

## ASPIRATIONS.

The things are not without  
That I most wish to win;  
But if they come at all  
They must spring up within.

I first would wisdom prize,  
Oh to discern aright;  
Midst these bewildering glares  
Truth's one clear steadfast light.

And after wisdom—strength  
Of body and of will,  
That I may serve the good  
And triumph o'er the ill.

And then to crown all—love!  
Without it all were vain;  
When self's absorbed by love  
Ten thousand fold the gain.

Oh wisdom, love, and strength,  
'Tis as I make thee mine,  
My life shall sweetly blend  
With the one Life Divine.

Windsor, N. S., Dec. 1885.

AVONIAN.

[FOR THE CRITIC.]

## CANADA'S MILITARY STATUS.

## No. IV.

For the purpose of maintaining internal tranquillity the existing militia are fairly efficient: for a more onerous duty their services would be of the most nugatory character. How, for instance, could they hope to measure swords with the countless thousands who could be levied in the United States to carry the Stars and Stripes into Canadian territory? As already mentioned, the Dominion has certainly no other nation to fear than her Republican neighbor. The happiest relations now exist, it is true. But it was not always so and may not always continue. The Canadians have only come by their country by what might be regarded as a fluke. There is every reason to believe that if the Americans had succeeded in their efforts to capture Quebec after their seizure of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, the American eagle would to day shelter the entire continent with his colossal wings, so determined were the children of liberty to weld the two countries into one mammoth republic. Indeed we might go further and attribute the line of demarcation to the stray bullet which pierced the body of Montgomery as he gallantly struggled on the ramparts of Quebec. Nature can never condone the separation, so opposed is it to all her canons. But an invasion of Canada by the United States, which formed so popular a theme in America from the beginning of the century up to the civil strife, is now consigned to the realm of improbabilities, and has no special pleaders except the Stygian throng of Rosavites. When the feeling of hostility to Canada was uppermost in the American mind, it can easily be accounted for by the bitter hatred that prevailed against the British throne. Since the war this feeling of antipathy has been gradually subsiding. To-day it has no national significance. Only a tribe of wretched miscreants on whose banner "Dynamite" is emblazoned in bold and glaring capitals seek to gain a cheap notoriety and some ready funds by flaunting their anti-British flag where there is no danger. Every state of the Union contains a class who believe the two countries have a similar destiny. They are not, however, the devotees of any creed in which this amalgamation shall be sought by force of arms. If the marital rites could be performed by mutual consent, thousands of true Americans would herald it with glad acclaim; but they would not wish to see the nations linked together at the edge of the sword, although very little more irritation during the Southern rising would have set the heather in a blaze. In the loyal North, the bearing towards Canada during the civil carnage was, to say the least, unwarrantably imperious. The press poured out the vials of its envenomed wrath at everything Canadian or British, and hurled the harshest epithets at its northern neighbors—and especially at Great Britain for the humiliating surrender of Mason and Slidell. When John Bull had reclaimed the confederate agents, the tone of the New York dailies was as offensive to Canadian ears as the pungent pews of American journalists could make it. United States generals, too, openly threatened to attack the colony. It was now that the frontier of Canada came in for a for a searching inspection. More than one federal soldier under the Union flag haughtily pronounced it incapable of defence. Thus, with the possibility of a rupture, England hurried across the ocean officers and men to uphold the national colors, should the Americans be egged on by the virulence of their temper to the assumption of fresh responsibilities. On the American side of the Great Lakes important fortifications were erected. United States engineers on one side of the frontier, and a staff of British officers on the other, were engaged in maturing elaborate plans for the construction of stupendous defensive works the moment the lowering cloud should burst. In the then angry mood of the hostile powers, these precautions were timely; but happily events did not take such a turn as to call into play the latent energies of the "Canucks." That dangerous period over it now looks to the student of events as if the United States would not under any circumstances be very anxious to go to war with Canada while the connexion with England lasts. Neither will she be likely to, after the colony gets past the chrysalis stage, unless international complications arise which will justify a resort to arms. The time was when the American people would have rejoiced at her subjugation. But a pure love of conquest would not tempt them to add Canada to their dominions. When they raise their hands against her it will be for good and justifiable reasons.

