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Laura Secord, the Heroine of 1812.

In view of the interest newly awakened concerning the story of the war of 1812-15, by the recent imposing celebration at Toronto of the anniversary of the battle of Lundy's Lane, it is opportune to briefly refer to a published book of poems reciting incidents of Canadian history of those times, and more particularly the story of Laura Secord, the heroine of 1812. The publication, issued in 1887, is entitled, "Laura Secord and other Poems," and the authoress is Mrs. Sarah Ann Curzon, of Toronto. Amongst the "other poems," which number twenty-three, may be mentioned as of chief interest in connection with the main theme, "A Ballad of 1812," "The Hero of St. Helen's Island," "Our Veterans of 1812—A Plea," and "On Queenston Heights." Besides these the book contains several choice bits in the way of "Fables; original and from the French," and of "Translations," these including in their number a poem "In Memory of the Heroes of 1760," and "The Song of the Canadian Voltigeurs." The narrative of Laura Secord is written in the form of a drama, and the aim of the authoress is thus stated in the preface:

"The drama of Laura Secord was written to rescue from oblivion the name of a brave woman, and set it in its proper place among the heroes of Canadian history. During the first years of her residence in Canada the author was often astonished to hear it remarked, no less among educated than uneducated Canadians, that 'Canada has no history'; and yet on every hand stories were current of the achievements of the pioneers and the hardships endured and overcome by the United Empire Loyalists. Remembering that, as soon as she had conquered the merest rudiments of reading and grammar at school, she was set to learn the English history and so become acquainted with the past of her country, it seemed to the writer that there was something lacking in a course of teaching that could leave Canadians to think that their country had no historical past. Determined to seek out for herself the facts of the case, it was with feelings of the deepest interest that she read such of the contributions to the newspaper press as came in her way during the debate with regard to the pensions asked of Government for the surviving veterans of 1812 in 1873-4. Among these was incidentally given the story of Mrs. Secord's heroic deed in warning Fitzgibbon. Yet it could not pass without observation that, while the heroism of the men of that date was dwelt upon with warm appreciation and much urging as to their deserts, Mrs. Secord, as being a woman, shared in nothing more tangible than an approving record. The story, to a woman's mind, was full of pathos, and, though barren of great incidents, was not without a due richness of colouring if looked at by appreciative eyes. Nor were the results of Laura Secord's brave deed insignificant. Had the Americans carried Beaver Dams at that juncture, the whole peninsula was before them—all its supplies, all its means of communication with other parts of the province. And Canada—Upper Canada, at least—would have been in the hands of the invaders until, by a struggle too severe to be contemplated calmly, they had been driven forth. To save from the sword is surely as great a deed as to save with the sword; and this Laura Secord did, at an expense of nerve and muscle fully equal to any that are recorded of the warrior. To set her on such a pedestal of equality; to inspire other hearts with loyal

bravery such as hers; to write her name on the roll of Canadian heroes, inspired the poem that bears her name. But the tribute to her memory would not be complete were it to omit an appeal to Canadians, especially to the inhabitants of this province, who in their prosperity owe to her so much, to do their part, and write her name in enduring marble upon the spot where she lies buried. Nor does it seem asking more than a graceful act from the Government of the Dominion—a Dominion which, but for her, might never have been—to do its share in acknowledgment. One of her daughters still lives, and if she attain to her mother's age has yet nearly a decade before her.

"The drama of Laura Secord was written in 1876, and the ballad a year later, but, owing to the inertness of Canadian interest in Canadian literature at that date, could not be published. It is hoped that a better time has at length dawned."

The task undertaken by Mrs. Curzon, as related in this Preface, has been performed in a manner highly creditable to that lady, on account not only of the high literary standard of the work, but of the interest she has imparted to the story. We are glad to know that the volume has been well received, though its publisher has not met with that reward deserved from the patriotic nature of the work. Our Volunteers especially should see to it that such attempts to commemorate the bravery of those of Canada's early history should be cordially encouraged. And they should have a special interest in the work above noticed, from the fact that the authoress is the mother of their worthy brother-in-arms, Staff-Sergt. F. W. Curzon, of the Tenth Royal Grenadiers, a member of this year's team at Wimbledon, and who has for long held a high place in the ranks of the riflemen. This lady was the writer also of the Lines commemorative of Lundy's Lane, read at the recent anniversary, and published in our issue of last week.

Doubtless the work may be obtained of or through any leading bookseller, as well as direct from the authoress, at 49 Bellevue Avenue, Toronto. The price, bound in cloth, is \$2; or in half morocco \$2.50.

Small Practice.

Though themselves not by any means free from occasional blundering, the powers that be of the P. Q. R. A. continue to inflict the severest penalty upon any unfortunate competitor who makes a mistake however trifling. The meeting just concluded furnished several examples. For instances: A competitor asked at the wicket for an Optional match ticket. Though there was only one set of prizes, two sets of tickets were issued, one marked for Snider and the other for Martini. The competitor in question was handed a Snider ticket, but not noticing that it called for that rifle, he handed it to the register keeper, asked for and received seven rounds of Martini ammunition, and had almost completed his score with that rifle when the mistake was discovered. A reference to headquarters resulted in the disallowance of the score, which was a winning one. There was no justice in this proceeding. In the team competition in the Association match, a team score was disallowed because the team captain had made a mistake in figuring up his aggregate ticket; and the Montreal papers of Friday announce, we presume by authority, that the score of a team entered in the Grand Aggregate competition has been disallowed for a similar cause. Three days' shooting to count for nothing because of a mistake in arithmetic