

Moquin, the late Andrew Stuart. These were his classmates, his brother barristers, or his associates. What an excellent memory the old *litterateur* must have? Not even Justice McCarthy is forgotten. McCarthy, that "bright meteor" of the bar, whose sarcastic spirit was quenched so early by that fell destroyer, king alcohol.

Are these *memoirs*, for all that, faultless? Certainly not. One would have liked to see contemporary history take the place of too abundant family reminiscences. What a pity the old philosopher did not discover sixty years ago that he could write?

Might one not also be inclined to ask whether, in all points, Mr. DeGaspé's book is a faithful mirror of times by gone? Our own memory does not take us back to the days in which flourished a Lady Jersey, or in which a Mrs. Clarke dispensed military patronage, imperial and colonial, for the Duke of York, much less can we successfully retrace the ignominious period for Frenchmen, when the voluptuous Pompadour ruled supreme over the realms of Henri Quatre; but we know that at all times an echo of the mother country, under French and under English rule, reached our shore for good or bad; nor could we reasonably expect to find the social atmosphere of the colony purity itself, when it was tainted in the metropolis—the waters of the streamlet cannot be limpid, when those of the river which feed it are turbid. This being the case, one is apt to ask, whether colonial society, in the days of Mr. DeGaspé, was as free of blemish as he leads one to believe. It is all very well, and possibly praiseworthy, to carry charity towards one's contemporaries to the most remote limits; but truthfulness, in details, we hold to be indispensable. We trust our old friends will forgive this frank expression of opinion.

Will Mr. DeGaspé's example be followed by some of the votaries of letters belonging to a former generation still lingering in our midst? We devoutly hope so, for the cause of history. Were it not presumption on our part, we would call by name on some of the talented veterans, whose years must have brought them a large store of wisdom and experience: we would beseech them, ere the relentless hand of fate overtake them, to leave a written record of "men and manners" in the colony in the heyday of their youth. Will the venerable Laird of Fairmead, Drummondville, permit us to ask him for his recollections of former days? Will the veteran statesman, of Monte Bello, Ottawa, consent to jot down an account of his parliamentary contests, triumphs, &c., but we fear being thought presumptive.

Mr. DeGaspé's memoirs are likely to meet with favor, especially in that portion of Lower Canada where the chief personages whom he introduced to our notice flourished. The peculiar customs of the French Canadian peasantry are admirably sketched.

Cog, Bezeau, Romain, Chouinard, Major Laforce: these characters are true to the life: they are types which any one acquainted with French Canadians will recognise.

We shall close this notice with a description by Mr. DeGaspé of

A FETE CHAMPÊTRE AT POWELL PLACE IN 1809.

"At half past eight A.M., on a bright July morning, (I say a bright one, for such had lighted up this welcome *fête champêtre* during three consecutive years) the *élite* of the Quebec *beau monde* left the city to attend Sir James Craig's kind invitation. Once opposite Powell Place, (now Spencer Wood) the guests left their vehicles on the main road, and plunged into a dense forest, following a serpentine avenue which led to a delightful cottage in full view of the majestic Saint Lawrence; the river here appears to flow past amidst luxuriant and green bowers which line its banks. Small tables for four, for six, for eight guests are laid out facing the cottage, on a platform of *planned* deals—this will shortly serve as a dancing floor *à fresco*; as the guests successively arrive, they form in par-

* Governor Craig went by the name of the little King, on account of his love of display.

ties to partake of a *dejeuner en famille*. I say *en famille* for an *aide-de-camp* and a few waiters excepted, nothing interferes with the small groups clubbed together to enjoy this early repast, of which cold meat, radishes, bread, tea and coffee form the staples. Those whose appetite is appeased make room for new comers, and amuse themselves strolling under the shade of trees. At ten the cloth is removed; the company are all on the *qui vive*. The cottage, like the enchanted castle in the opera of Zemira and Azor, only awaits the magic touch of a fairy; a few minutes elapse,* and the chief entrance is thrown open: little King Craig, followed by a brilliant staff, enters. Simultaneously an invisible orchestra, located high amidst the dense foliage of large trees, strikes up *God save the Queen*. All stand uncovered, in solemn silence, in token of respect to the national anthem of Great Britain.

"The magnates press forward to pay their respects to His Excellency. Those who do not intend to "trip the light fantastic toe" take seats on the platform where His Excellency sits in state; an A.D.C. calls out, *gentlemen take your partners*, and the dance begins.

"Sixty winters have run by since that day, when I, indefatigable dancer, figured off in a country dance of thirty couples. My footsteps, which now seem to me like lead, scarcely then left a trace behind them. All the young hearts, who enlivened this gay meeting of other days, are cold in their tombs; even *she*, the most beautiful of them all, *la belle des belles*—*she*, the partner of my joys and of my sorrows—*she*, who on that day accepted in the circling dance, for the first time, this hand, which, two years after, was to lead her to the hymenial altar—yes, even *she* has been swept away by the tide of death. † May not I also say, with Ossian, 'Why art thou sad, son of Fingal! Why grows the cloud of thy soul! The sons of future years shall pass away: another race shall arise! The people are like the waves of the ocean; like the leaves of woody Morven—they pass away in the rustling blast, and other leaves lift their green heads on high.'