In considering how Canada can best secure a comparative immunity from insults by the keeping up of a rigorous military system, it should be borne in mind that she has a very peculiar and at the same time a very unavoidable destiny. As previously hinted, Canada must, before many more years, loosen the silken cords that bind her to England. It will then be a matter of supreme importance whether the wayward colony remains a true friend to her parent, or throws overboard the affections engendered by her long attachment to the empire, and gives her hand and heart to her Republican neighbor. No less a thinker than Goldwin Smith assures us that the immutable laws of nature have made such a union inevitable. And if we wish to convince ourselves of the rationality of this view, we have but to unfurl a chart of the American continent, and with one glance up and down the vast area see the indivisible nature of the whole land. It is a truism that what God has joined together no man can rend asunder. The sejunction of the two countries for the last century has been but a brief proam, a prelude for the smoothing down of animosities, and a paving of the way to the re-uniting of the continent into one mighty and homogeneous people, alike in origin and institution, and destined to hold a regnant power in the councils of the world. No man saw more clearly the certainty of Canada's detachment from England, sooner or later, than the Hon. Joseph Howe—Canada's greatest orator and statesman. With a sagacity that does not belong to every political chieftain, he pointed out nearly half a century ago the absolute fallacy of the idea that Canada could remain much longer than a century a scion of the empire—notwithstanding the vociferous poch-pooing of the theory by the apostles of red-tapeism. He also had the prescience to see the possibility of the Dominion at some time being an enemy of England, when her people far outnumber the inhabitants of the British Isles—or, in other words, when she is absorbed by the restless nation whose subjects will yet people the earth from Florida to Alaska, and from ocean to ocean.

Canadian independence, as elsewhere stated, will, with hardly a doubt, be ushered in with the next century—the only doubt, indeed, being that the Dominion may have gone over, "horse, foot, and dragons," to the United States before the centuries get out of their teens. At all events the confederation is doomed to a partial dissolution before the annexation movement is complete. Under the most favorable conditions for its development, confidence, as Chatham has said, is a plant of slow growth. But the provinces of Canada might live on from cycle to cycle, and grow gray with age, and still be able to proclaim from the house-tops with a patriarchal smile that they had no confidence in each other, so devoid are they of everything that tends to unification. If we take Nova Scotia for an illustration, we find that her people are heartily tired of contending for their rights against series after series of arbitrary exactions, and of being allied to a country whose commercial correlations bear as much real analogy one to another as the quarterings on the escutcheon of a German baron. Throughout the Maritime Provinces the same feeling of estrangement exists, and intelligent popular opinion—that sheet anchor of freedom—is hourly widening the breach between them and the rest of Canada, and narrowing the gap that divides them from the United States, to which the irresistible current of events is drawing them closer and closer in the bonds of unity and peace. In truth one might as well expect to discover the lost tribes of Israel and Baddeck, as to find a Canadian constituency without a greater or less number of annexationists. Imperial federation—so far as Canada is concerned, is the veriest trumpery. Its practicability is on a par with the attempt to extract sunbeams from cucumbers. It is an indisputable thing that cohesion is life and separation death—other things being equal. But other things are not equal in Canada. Separation from the empire would mean with her a peaceful sliding into the American Union—the most eventful and promising life that could fall to her lot. The federation idea will have its day, but very few in Canada will cherish the delusion.

C. P. M.

## HERE AND THERE.

The human heart must bleed to show its finer instincts.

Had Christ not been crucified, he never would have been called divine.

As to comparing Louis Riel to Christ, you mistake, my friends: it was the thief at his side he resembled.

We have only the hard rocks where the sea rolls heavily; the roughness of a primitive race produces only the hard hearts of the warrior, slave-owner and cruel conqueror.

The beautiful vegetation of the sea is luxuriant only in the resting places of the deep; it is only when the human race has plenty of peace and security, that the choicest flowers of the mind expand and give out their most fragrant perfume.

How any man with a little deed to his own brains can believe in imprisonment for debt, is past my humble ounce of brains to conceive.

It takes away the hopefulness and the energy necessary to a flourishing trade, it means the long credit system—a curse to this, and all other communities that practice it.

Shylock's "pound of flesh" policy belongs to the past; but Nova Scotians still hold to it, though humanity averts her shamed face, and our common sense is quoted at a discount.

I have seen a young man in the bright little town of Amherst shot down in cold blood, in an attempt to escape from a constable who had a warrant for his arrest for a debt of four dollars and sixty cents, which included the constable's fees.