

# CANADA:

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*"Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."*

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## Our Contributors.

### THE POET.

BY BLISS GARMAN.

The chosen one, of angel mien,  
Shall swing upon its golden bars  
The Aurora for his shifting scene,  
And crown his puppets with the stars.

New York, U. S. A.

### THE BURNING OF MIRAMICHI.

BY PASTOR FELIX.

From its wilds  
Spiced with dark cedars, cried the whip-poor-will.  
—*Isabella Vulancy Crawford, "Malcolm's Katie"*.

I saw with fear and awe!  
The heavens were all aflame!  
I knew the woods must be on fire!  
—*Alexander McLachlan, "Fire in the Woods"*.

The flames on forest move and mount  
From rank to rank, and loud and louder roll.  
—*Lawlor "Gehir"*.

#### I.

THE year 1825 may be termed the fire-year in Acadian annals; nor will it soon be forgotten how that mad-cap element, which is not less dreadful in its forest career than when, upon city streets, it,

"Commissioned by the winds,  
Begins on sheds, but, rolling in a round,  
On palaces returns",

made a holocaust of the northern wilderness.

On Nova Scotia's western shore a sort of preliminary torch had been kindled, and a considerable portion of Shelburne was burned over, about five years earlier, but this slight singeing, though memorable in the Province, and notable at the time, was as a few wandering sparks to fiery rain, like that in the vision of Dante.

There rises in Carleton County one of the largest rivers of the Province of New Brunswick, known as the Miramichi. Its noble volume is swelled by numerous tributaries, draining a wide extent of the centre of the Province; and it empties

its waters into a spacious bay, and by a flourishing town, now called Chatham, but then bearing the name of the river. If not so celebrated by sportsmen as the Restigouche or the Metapediae, nor so be praised for spaciousness and varied beauty as the St. John, it is commercially important, and owns in this respect no rival. Far from its debouchment its sources are hidden in woody deeps, where portages connect it with the N. shwaak and the St. John; but for fifty miles inland the white sails can travel from the ocean, and when the vernal or autumnal freshets are on, can go farther still.

Abundant wealth is here, in field, in wave and in forest; and at the time of the event we narrate the native product of river and wilderness was more profuse than now. Salmon and trout, those limber beauties of the fisher, sported in the clear waters; there swam the bass and the little smelt, and in its rocky retreat at the river's mouth crept the lobster; while deer, moose and smaller game abounded in the forest, whose dark palisade skirted a considerable extent of this rich waterway; but the dim tent-branches they sported under, of red and white pine, were being broken into by the lumberman's axe, for they were the fairest prize and richest spoil of the country.

If prosperity invites disaster, the time was ripe, for the lumber trade went flourishingly, and when should the store ever be exhausted? The mills, in goodly and increasing number, moved not lazily; and for some years there had been, in our modern expressive phrase, "a boom" in the business. With not unmusical shriek and clatter the saws were briskly ripping up the huge bulks of primeval timber, and the axes ceased not to wake the echoes among shadowy aisles; for was there not a demand for their products. Rapidly the tide of population was flowing in toward Miramichi, and many a comfortable home sprang suddenly up within its flourishing precinct; while many a hamlet or settler's cabin could be found, sprung mushroom-like, on the river-brink or in forest clearing. Prosperity was indeed here, so cheerfully advertised by the rapidly rising villages, the cottage homes, the snug churches and school houses, alas! a prosperity about to be swept still more suddenly away by an angry besom of fire!

Never within human memory had a summer been more fervid. Over all the great American continent the sun