"After all, why, indeed, yield up my soul to sadness? The children of the coming generation will pass rapidly, and a new one will take its place. Men are like the surges of the ocean, resemble leaves which hang over the groves of my manor; autumnal storms cause them to fall, but new and equally green ones each spring replace the fallen leaves. Why should I sorrow? Eighty-six children, grand-children, and great-grand-children, will mourn the fall of the old oak when the breath of the Almighty shall smite it. Should I have the good fortune to meet with mercy from the sovereign judge, should it be vouchsafed to me to meet again the angel of virtue, who embellished the few happy days I passed in this vale of sorrow, we will both pray together for the numerous progeny we left behind us. But let us revert to the merry meeting previously alluded to. It is half-past two in the afternoon, we are gaily going through the figures of the country dance "speed the plough" perhaps when the music stops short; everyone is taken aback, and wonders at the cause of interruption. The arrival of two prelates, Bishop Plessis and Bishop Mountain, gave us the solution of the enigma; an *aide-de-camp* had motioned to the bandmaster to stop, on noticing the entrance of the two high dignitaries of the respective churches. The dance was interrupted whilst they were there, and was resumed on their departure. Sir James had introduced this point of etiquette, from the respect he entertained for their persons.

"At three, the loud sound of a French horn is heard in the distance, and all follow His Excellency, in a path cut through the then virgin forest of Powell Place. Some of the guests, from the length of the walk, began to think that Sir James had intended those who had not danced to take a 'constitutional' before dinner, when,

† M. DeGaspé married in 1811, Susan, daughter of Thomas Allison, Esq., a captain of the 6th Regiment, infantry, and of Theresa Baby; his two brother officers, Captain Ross Lewin and Bellingham, afterwards Lord Bellingham, married at Detroit, then belonging to Upper Canada, two sisters, daughters of the Hon. Jacques Dupéron Baby.

on rounding an angle, a huge table, canopied with green boughs, groaning under the weight of dishes, struck on their view—a grateful oasis in the desert. Monsieur Petit, the chief cook, had surpassed himself; like Vatel, I imagine he would have committed suicide had he failed to achieve the triumph, by which he intended to elicit our praise; nothing could exceed in magnificence, in sumptuousness this repast—such was the opinion not only of the Canadians, for whom such displays were new, but also of the European guests, though there was a slight drawback to the perfect enjoyment of the dishes—the *materials which composed them we could not recognise*, so great was the artistic skill, so wonderful the manipulation of Monsieur Petit, the French cook.

"The Bishops left about half an hour after dinner, when dancing was resumed with an increasing ardor, but the cruel *mammæ* were getting concerned respecting certain sentimental walks which their daughters were enjoying after sunset. They ordered them home, if not with that menacing attitude with which the goddess Calypso is said to have spoken to her nymphs, at least with frowns, so said the gay young *cavaliers*. By nine o'clock, all had returned to Quebec."

J. M. C.
Spencer Grange, near Quebec, Sept., 1866.

REMARKABLE HISTORY OF A TORPEDO-BOAT

THE following eventful history of a torpedo-boat is taken from General Maury's report of the defence of Mobile. The vessel, which was built of boiler iron, was about 35 feet long, and was manned by a crew of nine men, eight of whom worked the propeller by hand. The ninth steered the boat, and regulated her movements below the surface of the water. She could be submerged at pleasure to any desired depth, or could be propelled upon the surface. In smooth, still water her movements were exactly controlled, and her speed was about four knots. It was intended that she should approach any vessel lying at anchor, pass under her keel, and drag a floating torpedo, which would explode on striking the side or bottom of the ship attacked. She could remain submerged more than half an hour without inconvenience to her crew. Soon after her arrival in Charleston, Lieutenant Payne, of the Confederate Navy, with eight others, volunteered to attack the Federal fleet with her. While preparing for their expedition the swell of a passing steamer caused her to sink suddenly, and all hands, except Lieutenant Payne, who at that moment was standing in the open hatch way, perished. She was soon raised, and again made ready for service. Lieutenant Payne again volunteered to command her. While lying near Fort Sumter she capsized, and again sunk in deep water drowning all hands except her commander and two others. Being again raised and prepared for action, Mr. Aunley, one of the constructors, made an experimental cruise with her on Cooper River. While submerged at great depth, from some unknown cause she became unmanageable, and remained for many days at the bottom of the river with her crew of nine dead men. A fourth time was the boat raised, and Lieutenant Dixon, of Mobile, of the 21st Volunteers, with eight others, went out of Charleston Harbour in her, and attacked and sunk the Federal steamer Housatonic. Her mission at last accomplished, she disappeared for ever with her crew. Nothing is known of their fate, but it is believed they went down with the enemy.

INK STAINS ON WOOD.—If the stains be on mahogany, put a few drops of spirit of nitre in a tea-spoonful of water, touch the spot with a feather dipped in the mixture, and on the ink disappearing, rub it over immediately with a rag wetted in cold water, or there will be a white mark which will not be easily effaced. If the stain be on the common deal tables or dressers, or on the boards of floors, the same mixture can be used, but the latter precaution need not be adopted.