

selves the Northmen of Vinland, with their reputed explorations of the Canadian and New England shores in the tenth century, are little less mythical than Jason and his Argonauts. All, indeed, of America's antiquities which precede A.D. 1492, belong to prehistoric times; and a relic of the Tudors, which for England would be wholly modern, seems for Canada as pertaining to some antediluvian era. Pleasant therefore is it for all who now care to retrace the footsteps of our Young Dominion—pleasanter still will it be for coming generations,—to read the promising title of Dr. Scadding's handsome volume, "Toronto of Old: Collections and Recollections illustrative of the Early Settlement and Social life of the Capital of Ontario."

In 1686, or later years, when the valley of the St. Lawrence and the region to the north of the great lakes were undisputed French territory, a fort was constructed at the mouth of the river Humber to guard the terminus of the trail, or portage, by which voyageurs were wont to trade with the great Huron country around Lake Simcoe and the Georgian Bay. This appears to have been recognised in some general sense as the Toronto region. The fort itself was originally styled "Fort Rouillé," but in course of time it came to be popularly known as Fort Toronto; and so the same name at length attached itself to the fort and village on the neighbouring bay, which have grown to be the City of Toronto and the Capital of Ontario. The French stockade at the mouth of the Humber became for a time a royal trading-post, maintained in keenest antagonism to the English traders of Oswego, Albany and New York; but the Toronto of the River Don and the great bay is strictly of English origin; and had for its Romulus Lieutenant-General Simcoe, first Governor of Upper Canada.

The portrait of the sagacious old soldier and civic founder forms the appropriate frontispiece to Dr. Scadding's "Toronto of

Old." It is a well-engraved fac-simile of a miniature in the possession of his grandson, Captain J. K. Simcoe, R.N., of Walford—the old family seat in Devonshire; and for this we cannot be too thankful. Nothing can form a more fitting adjunct to local or general history than the portraits of the chief actors in the recorded events. Nevertheless, one cannot look on the smooth, round face and regulation hair, so suggestive of the formal military queue, without a craving that it were possible to exchange the niceties of the miniature painter's art for the more homely, truth-telling literalness of a modern photograph.

There is little mystery or romance about the beginnings of Toronto. Upper Canada was erected into a distinct province in 1791, only eight years after the Treaty of Fontainebleau; and a few months thereafter General Simcoe arrived at the old French fort, at the mouth of the River Niagara, and made choice of the sheltered bay of Toronto as the site of his future capital. The land was in occupation by a wandering tribe of Mississagas. What negotiations were made by the first Governor for permission to effect a settlement, and lay the foundations of a city in their midst, does not appear; but a report of the Indian Department, dated August 1st, 1805, bears the curious record of the "Toronto Purchase," comprising 250,880 acres, including the site of the city, and stretching eastward to the Scarborough Heights: for all which its Mississaga lords received and accepted the sum of ten shillings! It would be difficult now to obtain a lease of the needful six feet of ground within its area at the price for which the site of Toronto and its suburbs thus passed from Indian to White ownership.

The first Government House of Toronto had a historical significance of its own, which would have had a rare interest for us now had it been of a less ephemeral character. Captain Cook, the famous navigator, had constructed for himself a canvas house,