

Cape North to Cape Sable. The men offer you bows and arrows for your boys, the women, dainty-adorned moccasins for your girls, that prove their hands have not yet forgotten their aboriginal cunning. Silent and patient they squat upon the curb-stone, making no effort to force their wares upon your attention. Fourthly, there are the Preston darkies that form the subject of this article.

The darkies have a prominent position in this open-air market all to themselves, not because of any ordinance to that effect, but simply by force of the prescription that follows upon long usage. The narrow strip of brick pavement in front of the Board of Works offices constitutes their peculiar province, and there they gather in force every market day all summer long, laughing, chatting, joking among themselves, as true types of the negro as could be found on any Southern plantation.

Behind those fat, jolly, ragged, "coloured folk" lies an interesting history that is quite worth the telling. In the early part of the century they were called the "Chesapeake Blacks" in allusion to the place whence they had come to Nova Scotia. Considering their unhappy experience with the loyalist negroes who made their way thither at the close of the American Revolution, and with the Maroons of Jamaica, who had been banished to this cooler climate after their long and stubborn rebellion had been finally overcome, an experience entailing a tremendous expenditure, and no good results, one would naturally suppose that the authorities in Nova Scotia would be in no hurry to repeat the experiment of settling these warmth-loving people in a country to which they were constitutionally averse. Yet at the conclusion of the war of 1815 a large number of blacks were permitted to take refuge on board the British squadron blockading the Chesapeake, and were ultimately transported to Halifax. They proved very troublesome and perplexing charges. Unaccustomed to provide for their own necessities, or to put to good account the produce of their own labour, some wandered through the country as mendicants levying contributions upon the people, who, moved by pity or by fear, ministered to their necessities, while others threw themselves on the Government for support and subsisted on scanty rations. At Preston, about ten miles from Halifax, a settlement was formed for these and they were helped to build little houses, and to cultivate garden patches for themselves, and there they have been ever since.

In view of the vital interest now attaching to the question of excluding undesirable immigrants, and protecting labour against undue competition, it is amusing to stumble upon an entry like this in Murdoch's matter-of-fact annals of Nova Scotia. "On Saturday 1st April (1815) the House (of Assembly) addressed His Excellency on the subject of the coloured people brought here from the Chesapeake. They say that they 'observe with concern and alarm the frequent arrival in this province of bodies of negroes and mulattoes, of whom many have already become burthensome to the public.' They express unwillingness to aid in bringing settlers into the province 'whose character, principles and habits are not previously ascertained.' The Africans already here 'cause many inconveniences' and 'more brought in would discourage white labourers and servants,' and would tend 'to the establishment of a separate and marked class of people, unfitted by nature to this climate or to association with the rest of His Majesty's colonists.' They then begged His Excellency to hinder such people being introduced, which he agreed to do." Nearly all of which has a strikingly familiar sound, particularly what I have italicized, and with some slight changes in phraseology might be an utterance of to-day, instead of being more than half-a-century old. Truly there is nothing new under the sun.

Gathered together at Preston, and encouraged to make a definite start for themselves, the darkies got as far as putting forth some pretence to cultivate the soil, and there they stopped. The pretence has never developed into a reality. They are as indolent, shiftless and improvident to-day as were their slave ancestors, and as much dependent upon their white brethren for assistance and support. They have two specialties from which they derive a precarious income, to wit, brooms and berries. They are the berry-pickers *par excellence* for the city of Halifax. All through the season of such wild fruits, which beginning with strawberries proceed through raspberries, blueberries, brambleberries and blackberries to huckleberries, the Preston darkies line the side-walk at the market with their baskets temptingly full of nature's juicy offerings. This is the time of their prosperity when they wax fat like Jeshurun, and like him become impudent. The demand for berries is always far in excess of the supply and they find no difficulty in dispensing of their toothsome stock-in-trade when the soldiers from the garrison, the sailors from the ships, and the citizens from their homes, are all eager purchasers.

Not only do these berry magnates sit in the market place for customers to come to them, they go out through the city streets in search of the buyers, who, being too lazy to get up early, and hie to the market, are willing to pay a larger price because of their lack of enterprise. A familiar sight in Halifax is a round-faced "lady of colour" stepping lightly over the pavement although balanced with unfailing skill upon her head is a long narrow basket heavy with luscious globes and cones. The weight that the women, for the men never seem to attempt it, can carry in these baskets, and yet move as freely as though they were no more burdensome than a fashionable spring bonnet, is almost incredible, and the fact that despite their long severance from their ancestral home they still preserve this

primitive mode of burden-bearing is a striking illustration of the wonderful power of heredity.

