

*The Prince's Reply.*

Gentlemen,—It is with mingled feelings of gratification at the duty which I am called upon to undertake, and admiration of the magnificent spectacle of successful science which is before me, that I proceed to comply with your invitation, and, in the name of the Queen, to inaugurate a work as unsurpassed by the grandeur of Egypt or of Rome, as it is unrivalled by the inventive genius of these days of ever-active enterprise. I regret that the great man, whose name is now doubly enrolled in that page of my country's history in which its worthies are inscribed, has not lived to see this day. I regret that ill health prevents the presence of another who labored with him to plan and execute this vast design; but to them and to the eminent firm and those employed by them, in carrying out the works, no less than to your countrymen, whose energetic exertions first gave birth to the scheme of which this bridge is the consummation, the thanks of the great community of North America are due. Your Sovereign has testified her appreciation of the magnitude and importance of the enterprise, by deputing me to come so far to commemorate on the spot, on her behalf, the completion of a monument of engineering skill, which will, henceforth, bear her name, and convey to future generations another proof, in addition to the many which exist, of the successful industry of the great people committed to her rule. May this ceremony be auspicious to all concerned. May the Railway and this Bridge, which is its connecting link, realize all the expectations of its promoters, and continue throughout the great future of this Province a source of permanent and ever increasing prosperity."

The mere ceremony of opening a bridge is very much the same at all places. There was a platform covered with scarlet cloth, and a little scaffolding, from which hung a ponderous slab of granite, the last stone required to complete the masonry of this marvellous undertaking. The Prince with all his suite, and attended by the chief members of the Canadian Government, came at 2 o'clock in a beautifully-constructed open railway car specially built for the occasion. All along the route by the side of the track were seats, which were occupied by numbers of well dressed gentlemen and elegantly attired ladies. Near the portals of the Bridge the train passed between trophies of locomotive wheels and mechanical devices. The Prince's car paused just before entering the tube—within the massive walls. Where the passengers, chiefly the members of Parliament and friends, disembarked, and took their assigned places—some below on a level with the track—some above on the top of the walls—some again near the platform to which His Royal Highness was to mount and lay the stone, and over which was a richly draped golden fringed arch, with the appropriate inscription,—"*Finis coronat opus.*" He was received with deafening outbursts of enthusiasm.

Laying the last stone was soon accomplished. The Prince patted the bed of mortar, and the mass of granite was slowly lowered into its resting place. It was a solemn affair, and seemed like laying a tombstone over the grave of £17,000,000. The Prince then entered his car again, and proceeded through the bridge, which bellowed and rumbled like thunder as the train progressed, and the opening by which it had entered grew smaller and smaller till it only shone faintly in the distance like a pale blue star. At last a dim twilight appeared ahead, and the engine gradually stopped. It was in the centre of the bridge where the Prince was to drive the last rivets. His Royal Highness went outside to one of the openings in the masonry of the centre tower, and looking down on the St. Lawrence rushing past in one grand stream far below, sweeping under the bridge in eddies and whirlpools, or bursting into little sprits of angry foam as they touched the sharp edges of the granite masonry. None could look down on this great river; and then look along the sides of the iron tube which tapered away at each end in the distance till it seemed a mere reed of metal, without feeling astounded not only how such a design was ever carried out, but how it could ever have been conceived as practicable.

The trowel bore on the inside the following inscription: "To commemorate the completion of the Victoria Bridge by His Royal Highness Albert Edward, Prince of Wales. Montreal, 1860." On the reverse side was an engraving of the bridge. The handle was wrought into the form of a beaver, which was attached to the blade by a Prince of Wales' plume—the edges of the blade being decorated with a border of the rose, shamrock, thistle, and maple leaf.

