

much ignominy at York, should finally have become its first chief magistrate, when incorporated as a city: nay more, that he should have shewn himself, in that position—whatever may have been his imprudences in a subsequent stage of his career—an able, vigorous and sensible organizer, who, with a spice of Oliver Cromwell in his composition, and much of the insight of an Adam Smith into the arena of social science in his understanding, grappled boldly, and, as will be allowed on all hands, successfully, with the great difficulties of the situation.

I am aware that the Upper Canadian York which I have sought to save from oblivion was a town which, throughout the whole of the four decades of its existence, met with scant favour in many quarters.

Visitors of a day, from M. de Petit-Thouars to Lieutenant Coke, passed their trivial judgments upon it from their momentary survey. Travellers making the grand tour of the United States and Canada, and purposing, possibly, the publication, on their return home, of a volume or two of "Travels," would seize the occasion to make shrewd comparisons between York and certain United States towns, such as Buffalo or Rochester—each of later origin than York—to the general disadvantage of the Upper Canadian capital, putting wholly out of view the vast difference in the circumstances and geographical position of the contrasted places. York lay wholly out of the line of the traffic and trade developing so actively in the Great West, and backed at the time to the north, and for that matter to the west and east likewise, by interminable tracts of unbroken forest; so that it was utterly unlikely—nay, wholly impossible—that there should be about York, at the periods referred to, the movement, and life, and growth which, as a matter of necessity, were conspicuous about places situated and circumstanced as Buffalo, Rochester and other places along the southern sides of Lakes Ontario and Erie were.

And again, among many classes of Upper Canadians themselves, York was unmercifully flouted: for example, among those who, in the general advance of the country, had become identified with other thriving centres of business and life in the Province of Upper Canada, and were piqued at having to repair, for the settlement of every matter of great pith and moment to a town so little advanced in point of civilization beyond their own flourishing homes—a town, nevertheless, which affected a certain conventional superiority, by virtue of its character as the seat of Government.

And again: others, like Robert Gourlay, associating the place with abuses which they believed were rampant in it, heaped curses upon it loud as well as deep. It was where, as they believed, they themselves