



The Volunteer Review

AND MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE.

A Journal Devoted to the Interests of the Military and Naval Forces of the Dominion of Canada.

VOL. VI.

OTTAWA, (CANADA,) MONDAY, JANUARY 15, 1872.

No. 3.

THE CANADIAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

(Communicated.)

The appearance, with the new year, of the *Canadian Monthly*, is an event which we cannot pass over with the superficial notice which is all that is permitted us of magazines in general.

When we consider what unfortunately is daily forced on our perception—the viciousness, the frivolity and the crudity, of a large part of the press of every civilized country, the production of a magazine having, for its definite purpose, the elevation of tone of the growing literature of our rising nation, ought to be a subject of hearty rejoicing to all who are capable of a sound appreciation of the effort.

"Some books," says Bacon, "are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested." And in a minor degree, the aphorism is not inapplicable to magazines.

It is impossible to read the introductory article of the first number of the *Canadian Monthly*, without a feeling of confidence in the future influence of what is introduced to us with so much modesty and so much force; and it will be no credit to the "intellectual life of Canada," if the new periodical do not command a wide circulation, and a hearty and appreciative support.

We will take a brief glance at the articles contained in it, and we shall be happy if our remarks contribute in any degree to its diffusion.

The "Treaty of Washington" is discussed by Mr. Charles Lindsay, with a dispassionate impartiality, the statesmanlike calmness of which however, seems to bring forward more forcibly than would the most violent denunciation, the lax and time-serving policy of the present British Government.

It is impossible to resist the conviction that the omission by Sir Edward Thornton to include in the preliminary correspondence the Fenian Raids claim, which omission is given as the cause of the refusal by the U. S. government to consider them, was prearranged to afford the Imperial government an ignominious loop hole of escape from the duty of pressing its obligations

upon a nation whose insolent defiance of them on every occasion would be ludicrous were it not humiliating to England.

The ground taken by Lord Russell long ago to the Alabama claims should never have been receded from without a full understanding that the Fenian Raids should be set off against them. But it is in vain to look for a courageous foreign policy. The fact is that England is thoroughly afraid of the United States, and it may be predicated with perfect confidence of any diplomatic transaction that take place between the two nations, that Great Britain under a Radical government will submit with smiling complacency to all the kicking the United States may choose to bestow upon her, and probably the best thing that could happen to her would be that the States should go on kicking till they produce some effect.

The instincts of the British Nation seem to have indeed become demoralized, a demoralization which has been manifested in a false and servile pretence of admiration and good-will towards a nation and government whose steady policy is to pocket all concessions granted, and extort more by fresh insults and aggressions as soon as opportunity serves—and in false sympathies as evinced during the Franco Prussian War.

"Anne Hathaway" by Daniel Wilson L. D., is a pleasantly speculative dialogue on the probable tone of mind and feeling of the "poet of all time" as to his matrimonial relations. The view taken by the "Delina" of the dialogue is as natural as agreeable, and certainly seems as probable as any other.

The first instalment of "Marguerite Kneller, Artist and Woman" by Louisa Murray, gives promise of a healthy and not inelegant story of Parisian artist life in its best phase.

"What displeases me in Strauss" said Humboldt, "is the scientific levity which leads him to see no difficulty in the organic springing from the inorganic; nay, man himself from Chaldean mud." A series of arguments, which carry conviction to a sound mind, are directed by H. Alleyne Nicholson, M. D. F. R. S. E. &c., to the refutation of Mr. Darwin's theories of the descent of man in an

excellent article, "Man's place in nature," which would undoubtedly have elicited the commendation of the great German savant.

The "Curiosities of Canadian Literature," "Washington and Jumonville" by W. J. Anderson L. D. throws some light on one of those episodes of the Colonial Wars which preceded the American War of Independence, and a very curious one it is. There is a mine of interesting matter in old Canadian records of this period, little known to general readers, but which it would seem to be the special province of such a magazine as that before us to bring to light.

"An Historical Night in the old Canadian Parliament" by S. I. Watson, is a lively and interesting sketch of the debate (and of those who conducted it) on the \$100,000 City of Montreal Bonds question, which led to coalition, then to the Quebec Conference, and ultimately to Confederation.

The "End of Bohemia" a translation from the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of an essay on the part played by literature and Journalism in the recent events in France, is but the literary phase of the universal recklessness and frivolity which precipitated France to her downfall. Never was the "Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat" illustrated on so grand a scale—Verbose as are most serious productions, and somewhat tedious and dry, the article is instructive enough as far as it goes.

The conductors of the "Canadian" have done satisfactorily in reproducing the Laureates lost "Idyll" as a whole, in preference to reviewing it piecemeal. We are very fond of Tennyson, and think that he has passages which are unequalled in the whole range of poetry. We think, however, that he shines brightest in his shorter pieces, and has, in his longer ones, interspersed his beauties with more nonsense than perhaps any poet past or present. The idylls are throughout a mixture of quaint and not always happy conceits, with passages of unquestionable pathos and grandeur. "The last Tournament," undoubtedly not equal to "Guenever," is perhaps neither better nor worse than "Elaine," "Faïd" or "Vivien," certainly not so unpleasant as the latter.