

Fort Toronto.

[The following lines are from the pen of Mrs. S. A. Curzon, author of "Laura Secord, the Heroine of 1812:"]

This is our Gilgal. Here we set our stones—
Stones of memorial of the grace of God.
Here, when our sons shall say, "What means
that pile?"

Ours the reply, "Here civil commerce dwelt;
Here the dusk remnants of an antique age,
Of the first emigrants from Old World shores,
Indians, met of their ancient blood again—
Blood strained and fused through many an
era's sieve

Till brotherhood was lost. And yet 'twas
there;

But not to bless: to trade, merely to trade.
Here when the Hand that guides the way o'
the world

Had, by hard stress driven to an unknown
shore
Champlain the wise, La Salle the brave and
bold,

And the white banner, lily-strown of France,
Flow o'er Quebec, a promise and a power;
Her sons, light-hearted as the morning gale.
Struck friendly hands with Indians of the
West,

And taught them commerce of another kind
Than their old simple rule of need and gift.
Here, when the treasures of the forests vast,
Of meadows, streams and pools met their
wide gaze,

The Frenchman built a post that here might
come

Those wily craftsmen that could circumvent
The laws of Nature, and beguile her wealth
Into their packs; and here might trade.
Trade ermine, that should deck the royal
robe,

For gew-gaws; give beaver for a bead;
Offer for cloth; the silver fox, of sheen
So wonderful that great Richelieu admired,
For a bright bit of red; and anything,
Even their loves and wives, for *eau-de-vie*.

And here they came—to Rouville, through the
vales

That skirt yon river with rich woods and
deep

From source to sea. 'How richer then than
now!'

From lake to lake they came, by many a
stream,

Brilliant with finny life, where otters played,
And beavers built their dams, and ospreys
perched.

Past lovely bays they brought their long
canoes,

Where roseate water lilies, delicate
And spotless white, queened all the emerald
plain.

Past clear, cool depths, where the ranunculus
Netted the surface with its tiny cups;
And the shy bass lurked all a summer's day,
Past pebbly beaches, where the water glowed
And the deer bent to count his forty tines;
O'er portages, all mossed with silken loops,
Fragrant with ferns and skirted with morasses
Where many a soft, sweet fruit hid luscious
gifts

To cheer the weary way 'neath tall trees
The like in stateliness we ne'er may see,
For they were darlings of the centuries.

From populous towns they came, an able
race,

Dwelling in greenwood bowers in kind estate,
With busy arts that make a people rich.
They knew to grow and store the golden corn,
To twine the hemp that made their nets and
lines,

And from the seed express the unctuous
drops.

Fair Simcoe saw their bowers; and Mackin-
naw,

And Mississague that to Huron glided.
A nation great, and rich, and flourishing—
Their bowers were homes, where winter's
bitter winds

Pierced not their children, wrapped in furs,
and full

Of rich, warm blood, fed from the net and
chase;

Their women toyed with wampum, and their
men

Lorded it royally at council fires.

And when the Iroquois swept fiercely o'er
The wealthy region, like a prairie fire,
And left but blackness and despair and
death,

He found rich spoil that filled his heart with
joy;

For he had learned to trade, and here he came
To the old gathering place; brought poultry
rich

To change for silver toys, for raiment strange,
And muskets, dear to the fierce warrior heart.
The English trader loved to see him come,
And lured him with more prize than French-
men gave,

And flattered him—the powerful Iroquois—
The Iroquois, Old England's proud ally,
Who helped her hold her own and grasp the
West;

And for his pains got root in this rich soil
And flourishes, the maple with the oak,
A people e'en to-day.

Thus came the heritage in which we boast.
These were the men, and those the daring
times

That, by potentiality of things
They saw but faintly, built our fortunes up
And poured into our coffers untold wealth—
Wealth not all sordid, wealth of virtue's
strain

That finds its best return in widening
The avenues of Nature; looks far on
And sees humanity a unit, one—
Spending itself to prove the brotherhood.

And shall not we, as loyal men and true—
Nor surfeited with glut of sordid gain
That dulls the head and palsies the strong
heart—

Enshrine forever these rich memories?
Theirs our Toronto, theirs our gathering
place—

How greatly greater than they e'er might
dream!

To this proud memory of brave old times—
Times that their lesson gave, we raise this
pile,

Stones of memorial of the grace of God."

Local Government in England.

FROM one of our exchanges we
abridge the following account of im-
portant projected legislation in Eng-
land:—

For a long time the English House
of Commons has been burdened with
a mass of work which it has been en-
tirely unable to perform. This mass
of work has grown larger from year to
year, as the needs of the people who
desire legislation have constantly been
increasing.

The time of the House has been, to
a large degree, absorbed by political
questions. Ireland has demanded and
received a very large proportion of its
sessions for several years, while many
of its hours must be occupied, from
year to year, with the bills necessary
to carry on the machinery of the
government.

