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RICHARD WHITE, PRESIDENT
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73 St. James Street, Montreal.

GEORGE E. MACRAE, WESTERN AGENT,
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FROM HAMLET TO CITY.

In pursuance of a plan which, we trust, is destined to have far-reaching results in the fulfilment of the aims of THE DOMINION ILLUSTRATED, we devote the greater part of the present issue to the City of Sherbrooke, P.Q., and the district to which it is a centre of industry and trade. On succeeding pages our readers will find a valuable store of information, collected on the spot by our own agents and correspondents, regarding the history, progress and actual condition and prospects of the metropolis of the Eastern Townships. In its growth from the wilderness of the forest primeval to its present stage of development, that portion of the Province of Quebec has had its share of the romance of pioneer life. In natural charms it is surpassed by no region in the Dominion. Its lakes and mountains have long since attracted the tourist and furnished scope for the artist's pencil. Its wealth of soil—adapted both for agriculture and pasturage, the variety and richness of its mineral resources, the abundance of its timber, and the unexcelled advantages of its water power, renders it a grand field for the enterprise of the farmer, the business man and the capitalist. It might, indeed, be a cause of surprise to one unacquainted with the colonization system of the Old Régime that a land of such ample and varied resources should have lain so long a waste, traversed only by the wandering Indian. The tract in question was, until the close of the last century, as Bouchette points out, circumscribed by the seigniories in which the land was held by feudal tenure, save where the United States form its southern boundary. Hugh Murray, in his "British America," speaks of the Eastern Townships as "a large territory in the interior, reaching to the American frontier, and situated along the smaller rivers," and he adds that "notwithstanding occasional swamps, it forms perhaps the finest portion of Lower Canada." He then goes on to describe its "undulating surface, finely wooded and diversified by numerous streamlets, which render it particularly well adapted for pasturage." Even when Murray wrote, fifty years ago, the Townships had become noted for the finer breeds of cattle. But at the same time agriculture was not neglected. "There is also," he continues, "abundance of ground fitted for wheat; but being sown in spring, it is not equal to that of Upper Canada. Oats and Indian corn are good, and the potatoes are at once excellent and very plentiful." As yet, nevertheless, it was cattle and not grain that had formed "the staple produce and almost the only material for exportation." Mr. Murray then shows how well suited the rivers are for mills, but he indicates the obstruction of rapids and the execrable roads as the great drawbacks to intercourse with the rest of the world. The salubrity of the Townships was proved by their immunity from the cholera scourge of 1832.

Such testimonies to the value of the region of which Sherbrooke is the flourishing centre might be multiplied. Indeed long before either Murray or Bouchette had written on the subject, the general character of the country was well known both in the States and Canada. And, though it was not till after the passage of the Constitutional Act that definite steps were taken for the settlement of the district, attention had been called to it soon after the Conquest. It is, however,

to Mrs. Day's industrious patriotism that we are indebted for a connected record of its colonization. Her "Pioneers" and her "History" are monuments of the ardour with which she gathered the *disjecta membra* of memories and traditions that would soon have been irreparably lost but for her timely efforts. In the former volume she illustrates by documentary evidence the system in vogue for disposing of the land—a system, the abuses of which Lord Durham has so vigorously denounced. To the political economist those *pieces justificatives* are of very real interest. Still more precious from a historical standpoint are the biographical sketches of the "leaders" and other pioneers—the data for which she was at such pains to collect from sources that would soon have been inaccessible. Works of this kind must be a labour of love, and we cannot be too grateful to those who save such records of our past from destruction.

We know from Thomson's "History of Vermont" that settlement had been begun across the frontier before the first quarter of the 18th century had ended, and from that time forward hardy squatters had penetrated into those marches which were long the battleground between New France and New England. Some of these had doubtless crossed the present boundary line long before normal colonization, under government auspices began. But the deeds and even the names of those harbingers of modern progress are veiled in thick obscurity. In like darkness are involved the hardy backwoodsmen who first cleared land on the site of thriving Sherbrooke. It seems, however, to be established that David Moe built the first barn within the present limits of the town, and on one of the boards of that structure was cut the date of erection—1800. Samuel Terry is known to have dwelt at the same distant period opposite the mouth of the Magog, while Gilbert Hyatt put up the first grist mill on the Ascot side of that stream. Subsequently carding and clothing works were built on the same spot by Jonathan Parker, while on the Oxford side stood Jonathan Ball's saw mill. In those years the hamlet out of which Sherbrooke was destined to grow was known as the Lower or Big Forks, Lennoxville being distinguished as the Upper Forks. These points, Mrs. Day tells us, were even then centres of trade for the country around. Writing at and of a later date, Bouchette, after emphasizing the grave disadvantage of bad roads, and, consequently, of deficient means of communication with the chief markets of the province, says that the remarkable prosperity attained, notwithstanding those drawbacks, could only be attributed to the enterprise, industry and perseverance of the inhabitants. And, pointing to their cornfields of unrivalled luxuriance, their thriving farms and flourishing villages, he singles out Sherbrooke as an example of what Townships energy had already accomplished. "The town of Sherbrooke," he writes, "contains about 50 dwelling-houses; it occupies a high position on both banks of the Magog river, and its settlements are connected with a bridge; the old court house and jail are on the Ascot side. As the seat of jurisdiction of the district of St. Francis, it is a place of general resort; besides being, as it were, the emporium of the Townships trade or rather (as the head of the present navigation of the St. Francis) the place of transit through which the chief part of the Townships produce is conveyed to the market towns or elsewhere. The chief articles of trade are grain, pot and pearl ashes, and likewise horses, horned cattle, sheep and other live stock." He then pays a tribute of admiration to the scenery and to the delightful residence of the Hon. W. B. Felton, one of the original promoters of the settlement and an extensive land proprietor.