The formality of completing the bridge was now gone through. Four rivets had been left unfinished, and these were closed with iron bolts by two workmen. The last, a silver rivet, was clinched by the Prince himself. The two workmen wielded their tremendous hammers with a din that was awful, the rich uniforms of the Prince and suite, half hidden in the gloom, and softened down by the wreaths of thick wood-smoke which curled from the funnel of the engine in the background—the little glimpse through the opening into the bright sunlight, the St. Lawrence, far beneath—the flaunting decorations and shining roofs of Montreal beyond the river—

all made a striking subject for a picture. At length the last iron rivets were fixed, and the last of all, a silver one, was inserted. The Prince took the hammer, and, heavy as it was, prepared to wield it stoutly; Mr. Hodges adjusted the silver knob, and with some stout, resounding blows, the Prince finished the last rivet in the Victoria Bridge. Soon every one there, got back into the car, which went on through the tunnel to the other side of the river, where a magnificent view of Montreal could be gained. Here the party remained for a few minutes, and Mr. Blackwell, in the name of the Grand Trunk Railway Company, presented the Prince with a beautiful gold medal, executed by Wyon, commemorative of the occasion. The suite were presented with similar ones, but in silver. The Royal car then returned through the bridge to one of the large workshops of the company, where a splendid lunch had been prepared. At its conclusion the healths of the Queen, Prince Consort, and Prince of Wales were given and acknowledged with almost uproarious demonstrations of loyal welcome. The Prince bowed his acknowledgments; and, almost as soon as the cheering had subsided, he himself rose to give a toast, and the deepest silence of course prevailed. "I propose," said he, and his clear voice was distinctly audible to the furthest corner of the great room, "The health of the Governor General—success to Canada and prosperity to the Grand Trunk Railway." At this the cheering was renewed with vigour, while the band struck up the beautiful melody which has become national in Lower Canada, "*A la claire Fontaine.*" The Prince then quitted the table to receive an address from the workpeople on the railway, by whom again a tremendous reception was given. In fact, cheers seemed to tire the ear, for through the whole day they never once stopped. The Prince then passed through the workshops, where all the machines were going at full speed, with their lathe-bands decorated with rosettes, and every part of the machinery covered with little plumes and bunches of flowers, which kept whirling round like silent fireworks. Only a short stay was made here, and the Prince returned at once to his residence, and in the evening Montreal illuminated. It was one of the best and most general illuminations with which the Prince had yet been received. Every one of the streets was a perfect blaze of light, and fireworks were going off in all directions.

## COLLEGE OF ST. HYACINTHE, AUGUST 29TH.

From Montreal the Prince proceeded by railway to St. Hyacinthe and Sherbrooke. At the entrance to the St. Hyacinthe College-grounds, a triumphal arch of handsome proportions had been raised. It bore the following inscription:

"*L'Intelligence, grandie par l'instruction gouverne le monde.*"

The distance between the station and the college was about a mile, and along the entire route the crowd of spectators was dense and uninterrupted. A vast balcony of verdure had been erected in front of the college which bore the following words:

"*Salut a notre roi futur!*"

and was decorated with an immense number of small flags of every colour, bearing inscriptions pleasantly and happily applicable to the occasion. His Royal Highness was received on the steps leading to the college doors by the Superior of the House, accompanied by a numerous body of the clergy of the diocese. On ascending to the College Hall, which was very handsomely decorated, a species of throne elevated upon a dais was found prepared for the Prince's use. At each end of the hall were inscriptions done in golden letters, to perpetuate the memory of the honour that day conferred upon the College. The first, facing the Prince's seat, and was as follows:

"*III. Kal: Septemb: MDCCCLX.*"

"*Perpetuum decus, alma dies, his ædibus affers.*"

The other, above His Royal Highness' throne, was:

"*Non Anglica quondam ullo se tantum tellus jactabit alumno.*"

His Royal Highness having taken his seat,—the Governor General on his right, the Duke of Newcastle on his left—and all the clergy standing in order on either side of the hall, various municipal addresses were presented. The Superior then presented the following address of the College, which was graciously received by His Royal Highness, and handed by him to his Grace of Newcastle, who was to forward a reply by post:

May it please Your Royal Highness,—We the Directors of the College of St. Hyacinthe, feel it our duty to present to your Royal Highness a special homage of our profound respect; for it is in our House that you have deigned to stop while passing through this town. We can appreciate the high honor which your Royal Highness does to an Institution so humble and so destitute of all that is capable of exciting interest, and we recognise in the condescension which you this day extend to this College, a striking evidence of the importance which you attach to Education, the source of such noble enjoyments to the recipient, and the means so powerfully promotive of the