

will-o'-the-wisp, the imp that drives the horses, all these tales are delightful. They are something that the English do not in the least understand, something quite distinct from any Scotch superstition." This rich material of folk lore and tradition, in appearance feeble, in reality copious, effective, and full of force, furnishes the real foundation for our national literature.

With the conquest commenced a new era. Canada arising with renewed vitality above disaster and corruption, amidst the shadows of despair commenced a fresh existence, brilliant with hope. Order gradually succeeded chaos, subjection and dependence yielded place to an invigorating system of stable freedom. British rule brought material growth and educational advantages, thus affording a stimulus to mental activity, an incentive to liberty of thought. There was a great scarcity of books in the country. With a prolific modern press, in an age in which the making of books seems to have no end, it is rather difficult to realize a state of society in which books scarcely existed. Those who had literary tastes and inclinations had little opportunity for gratifying them. An educational report of 1824 informs us "that generally not above one-fourth of the entire population could read, and not above one-tenth of them could write, even imperfectly." The first newspaper, *La Gazette de Québec*, printed in both French and English, appeared 21st June, 1764. The first issue was printed on four folio pages of twelve inches by twelve, each containing two columns of small type. It had 150 subscribers. This paper retailed gossip and chronicled passing events. Being conducted with a caution verging on timidity, it rarely mentioned the politics of the day. The first article was the prospectus in larger type, in which the promoters promised to pay particular attention "to the refined amusements of literature, and the pleasant veins of well appointed wit." The latest English news was dated from April 11th, the latest American from May 7th. Some copies of this paper are still in existence.