Mr. Bouchette has much to say of the people of the Townships—Americans, Irish, Scotch, English, Dutch and Germans ranking, as to numbers, in the order of their mention. But though diverse in origin, they are homogeneous in aim and spirit, in the pride which they take in the advancement of the country and in the harmony prevailing among persons of all creeds and races. This, as our readers know, is still one of Sherbrooke's

most marked characteristics. The foregoing enumeration has long been succeeded by that of English-speaking and French-speaking citizens—the two main, and, in fact, only recognized elements of the population to-day. Indeed, the cordial good-will that distinguishes the relations between these two racial elements in the city and district of Sherbrooke is a practical rebuke to those who counsel the separation of our people into two antagonistic communities. We regret to find in some of those excellent accounts of the new settlements in the north country an injudicious exultation at the absence of any alien element to mar the "national" character of their progress. Surely in a country like ours this is sheer folly. There are none so wise that they may not profit by the lessons of others; none so completely equipped for the battle of life that they may not benefit by the suggestion and help of persons of different experience. The Townships would not be what they are to-day but for the diversity of the population. The American Loyalist settlers brought with them a knowledge of backwoods life which was of untold value to the British immigrant that came later, while the French-Canadian has had the benefit of learning from both these classes of pioneers. To stand aloof, in sullen disdain from the neighbours, in common with whom Providence has cast our lot, is a proceeding of which the condition of Sherbrooke furnishes a heavier condemnation than any words that we could use. For rarely has the policy of forbearance, sympathy and kindly coöperation been more fruitful of manifold good than it has proved in the Eastern Townships in general and in Sherbrooke, especially. Welcome evidence of its wisdom may be read in the sketches that follow. By what successive steps the little hamlet of the Lower Forks attained the proud position of achievement and promise that it has reached to-day our readers may learn from the ensuing pages of this number.

A TOLERANT COMMUNITY.

There is nothing more interesting to the student of human society than to watch the processes by which communities acquire the qualities that come to be associated with their names, as though they were distinct personalities. Paris, Manchester, New York, Boston, in modern times (as had Babylon, Athens, Carthage, Alexandria, in antiquity) have each a characteristic moral flavour, as clearly discernible as though they were so many individuals. To say so is, indeed, merely repeating a commonplace of millennial age. Long before Rome was founded, the faculty which groups of men possess of developing a sort of composite ethical likeness of themselves had been recognized by the moralists of the world's prime. National character is again made up of a composite of such composites. The Englishman is a type that includes the Cornishman and the native of the eastern fen country as well as the sturdy Yorkshireman and the Northumbrian borderer. So the Canadian is a medley of characteristics that range from peninsular Halifax and insular Charlottetown to continental Vancouver and trans-fretal Victoria. And proud though we all may be of our common name, no Vancouverite will tolerate being called Victorian; no Haligonian a Prince Edward Islander, still less will the Ontarian submit to be called Quebecker, or the Nor'-Wester an Old Province man. Yet some of these types—so emphatically insisted on—are of such recent creation that we might almost resolve them into their elements. Ten years ago, for instance, the Vancouver (city) type did not exist; yet, we believe, there is none more salient and unmistakable in this Northland of ours. Is it, then, the strong individuality of the founders, of the pioneers, that is impressed in *perpetuum* on the nascent community? In some instances this would seem to be the case. Sixty years ago Bouchette, writing of the Townships, said that there existed there little, if any, of that spirit of race or religious bitterness which pitted men against each other, destroyed the harmony of society and paralysed its powers of development. Now this is just the testimony that is borne by