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THE LIMITS OF KNOWLEDGE,
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BY

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Such an honour as that which the faculty vouchsafed to me in the request to address you to-day led—as you may readily believe—to much searching of heart. At the first blush the prospect seemed too alluring to be foregone; second thoughts followed, burdened with doubts whether it would be possible to rise equal to the demands of the occasion; these, however, in turn faded before the feeling that the only fitting acknowledgement of your kindness lay in yielding to your wish.

It is indeed a source of much pleasure to be again amidst the fair scenes of this great Dominion, and to dwell upon the manifold beauties showered upon her by the ungrudging hand of nature. It is delightful to gaze once more upon the broad bosom of the silver river with its emerald jewels, reflecting the glowing tints of the woods in their winsome robes. It was amongst these lovely scenes that the thrilling pictures of Parkman first held me in thrall, and led me to understand, as would in no other way have been possible, the lives and works of those who, during two centuries of conflict, strove for the mastery of the new world. Here also was borne in upon me the full meaning of the charming tales of Parker, and amidst their natural surroundings the characters whose loves and hates throb in his pages took an even more living form.

Under the witching wand of these, and many other wonder workers who have lived in your midst, the ground is hallowed by thoughts of the past. What a marvellous vista it is! The brave stealthily gliding through the primæval forest: the pioneer pushing further into the western fastnesses: the seigneur struggling for the foundation of a new nation: the priest-labouring for souls, faithful unto death: the soldier