

OUR TABLE.

HOCHELAGA; OR, ENGLAND IN THE NEW WORLD.*

THE Editor of this work—the Author of “The Crescent and the Cross,”—is favorably known to the greater portion of our readers, and to the literary world. The connection of his name with this work is therefore calculated to aid in giving it currency—supposing it to need such aid, which in some particulars, we rather incline to think it does. We have only given it a very hasty glance, and may therefore have failed in rendering it justice, but the opinion we have formed of it is not as high as some perhaps better judges among our contemporaries have done. While we admit it to be very agreeably written, and to contain a great deal that is calculated to amuse, interest and instruct, the reader, we cannot conceal the fact, that it abounds in evidences of haste and want of care, which, in such a book, should not by any means have been permitted. We are the more particular in mentioning this, as the Editor, giving full credence to the opinion of the Author, assures us that it is the work of an earnestly enquiring mind, and that it contains no “hastily written” or “crude impressions.”

But while we cannot avoid expressing our opinion that the work is not free from blemishes, we are pleased to find it generally well worthy of perusal. Our author has been highly favored with the means of becoming acquainted with “Canadian social life,” and as he appears to be no unworthy judge, we are gratified to find that he has formed a flattering opinion of us. We are the more pleased with this, as the book will be largely read in Britain, and the people of our Mother Country are still sadly in want of information upon these matters—few of them being unable to divest themselves of the idea that Canada is nothing but an interminable wilderness; an idea fed by many celebrated tourists, and fastened upon the mind by pictures of Canadian scenes, as little like the originals as the stunted firs they represent are like the lordly pines, and luxuriant elms and maples, of which our noble forests are composed. We give his opinion of our Canadian women:—

“The Ladies of Canada possess, in a great degree, that charm for which those of Ireland are so justly famed—the great trustfulness and simplicity of manner, joined with an irapproachable

purity; the custom of the country allows them much greater freedom than their English sisters. They drive, ride or walk with their partner of the night before, with no chaperon or guard but their own never-failing self-respect and innocence. They certainly are not so deeply read generally as some of our fair dames; they enter very young into life, and live constantly in society afterwards, so that they have not much time for literary pursuits; there is also difficulty in obtaining books, and the instructors necessary for any very extensive acquisitions. But they possess an indescribable charm of manner, rendering them, perhaps, quite as attractive as if their studies had been more profound.”

We give another extract, relating to the same interesting subject:—

“In this climate of extreme heat and cold, they very early arrive at their full beauty; but it is less lasting than in our moist and temperate islands; when thirty summers’ suns and winters’ frosts have fallen upon the cheek, the soft, smooth freshness of youth is no longer there.”

To this we cannot by any means so fully subscribe. We are aware that the opinion has been frequently expressed, but in the face of the evidences seen every where around us, we cannot acknowledge it to be correct. If the reader will judge between us, he has the means of doing so within the pleasant circle of his own acquaintance, among whom there are doubtless many blooming matrons who will readily acknowledge they have passed the boundary which our author vainly attempts to rear against the continuance of woman’s loveliness in Canada. On this subject, there is *prima facie* evidence that our author has been content to take his opinion at second hand. If he should favour us with a second edition—and of this there can be little doubt—we trust he will take occasion to satisfy himself of the error—and correct it.

We would willingly indulge our readers, and ourselves, by quoting more largely from the pages of the work, but the want of space compels us to rest for the present satisfied. On a future occasion we may possibly please ourselves, and, we would fain hope, our readers, by entering more largely into an examination of its contents. We trust, however, that those who feel an interest in the things recorded of us, by an observant stranger, will not wait for this, but obtain the work, and judge of its defects and beauties for themselves.

* Hochelaga; or, England in the New World. Edited by Elliot Warburton, Esq., author of “The Crescent and the Cross.” In two parts. New York: Wiley & Putman—Montreal: Armour & Ramsay.—Price 4s. 6d.