of any civilized country, but, for our present purpose, we need not go beyond that of the neighbouring Republic for a cogent and ample illustration. Had the Puritans been in perfect religious and political accord with the English people, the May Flower need never have unfurled her sails to the western breeze, or sailed out to sea amid the lamentations of her living freight of expatriated exiles. The American colonists were in full possession of the Anglo-Norman temperament and genius, but they did not represent the intellect of the nation which they left. They were Anglo-Nor-

mans in the rough, without being at all amenable to many humanizing influences; such, for instance, as cultured taste, high polish and delicate refinement. They had, consequently, to lay the very foundations of their literature, as well as to form and raise, piece by piece, and section by section, every portion of its superstructure.

All that is durable in the literature of the United States may be referred to the eventful epoch subsequent to the Declaration of Independence. American men of letters, anterior to the close of the revolutionary war, were few and utterly insignificant. The genial Washington Irving, born in New York in 1783, was the first American author who commanded the enraptured attention of Europe. His reception beyond the ocean was everywhere entirely favourable. This trans-Atlantic popularity was afterwards worthily bestowed upon Bryant for his marvellous poetry, and upon Cooper for his brilliant prose fictions. The poetical works of Longfellow may now be found on every English table, where they dispute the supremacy with the Bible; and we are free to conjecture whether *Evangeline* or the *Book of Kings*, the *Song of Solomon* or the *Song of Hiawatha* receive the most frequent attention. Those gifted pioneers, Irving, Bryant and Cooper, prepared the way for a host of representative American writers, who, by force of their sterling merit and strong individuality, obtain prominence for themselves in every branch of their profession. The great American writers have already succeeded in creating a public mind. They write in a clime that resembles Syria, as described in the ancient chronicles, in the fertility of its soil and the serenity of its sky, Arabia in its delightful temperature, India in its fruits and flowers, and Italy in the excellence of its ports and harbours. More than that, they write for and about a people pre-eminently worthy of the sacred liberty they inherit from their forefathers, who, in the hour of trial, heroically manifested all the virtues that go to the constitution of immortal patriots.

With a few exceptions, entirely unworthy of extended notice, all those authors are distinctively and exclusively American. One or two there are who undoubtedly merit the bitter sneer of Lowell, when, in his delightfully frank verse, he directly tells them, "You steal Englishmen's books and think Englishmen's thoughts." But these, fortunately for their country, are exceptions. The great majority do not think after European models, nor seek for their incense or stimulus in European books, nor cringe in abject submission to the biased judgment of European criticism. On the contrary, they draw their inspiration from the pellucid fountains of American freedom, and their striking imagery from the mighty lakes, the towering mountains, the boundless plains, the tremendous cataracts, and the glorious sky and sunshine of their native land.

Had the leading American writers proved less true to themselves and their country, they would not have been received in Europe as the seers of another world. This conclusion leads us directly back to the principle enunciated at the outset. Had there been no war of independence, and no severing of this British connection, the literature of the United States would be, we feel convinced, as scanty at home and as unrecognized abroad as is to-day the struggling literature of this Dominion. After all that has been said, we can no longer consider it either very surprising or particularly mortifying that the literature of Canada, a colony of the British Crown, whether as to quantity, subject, or variety, is inferior to that of the United States, a free and mighty commonwealth.

In nations, as in individuals, self-reliance is essential to great achievement. The man who is incapable of governing himself must be the unfortunate possessor of a weak mind; and as a community is only an aggregation of individuals, it follows that the nation that is timorous in grasping the reins of her fate with a hand of iron, cannot truly be said to have a commanding national mind. Let a community ruled by a foreign government strive with a persistency which, if employed in almost any other direction, would not fail to achieve success, yet her efforts, however prolonged, can never culminate in the production of a great literary genius. Homer and Virgil, Dante and Milton were the products as well as the ornaments of in-

* The writer in the *Freemant's Journal* who states that Dr. Power "was born at sea," is evidently in error.