

remote region cost me sixty cents a pound! But enough of scenery, for that last effort has exhausted my descriptive powers.

Having endeavored to show what Canada is and what she may become, let me now examine if her people are worthy of so great a heritage. Our country was, as you are aware, one of the few colonies founded by the French, one of the bravest, withest and most polished races of Europe.

Their form of government was not calculated to promote the growth of the country in population or wealth, for its tendency was too strongly in the direction of centralization of power to suit the scattered settlements of a colony. However, in the infancy of the country that very centralization may have counteracted the evil results which are likely to ensue when men, separated from their fellows, are too few to establish local governments, and are, therefore, freed to a great extent from the restraints of law. When the rivalry of the British colonies on their borders forced the governors of New France to extend the limits of their country, and the period of their usefulness had passed away, then the power which controls the destiny of nations removed them from their positions and substituted men and institutions better adapted to the genius of the country. Unfortunately, the substitution of British for French rule did not remove every obstacle that lay in the way of Canada's advancement; for there still exists a distinct people, with peculiar language, laws and customs, whose interests do not always seem identical with those of their fellow-countrymen. Still, the fusion of the races is going on, though slowly, and we may hope that, before the lapse of another century, but one language, one interest and one people will be known within our borders, and that French will exist only as an accomplishment, and as a means of torturing unfortunate High School pupils. To this section of our people Canada owes names which have won more than a provincial fame. Honoré Fréchette, the talented lawyer-poet of Montreal, who, a few years ago, won the prize offered by the French Academy for the best poem of the year, and Mme. Albani, the well-known prima donna, have proved to the world that even the divine arts can be successfully cultivated by the "shuddering tenants" of the "few arpent of snow."

But I must now speak of Ontario, the province most interesting to us, which was settled chiefly by those two great races, first the Irish, and then the Scotch; and its position as leading province of the Dominion would seem to justify all that was said in their favor by the gentlemen who so ably championed their cause. Shall I tell how our ancestors came to the wilds of Ontario, with little else than a year's provisions, axes which they did not know how to use, and the noble manhood which enabled them to undergo any privation, any toil, if only they could win for these dear to them homes, which in their native country they could never hope to possess? Shall I describe their sufferings from poverty, disease and even famine, while they were daily meeting and overcoming difficulties which we their descendants, never can experience? Shall I tell how, prematurely old, and worn out with toil of which we reap the benefit, they went down at last to the grave, not, indeed, unwept and unhonored, but I fear without having at all times received from us those outward marks of respect which their self-denial, self-sacrifice and success so well merited. It is to these men we owe our position among the nations to-day, to these heroes—for heroes they were—who showed their courage and their manhood, not in inflicting, but in enduring pain—not in slaying men, but in felling trees. And when the invasion of their country called them away from the axe and the plow, they showed at Chateauguay, at Queenston and at Detroit, that they were able to fight and willing to die for the land of their adoption. Now, are the sons of these men unworthy of such sires? There are persons now, as there were three thousand years ago, who grumble that the race is degenerating; that we are becoming too learned; that our physical strength as well as our hair is rapidly disappearing under constant study; that we are developing head at the expense of arms and legs, that "the days of chivalry are gone," and that we can no longer expect such devoted patriotism as distinguished the ancient Greeks and Romans. It is true that we will not hold our hand in the fire till the sinews crackle merely to show our fortitude, that we will not sacrifice ourselves to appease the wrath of an imaginary spirit, that we cannot afford to throw away lives which are valuable to our country, ourselves and our—cousins; but if necessity requires it, I know that I am but voicing the sentiment of the young men of Canada when I quote:

"As fought our sires of old
So we will fight again,"

As a proof of this I need only remind you of the warlike enthusiasm aroused in our High School at the beginning of the present rebellion. The flushed cheeks, the flashing eyes, the martial bearing of the boys, must have convinced every beholder that we only wanted the opportunity to throw ourselves upon the rebels and sweep them from the country they disgrace. The readiness manifested by our volunteers in coming forward to deliver their country from the danger which now threatens her sufficiently proves that if, in the future, Canadians must engage in war, they will act their part in a manner worthy the descendants of the warriors of Clontarf, Oreey and Bannockburn. But let us rather hope that, under the influence of education diffused throughout the land, under the influence of the Gospel preached in every village, of the Bible read in every home, Canada will exert a moral power which will help to hasten that time when the motto of the nations will be: "Peace on earth, good will to men, glory to God on high."

I have reviewed the past, I have spoken of the present, it only remains to say a few words about the future. In our hands, my fellow-students, and in the hands of others like us, lie the destinies of our country. Just as we are energetic, self-denying, earnest, just as we are distinguished for the rectitude of our lives, so, in proportion, will the future of Canada be glorious. Does it not become us, then, to crush out of our nature every tendency to meanness, every baser passion, every inclination to trifle; and to strengthen our manhood, cultivate our nobler feelings, and aim at a mental and moral perfection which education and religion have placed within our reach? And not to the boys alone do I appeal, for the future of our country depends as much upon the ladies, I think even more than upon us. Your influence, which began with your infancy, is increasing and extending, and, if you use it rightly, will continue to do so while you live. It is almost universal, for from boyhood to manhood, from manhood to old age, we are always being rendered happy or miserable according as your power is exerted favorably or unfavorably upon us. In our childhood your influence as mothers with the aid of a slipper or strap, is sufficient to dissolve us in tears. In our youth your smile, as maidens, is sufficient to reward us, your frown to reprove us. In middle age your power as wives—but I shall leave that sentence unfinished till I can speak from experience. It is enough that your character is reflected in our conduct, and that according as you are modest, sensible and good, so will we be gentlemanly, generous and upright.

Since this essay was first written, Mr. President, the events which have taken place in the North-West—the march of Col. Otter, the daring attack on the enemy's rifle pits, the death of so many of our boys—conclusively prove that the sons of Canada are not degenerating either in endurance or courage. Remember that one of the first who fell in the cause of their country was a boy, a student, a native of this country—almost one of yourselves; and if no further sacrifice be now demanded of them, let the boys of Canada remember the name, honor the memory, and, when necessary, follow the heroic example set them by Allie Ferguson. And the generous enthusiasm of the ladies, their kindness in sending comforts to the troops, their offer to act as nurses, show that the hearts of Canadian girls are in the right place, and that, if all are not willing to be Florence Nightingales, they will at least join heartily in the song with which we shall conclude our programme to-night: God Save "Our Boys."

Holiday Reading

A TRUANT EPISODE.

She walked leisurely along Sixteenth street in San Francisco, one morning last May, a very stately looking old lady, with silvery curls about her face. Upon her head she wore a widow's cap, shaped like a coronet, and her full black dress fell in soft folds about her. An old gentleman, bowed and decrepit, his bald head covered with a black skull cap, watched her with deep interest as she approached, from his post on the steps of the Sixteenth street market.

Chancing to look up, she caught his eye. A singular understanding seemed to be at once established between them.

He beckoned to her mysteriously, and looking cautiously about