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CANADIAN BARDS AND BALLADS.

A country's national life depends greatly on its hero-history. In the form of tradition from mouth to mouth, Canada has preserved but little of the deeds of real daring, and still more of endurance, which so largely characterized our French and English ancestors; but the former at least have had willing and appreciative chroniclers in the clerical writers whose efforts to christianize the continent were not always free from blood. Theirs was an age which did everything in the name of religion, and theirs was a religion to which everything dramatic was serviceable. The French-Canadians have a prolific and brilliant national literature to which those of English extraction can as yet show no counterpart, their eyes being turned rather towards the future than to the past. The latter have neither cherished their own traditions, nor has their sympathy been as yet drawn out towards those preserved in another language than their own. Patriotism, however, is a sentiment which feeds on worthy deeds of old. To preserve the memory of days gone by, to brighten among the Canadian people the fire of patriotism, and to deepen their love of the land on which they tread, the publishers of the MONTREAL

WITNESS, in January last, offered a prize for the best Canadian ballad received before March 1st, following, and Rev. James Carmichael, Rev. J. F. Stevenson and Mr. Samuel E. Dawson, publisher, consented to act as judges.

In all, 291 contributions were sent in, of which only 168 could be classified in respect to the place of production, the sex of sender, &c. Of this number there came from the Province of Ontario, 103; from Quebec, 50; from New Brunswick, 2; from Nova Scotia, 6; Prince Edward Island, 3; Manitoba, 2; the United States, 2. Montreal heads in the list of contributing towns, twenty-two of the poems having been written here. Belleville sends 5; Kingston, 4; Toronto, 3; Quebec, 3; Charlottetown, P. E. I., 2; Brockville, 2; Galt, 2; Cornwall, 3; Milton, U. S., 2; Compton, 3; Ottawa, 3; Owen Sound, 2; Colborne, 2; Pembroke, 2; Wellington, 2; Halifax, 2; Three Rivers, 2; and most other towns or cities represented, but one. Of the authors, seventy were ladies and ninety-eight gentlemen. The subjects chosen were very varied. There were 130 odes to Canada, not ballads at all; 28 poems on social subjects as suitable to any other part of