When the berries fail, and they last but a few months, the darkies resort to brooms and begging. Of these brooms they have a monopoly, although I greatly doubt if they are protected by any patent. They are very simple affairs, the mere germ, so to speak, from which the modern parlour broom has been evolved. Birch brooms they call them, they being nothing more than a bundle of black birch twigs tied tightly with withes about a stout stake which forms the handle. They are very useful things for stables, side-walks, warehouse floors, and such rough work, and many thousands are sold at the moderate price of a "quarter" apiece the year through.

In the art of begging the Preston folks have pretty well attained perfection. Their very appearance in mid-winter, when their needs are greatest, "pleads trumpet-tongued" in their behalf; so irresistibly does it illustrate both the ludicrous and pathetic in humanity only the pencil of a *Porte Crayon* or a W. L. Sheppard could do justice to the animated scare-crow that presents itself at your door with basket, gaping most suggestively for the alms you would have to be granite-hearted to refuse. Where those wonderful apologies for garments which in tattered layer upon layer imperfectly cover their shivering limbs could have come from, and what kind of people could have been their original owners, it would certainly puzzle the appalling author of "Oh, my lungs and liver!—will you go for three pence?" to determine. Bare feet being vetoed by the icy side-walks, and boots being luxuries beyond their reach, they encase their lower extremities in folds of old carpet, which they sometimes also stuff with straw, making them look as though they were sufferers from that form of disease which is generally supposed to be reserved for the wearers of purple and fine linen—to wit, the gout.

If you were to follow them to their homes at Preston, you would find yourself in the midst of a cluster of as absurd apologies for dwellings as could be well imagined. Not very much larger than dog-kennels, put together in the most hap-hazard fashion, every second pane in the tiny windows broken, and the apertures stuffed with dirty rags, the chimneys all apparently nodding to their fall, and the roofs betraying many a gap in their shingling, these huts lie scattered about a rocky, barren tract after no discernible plan, constituting the merest caricature of a village. Here the darkies bask and feast in summer, and starve and shiver in winter, each diminutive dwelling housing a swarm of inmates that seems altogether out of proportion to its capacity.

It would not be just to the people of Preston, however, to leave the impression that they are all ragged, improvident berry-pickers and broom-makers. From their ranks come many excellent servants, porters, coachmen, and char-women, who find it easy to obtain employment in the city at good wages, and are often preferred to white-skinned workers of the same class. If kindly treated they will attach themselves to households with the same simple fidelity as distinguished their slave ancestors. A family with which I was intimately acquainted had such a dependent in the person of a Mrs. Smithers, a very reliable char-woman. The eldest daughter of the house, who was very kind to this hard-working creature, had a curious proof of her attachment. Mrs. Smithers was sometimes permitted to stay over night, sleeping in a room in the basement. The young lady's room was at the top of the house. One night, long after every body had gone to sleep, she happened to awake, and was at once made aware of a strange sound just outside her door. She listened intently, and with no small perturbation, and soon came to the conclusion that the mysterious noise was that of heavy breathing at the threshold. Naturally enough, she was much frightened, for it was impossible to tell whether the breathing was that of an animal or a human being. For some time she lay in bed uncertain how to act, and then, unable to stand it any longer, mustered up sufficient courage to creep out of bed and reconnoitre. What was her surprise on peeping cautiously through the half-open door to find a form that she readily recognized as Mrs. Smithers stretched upon the mat in profound slumber. It was a wild stormy night, and she had grown lonely away down in the dark basement, and had crept quietly up to the third story to finish her sleep on the hard floor at the young lady's door, not thinking how startling her presence might prove.

If you ask me what is to become of the Preston darkies, I hardly know how to answer you, except by saying that that which hath been shall be. They show no signs of finding anywhere a stepping-stone to higher things, and, so far as one may judge, they seem to be destined to continue berry-pickers and broom-makers unto the end.

Ottawa.

WHY should men leave great fortunes to their children? If this is done from affection, is it not misguided affection? Observation teaches that, generally speaking, it is not well for the children that they should be so burdened. Neither is it well for the state. Beyond providing for the wife and daughters moderate sources of income, and very moderate allowances indeed, if any, for the sons, men may well hesitate, for it is no longer questionable that great sums bequeathed oftener work more for the injury than for the good of the recipients. Wise men will soon conclude that, for the best interests of members of their families and of the state, such bequests are an improper use of their means.—*Andrew Carnegie in North American Review for June.*

ABOVE THE GUNS.

On the cliff at the western end of the Isle of Tanti, commanding the strait which unites Lake Ontario with the Bay of Quinté, is a well-preserved, grass-grown breastwork, still known as "The Battery," within which are said to be buried the guns planted there during the war of 1812.

