

## The Prize says.

- 1.—CANADA; AN ESSAY.—*To which was awarded the First Prize by the Paris Exhibition Committee of Canada.* By J. SHERIDAN HOGAN. John Lovell, Montreal.
- 2.—CANADA AND HER RESOURCES;—*An Essay, to which was awarded the Second Prize by the Paris Exhibition Committee of Canada.* By ALEXANDER MORRIS, A.M., Barrister at Law. John Lovell, Montreal.
- 3.—CANADA: PHYSICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL. By A. LILLIE, D.D. Maclear & Co., Toronto.

On the 13th November, 1854, the Executive Committee of the Paris Exhibition issued an advertisement announcing their intention of offering for public competition three prizes for the best three essays on "Canada, and its resources; its geological structure, geographical features, natural products, manufactures, commerce, social, educational, and political institutions, and general statistics." Practical utility and comprehensiveness, combined with conciseness, were to be among the chief considerations on which the awards of the judges would be based. The Essays were to be sent to the Secretary of the Executive Committee on the 15th February, 1855, thus allowing exactly ninety-two days, or three months, for the production of a work on Canada embracing a comprehensive description of the physical and social condition of the country.

No one, we suppose, who takes the trouble to consider the nature and extent of the subjects suggested by the Committee, can fail to be convinced that the time allowed was much too short. Indeed, as the period for the reception of the Essays drew to a close, the Executive Committee appear to have become convinced of the necessity of extending the time as much as lay in their power, and accordingly they added fifteen days to the three months before granted.

The opportunities thus afforded for obtaining literary distinction were, however, sufficiently enticing to bring into the field no less than nineteen competitors for the honours and emolument offered by Government. Of the essays subjected to the consideration of the judges, three were reported "prizeworthy," three received honorable mention, one was passed over as illegibly written, and twelve remain in the hands of the Assistant Secretary of the Committee, from whom they may be obtained by the authors. The judges being unable to decide upon the order in which the three essays reported prizeworthy should stand, requested his Excellency the Governor General to make the award. No more capable or disinterested judge could have been selected, or one from whose expressed opinion disappointed competitors or their friends would feel inclined to appeal; and after a careful perusal of the two competing essays which are named at the commencement of this article, we do not hesitate to avow our conviction of the justice of that award. We do not wish it to be understood, however, that any one of the essays before us presents a complete picture of Canada; it is not to be supposed that the short period of fourteen weeks would embrace time enough for any writer, however familiar with its physical history and its social condition, to describe the country, its resources and its people with minuteness and detail. The evident object of the Executive Committee of the Paris Exhibition was to obtain a readable account and description of Canada and its institutions, in order to place in the hands of the middle classes in Europe a popular exposition of what we offer here to industry and enterprise. Mr. Hogan has furnished us with such an essay, which, though certainly

not free from sins of omission and a sprinkling of errors, is capable of creating a very interesting, encouraging and truthful impression of many leading features in Canadian life, and of the encouraging future which lies within the reach of every immigrant, and is the sure destiny of the country at large. In the introductory chapter to Mr. Hogan's essay, we find especial allusion made to the class of people for whose information and guidance the essay was, with judicious care, more particularly written. After alluding to the significant facts, that the population of Western Canada in 1829 was only 100,000, and the value of the real and personal estate of the people estimated at £25,000,000, that, in 1854 the number of its inhabitants had swollen to 1,237,600, and its assessed and assessable property to £50,000,000, Mr. Hogan asks:—

"And who and what are the people who divide among them this magnificent property? And how have they acquired it? Did they come in as conquerors, and appropriate to themselves the wealth of others?—They came in but to subdue a wilderness, and have reversed the laws of conquest; for plenty, good neighbourhood, and civilization mark their footsteps. Or did capitalists accompany them, to reproduce their wealth by applying it to the enterprises and improvements of a new country? No;—for capitalists wait till their pioneer, industry, first makes his report, and it is but now that they are studying the interesting one from Canada. Or did the generosity of European Princes, or European wealth or benevolence provide them with such outfits as secured their success? On the contrary, the wrongs of Princes, and the poverty of Nations, have been the chief causes of the settlement of America. Her prosperity is the offspring of European hopelessness. Her high position in the world is the result of the sublime efforts of despair. And he who would learn who they are who divide among them the splendid property created in Canada has but to go to the quays of Liverpool, of Dublin, of Glasgow, and of Hamburg, and see emigrants there embarking, who knew neither progress nor hopes where they were born, to satisfy himself to the fullest."

The description of the geographical features of the country is very general, and in some instances unnecessarily so, for we find no reference made, even in name, to the rivers, Thames and Grand River, which unwater the richest and most fertile portion of the Western Province. The chapter devoted to the "Geological features and soil" of the country is occasionally obscure, and not without mistakes, which, with a little reflection and care, might have been avoided. "All the great lakes are placed in the line of contact between two vast chains of Granite and Limestone." How does this general statement apply to Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, the lakes *par excellence* of Canada. The Granite is met with at the eastern extremity of Lake Ontario, and the lake itself is excavated wholly out of unaltered Lower and Upper Silurian rocks. Lake Erie is excavated entirely out of Upper Silurian and Devonian rocks, and in no part is less than 200 miles from granite exposures. The observation is partially correct with regard to Lakes Huron and Superior, the least important of Canadian lakes. Again, "From Quebec to Niagara the red slate [?] is perhaps the prevailing rock," and in the very next line, "the subsoil around Lake Ontario is limestone on granite." . . . "On Lake Erie the strata are limestone, slate [?] and sandstone." These contradictions and errors acquire importance in Canada where the real facts are locally known, because they leave room for cavil and ungenerous criticism, and may affect the value of the essay and the interests it is well designed to subserve.

The chapter describing the struggles and hopes of the early settler of Upper Canada is a truthful picture; the one which follows it, portraying the farmer of Upper Canada as distinguished from the early settler, is also well drawn and very encouraging:—

"Were I asked what is the leading characteristic of the Upper Canadian farmer, I should unquestionably answer, *Plenty*. Plenty