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"Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."

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EARLY CANADIAN HISTORY.

BY J. M. LEMOINE.

To the Editor of "Canada":

DEAR SIR, From the literary scraps in my portfolio I have pleasure in tendering the following for publication. It is the English version of a dry-as-dust document which an esteemed friend—now deceased—the late Henri Duchesnay, Esq., M. P., for Beauce County, P. Q., allowed me to transcribe from the voluminous French correspondence inherited by him from his brave ancestors, the Duchesnays, seigniors of Beauport, opposite Quebec.

Among the old *noblesse* of primitive Canada, few rank higher than the warlike Juchereau Duchesnays—now represented at Quebec by the athletic and worthy Brigade-Major and Deputy-Adjutant General, Lt.-Col. Théodore Duchesnay, and the numerous and highly respected clan of the Taschereaus, of Beauce, P. Q., from which sprang our present archbishop, Cardinal Taschereau. *Quebec, Dec. 1891.* J. L. M.

[A LETTER FROM A YOUNG FRENCH LADY.]

Quebec, 1759.

REINE MARIE DUCHESNAY TO HERMINE TASCHEREAU.

My Dear Mine,—You doubtless are wondering why I did not write sooner to you. I have enjoyed my holidays very much, though not exactly like Mère St. George would approve of; the fact is the town has been uncommonly gay. Our Intendant (Bigot), the young men say, is a *galant homme*. My mother, with a sneer, says he is *un peu trop galant*, and that she would rather cut our heads off, than that we should ever darken the doors of his glittering palace,—for such, really he has made the *Intendance*. There seems no hurry for school girls attending

balls, either at the Intendance or at the *Chateau St. Louis*; though a young French Lieutenant I was introduced to, last week, told me he thought it an abominable shame that grown up ladies, like Clementine and myself, should be debarred the pleasures of *la bonne société*, even if we should be younger than our appearance indicates, for you must know that I am quite as tall as my mother, though only fourteen years of age. Much of my time, this summer, has been taken up showing round that handsome English Captain,* who saved my good father's life just as the Indians were going to scalp him. This captain, as you know, is a prisoner on *parole*, and has had every liberty to wander about Quebec and the vicinity. Not only is he handsome,—he is young and witty,—his repartees would grace a Paris *salon*,—his daring and courage manifest themselves in his very foot steps. He is full of *prevenances* for the ladies, accompanies my mother on the streets, dines occasionally with my father.

But of late my poor father,—and it grieves him much,—seems to mistrust the gay captain, whose only fault appears to be too great a curiosity to learn everything concerning the doings of our Government in Paris and in Quebec. His inquisitiveness at times certainly surprises all hands, and he is, when alone, constantly writing; some say he is gathering secret information, for his friends in Virginia; others, actually go so far as to say he is preparing a plan of Quebec and the fortifications; with what object I cannot see. Our gratitude towards the saviour of our father is, of course, as it ought to be,—boundless. I speak unreservedly. I would not wish you to think for a moment that

* Major Robert Stobo, after three unsuccessful attempts, succeeded in escaping from his prison in Quebec, in May, 1759. He was a hostage taken at Fort Duquesne in 1755, and brought to Quebec,—where he was to be tried as a spy. He was commander of a Virginia corps. He joined Wolfe's fleet at Louisbourg, returned with him to Quebec, and is credited with having shown him the spot where to land and assault the city. Evidently our charming young friend was not proof against the fascinations of the brave, but unscrupulous, Virginia captain. J. M. L.

I could cherish for Captain Stobo any other feeling than that of esteem and gratitude. For all that his *tournaire*, conversation and looks are such, that many a girl would select him as an *heros de roman*. Major Peau, as you know, is often away, and his lovely wife, forgetting the early piety instilled in her at the Ursulines Convent as far back as 1735, gets herself much talked about. Her wondrous beauty, her accomplishments, her sweetness of manner, are calculated to create envy in this little world of ours; and I think there is no foundation for these slanders. As just stated, I do not yet form part of the *grand monde*, and do not know all that is going on. One thing I am sure of, one portion of the society is all that it ought to be: I mean the ladies and the gentlemen, my father and mother associate with. We go to-morrow to sup with Mons. Jean Taché, an eminent merchant who has a pretty country seat on the south side of the Ste. Foye road—the same who was, as you remember, charged with a diplomatic mission to the court four years ago, to plead the cause of the colony with the King's ministers. Bigot and his *gay entourage* are not likely to be there. Your turretted old manor of Ste. Marie (Beauce) cannot be very gay, though your lively cousins, the LaGorgendières, are a host in themselves. Do you still adhere to your former idea of keeping a diary of what may happen to you daily; if so, please copy into it my epistle and your answer, and when I go up to Beauce next summer we shall read over our letters, and ascertain the changes which have happened since the date on which the letters were written. I long to meet you in that noble avenue of waving elms, on the sounding banks of the river Caudière. Cannot you sketch for me that dear old feudal dungeon of yours, Elms and all, and make interest with the good old curé of the parish to take it to us in Quebec as you have no post, nor postmen, yet.

A singular feeling, a craving for something, has come over me this summer.