WHERE the waters of Quinté surge and sigh
With a sweet, mysterious minstrelsy,
O'er silver shingle, through whispering sedge,
And murmurous spaces of cave and ledge,
Where the blue-bells nod from each mossy edge;
Where over Ontario's field of blue
Lies such calm as reigned when the earth was new;
Where on lovely Quinté's breast imperaled
The passing stain of a smoke-wreath curled
Is all that tells of the living world;
Where the cliff hangs over the flood below,
A sombre shadow above the glow,
I, with my face to the shining west,
In a restful mood in a world at rest,
Lie at my length on the grassy crest.

Back from the edge a fathom's space,
Clasping the cliff in a close embrace,
Binding the curve, like a fillet found
On a maiden's tresses, a grass-grown mound
Guards from the verge's utmost bound.
What is it? A midnight haunt of elves
Who make their home in the rocky shelves?
A witch's circle? Or Nature's way
To keep from danger her lambs that stray
On the slippery slope in the summer day?
Far other. Here, so the legend runs,
Lie buried two of old England's guns;
And the circlet that crowns the lifted crest,
In its emerald bravery softly dressed,
Was a rampart once for her soldier's breast.

The zephyrs wander, the blue-bells blow
O'er the muzzled watch-dogs that sleep below.
In the years gone by did they show their teeth?
Belched they their fiery, sulphurous breath,
With a blast of flame and a bolt of death?
Was there a day when the silence broke,
And the echoes of headland and inlet woke,
Not to the nesting wood-bird's note,
Or the dipping oars of a fisher's boat,
But the hoarse, harsh bay of an iron throat?
Story tells not. Their work was done
When the peace that wraps us was earned and won;
All but forgotten they quiet lie;
But from under the sod, as the years go by,
They send us a message that may not die.

Oh! land of promise, that front'st the sun!
With untried feet set to a course unrun,
Out to the future thy fair hands reach,
But bend thine ear to the silent speech
And heed the lesson the guns would teach.
The strength and the spirit that forged those guns
Live and burn anew in the souls of thy sons.
Keep them, Canadians! deep, though dumb,
In prairie, and valley, and city's hum,
For a need that—God grant it!—may never come.
But as blossoms whiten and grasses wave
From the cannon's scarce-remembered grave,
So from your buried strifes must rise
Love's infinite possibilities,
And the flower of the nation's destinies.

Kingston.

ANNIE ROTHWELL.

PROMINENT CANADIANS.—XXVII.

SKETCHES of the following Prominent Canadians have already appeared in THE WEEK: Hon. Oliver Mowat, Dr. Daniel Wilson, Principal Grant, Sir John A. Macdonald, K.C.B., Louis Honoré Fréchet, LL.D., Sir J. William Dawson, Sir Alexander Campbell, K.C.M.G., Hon. William Stevens Fielding, Hon. Alexander MacKenzie, Sir Samuel Leonard Tilley, C.B., K.C.M.G., Alexander McLachlan, Hon. J. A. Chapeau, Sir Richard Cartwright, K.C.M.G., Sanford Fleming, C.E., LL.D., C.M.G., Hon. H. G. Joly, Hon. P. J. O. Chauveau, Sir William Buell Richards, Hon. Wilfrid Laurier, M.P., Hon. Honoré Mercier, Q.C., Hon. William Macdougall, C.B., Rev. Principal MacVicar, D.D., LL.D., Prof. Charles G. D. Roberts, M.A., George Faxton Young, M.A., Hon. Auguste Reale Angers, William Ralph Meredith, LL.D., Q.C., M.P.P., and Sir William Pearce Howland, C.B., K.C.M.G.

JOHN MACDONALD, SENATOR.

SUCCESS in life has been variously defined and attributed to various causes. With some, it has been achieved on securing a certain pecuniary independence, with the assurance that it will continue to improve; while the methods that have been adopted towards the end in view would scarcely bear inspection. With others, success is not accomplished by stages of progress, but by the final outcome of concentrated efforts, and the means used have been in strict accordance with certain moral principles that should obtain between man and man in all mundane transactions. In the one case, success is precarious, ephemeral, at best unsatisfactory; in the other it is pre-eminently the attainment of the end of one's existence here, the mastery of oneself, and the recognition of Providence as a factor in the affairs of life. The gentleman whose name heads this article takes prominent rank among those who come under the second class.

John Macdonald was born on the 27th of December, 1824, in the fair city of Perth, Scotland, where his father was serving with his regiment, the 93rd Sutherland High-