

And they descended and did roam  
Through levelled distance set round  
By gloom. They saw the silences  
Move by and beckon; saw their forms,  
Their very beads, oft time in storms,  
And heard them talk like silent seas.  
On unnamed heights black-blown and brown  
And torn like battlements of Mars.  
They saw the darkneses come down.  
Like curtains loosened from the dome  
Of God's cathedral, built of stars.

They saw the snowy mountains rolled,  
And heaved along the nameless lands  
Like mighty billows, saw the gold  
Of awful sunsets, saw the blush  
Of sudden dawn, and felt the hush  
Of Heavens when the day sat down,  
And hid his face in dusky hands;  
Then pitched their tents, where rivers run  
As if to drown the fallen sun.

The long and lonesome nights: the tent  
That nestled soft in sweet of grass.  
The hills against the firmament  
Where scarce the moving moon could pass—  
The cautious camp, the smothered light,  
The silent sentinel at night!

The wild beasts howling from the hill:  
The troubled cattle bellowing;  
The savages prowling by the spring,  
Then sudden passing swift and still,  
And bended as a bow is bent,  
The arrow sent; the arrow spent  
And buried in its bloody place,  
The dead man lying on his face!

The clouds of dust, their cloud by day,  
Their pillar of unfailing fire,  
The far North Star. And high, and higher—  
They climbed so high it seemed at noon  
That they must face the falling moon,  
That like some flame-lit ruin lay  
Thrown down before their weary way.

They learned to read the sign of storms,  
The moon's wide circles, sunset bars,  
And storm-provoking blood and flame:  
And like the Chaldean shepherds came  
At night to name the moving stars;  
And in the heavens pictured forms  
Of beasts and fishes of the sea;  
And marked the great bear wearily  
Rise up and drag his clinking chain  
Of stars around the starry main.

## OFFICIAL NOTICES.

### Ministry of Public Instruction.

#### APPOINTMENTS.

The Lieutenant-Governor has been pleased, by order in council, dated the 29th day of March, 1876, to make the following appointments:

#### SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS.

County of Bagot, Saint-Ephrem—André Belleval, junior, *vice* Pierre Savoie.

County of Bonaventure, Saint-Charles-de-Caplan—Messrs. Roch Xavier Bigaouette and Sifroi Lepage, *vice* Messrs. Frédéric Frelatte and Salomon Babin.

County of Gaspé, Cap-aux-Os—Messrs. J. B. Oncllet, Thomas Smith, John Robert and Louis Lermieux.

County of Kamouraska, Pohenégamook (Saint-Eléuthère)—Revd. Edouard Roy and François Morin, Euchariste Bouchard, Eusèbe Sirois and Joseph Lebel.

County of Ottawa, Hull—The Reverend Father Delisle Reboul,

Moise Daigneau, Joseph O. Laferrière, Hercule Pinard and Emery Perin.

County of Quebec, Cap-Rouge—Michel Hamel, junior, *vice* Jean Moisan.

#### TRUSTEES.

County of Gaspé, York—Messrs. James Fitzpatrick, Charles Lehouillier and Martin Power.

County of Gaspé, Gaspé-South—The Reverends Majorquin Balduc, Alexandre Gollis and Michael Dowling.

## MISCELLANY.

*How shall we Spell?*—How our English words shall be spelt is a matter concerning which the great mass of those to whom the language is native appear to have pretty fully made up their minds. They intend to tolerate no change in the present orthography. Those who put forth proposals for its alteration, whether in certain words and classes of words only, or upon a wider scale, are set down and laughed at without mercy. No one, we presume, will be found to question that one very important reason why we cleave to our present modes of spelling is the simple fact that they are ours. We have learned them by dint of diligent study, if not of painful effort; we are used to them; our spoken words in any other garb would look to us strange and quaint, or even ridiculous. To give them up would imply a revolution—such an overthrow of a grand institution, firmly rooted in the usages and predilections of a wide community, as no race or generation has ever yet been willing to permit, save under the pressure of some great and profoundly-felt necessity. And we acknowledge no such necessity; far from this, we think we see a variety of reasons why our favourite institution is preferable to any that could be put in its place. Precisely here, however, we ought to feel most distrustful of the ground we stand upon. It is easy to overvalue, or even wholly to misinterpret, reasons apparently favouring conclusions which we are already determined to reach! Let us, then, enter into a summary examination of the alleged advantages of our present English orthography, for the purpose of determining both what is their actual worth and how far we rely upon them in our defence of the institution. *Alleged Advantages of the Present Spelling.*—First to be noticed among the advantages referred to is the convenient discrimination to the eye of homonyms, or words which are pronounced alike but have a different origin and meaning. A familiar example is afforded us in the written distinction of *meet*, *meat*, and *metc*, and another that of *to*, *too*, and *two*. Such triplets, as every one knows, are not very rare in our language, and couplets of the same sort are to be counted by scores. Now, we have to observe that any credit which is given to our written language in this particular must be taken away from our spoken language. We gain nothing by writing the uttered syllables *meet*, and *too* in a variety of ways, unless, when uttered, they are of ambiguous meaning. If our minds are for even the briefest moment puzzled by such expressions as "he goes *to* Boston," "he goes *two* miles," "he goes *too* far," not knowing which *too* is meant in either case, then it is worth while to avoid a like difficulty in our reading by spelling the word differently. But who will consent to make so damaging an admission? There is a language in the world (the Chinese) where the words are so few, and their meanings so many, that orthographic differences are brought in as an important aid to comprehension, and the writing follows, upon a grand scale, not the utterance alone but the signification also. Thus there are more than eleven hundred ways of writing the word "e," and other words count their representatives by hundreds, by scores, or by tens. A host of devices have to be resorted to there in spoken speech to get rid of ambiguities which are wholly avoided in written. Our English, however, is not afflicted with such poverty of expression as to be brought to this strait. We have also three different "sounds"—"found," from "find"; "found," meaning "establish;" and "found," meaning "cast," "mould," between which, we venture to say, no soul ever thought of making a confusion, though they are all spelt with the same letters. Is there any one who cannot tell, by the ear or by the eye, when "cleave" means "stick together" and when it means "part asunder"? Who ever find any more difficulty in separating bear, "carry,"