But, under the constitution, Parli-
ament is accustomed also to look after
the details of many merely local affairs
—to provide necessities for cities and
boroughs—and even to legislate, on
many subjects, on behalf of private
persons.

An attempt has been made, in re-
cent years, to relieve Parliament of
a part of the burden resting upon
it, by the creation of two "Grand
Committees." To one of these com-
mittees are referred, for examination,

all measures relating to law; to the
other, all matters concerning trade
and manufactures. But this transfer
of work from the House itself to
committees, has failed to relieve the
House from a mass of subjects which
press upon it for settlement.

On the 19th of March an important
measure was introduced into the House
by Mr. Ritchie, representing the Min-
istry, which is intended to deal with
this difficulty. It is called the "Local
Government Bill," and its purpose is
to create—throughout England—local
boards, which shall deal with the local
wants of the communities in which
they are placed.

These local boards are called "Coun-
ty Councils." They are to be chosen
by those residents of the counties who
pay poor rates, and are, to a large ex-
tent, to replace the present parish or
local authorities.

They are to have control of the
police force of the county, to have the
management of gas and water works,
to regulate the sale of food and drugs,
to look after the health of the county,
to see to the dwellings of artisans, and
to make advances in aid of emigration.

Among further powers, the County
Council will have supervision over
lunatic asylums, workhouses, reform-
atories, and industrial schools; and
upon them is to be conferred the
power to grant or withhold licenses for
the sale of intoxicating liquors. Thus
a good deal of work and a good deal
of authority will be transferred to
them, both from Parliament itself and
from the present local bodies.

Certain judicial powers are also to
be wielded by the Councils, although
the present system of unpaid magis-
trates in the counties, and of paid or
"stipendiary" magistrates in the large
centres, is retained.

The new measure, moreover, divides
up the whole kingdom of England,
for local purposes, into new rural and
urban districts.

London—which is now partly in
Middlesex, Surrey, Essex, and Kent
counties—is to be made a county by
itself; and its Metropolitan Board of
Works will be transmuted into a
County Council. London has always
been divided up into a number of
separate and different forms of govern-
ment. It will, under this bill, now be
consolidated virtually into one.

The great English towns—Liver-
pool, Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester,
Sheffield, Bristol, Bradford, Notting-
ham, Hull, and Newcastle—will, in
like manner, be set apart as counties
by themselves, each having its separate
County Council, endowed with the
powers already mentioned.

It is worth while to note that this
measure is confined to England and
Wales, and is not to be applied to
either Scotland or Ireland. No doubt,
if it becomes a law, other bills will be
proposed, providing for some sort of
local government in the other two
kingdoms.

Such a measure, if passed, will in-

roduce a great, though necessary,
change in the methods of English
government; and one most striking
feature of it is, that women, who pay
rates, are to be given the right of
voting, equally with men, for the
members of the County Council.

How a Seed Became a Tree.

OVER fifteen years ago Lord Rad-
stock held a series of meetings in a
Protestant church in Paris. There he
met many Russians, and becoming
greatly interested in them, determined
to go to Russia on an evangelistic
tour. Among his congregation one
evening in St. Petersburg was the
Countess Bobrinsky. Wishing to hear
more, she invited Lord Radstock to
pass an evening at her house. When
she told her husband of the invitation
she had extended, he said he was very
sorry any such engagement had been
made, for he was not at all anxious to
meet any such man. But as he did
not feel at liberty to do violence to
the laws of hospitality and politeness,
he consented to remain in the room,
intending to excuse himself after a
short time.

When the evening came, however,
he felt the same attraction that had
won his wife, for he remained all the
evening, listening attentively to his
guest. He determined to write a
pamphlet refuting the doctrines and
theories advanced by Lord Radstock.
He applied himself with such honesty
to the study of these doctrines that
by the time his pamphlet was com-
pleted he was a converted man.

Since then Count Bobrinsky has
made many journeys, holding evangel-
istic meetings. About four months
after, he arrived in the harbour of
Honnleur. Going into the town, he
invited all who liked to attend re-
ligious services the next night on
board his yacht. The people came in
such numbers, and seemed so eager to
hear the word, that he determined to
hire a hall where services could be
held regularly. Meetings of one hun-
dred and fifty to two hundred people
were held every night for three
months. In that time over sixty
people were converted, twenty-four of
the number being sailors.

A Norwegian vessel arrived in port
one day, and as usual, the captain and
crew spent the first night on shore at
the café. There they happened to
hear of Count Bobrinsky's meetings,
and resolved to attend the following
evening. Their attendance resulted
in the conversion of the captain, mate,
and every sailor.

We speak of the snow as an image
of death. It may be this, but it hides
the everlasting life under its robes—
the life to be revealed in due time,
when all cold shadows shall melt away
before the ascending Sun, and shall be
not unclothed, but clothed upon, and
mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

—Robert Collyer.