

THE
MARITIME MONTHLY.

A Magazine of Literature, Science, and Art.

VOL. III.

APRIL, 1874.

No. 4.

CANADA FIRST.

THIS "Canada of ours" has just passed through one of her greatest political conflicts. The days of Lord Elgin, when putrid eggs flew thick and fast around his noble person, as he passed along the streets of a Canadian city, were tame in comparison. Last session the Parliament of Canada fought its greatest battle, and the people of the Dominion, through the medium of the electoral franchise, have triumphantly endorsed the verdict of the Parliament. In undertaking to record a calm and impartial opinion upon the Pacific scandal so called, and the vital Constitutional questions springing therefrom, after the smoke and heat of the battle have somewhat subsided, we are fully aware that we entertain party views, and are possibly tinged with party bias. We know the public mind is thoroughly *saturated* with the subject, and the public patience well nigh exhausted. But we enter upon the discussion of the questions involved, hoping to adjust our political lenses so as to suit the vision of every loyal-hearted Canadian—not to exult over a party triumph, nor to wail over a party defeat. Other more important and enduring considerations intrude upon the thoughtful mind, and to these we desire mainly to direct attention. Canadian institutions are representative, essentially dependent upon the popular will. Our political system—among the best in the world—begets party Government, throwing alternately the patronage of Government and the emoluments of office into the hands of the winning party. This system, honestly carried out, prevents, for any length of time, the administration of affairs becoming corrupt. It is alike an