

Council of Public Instruction, which held its first meeting on the 10th January of the last year and in which the different religious bodies, as well as the respective nationalities, were most respectably represented; of Normal, Model, Industrial, and even Infant Schools; of a valuable Museum attached to one of the Model schools; of conferences of teachers in which "important questions have been discussed and excellent lectures delivered;" of parish libraries, to the number of one hundred and thirty one; of School Inspectors, numbering as many as twenty-six, and such other arrangements as appertain to an advanced state of public instruction. We see it stated that "six of the pupils who have left the McGill Normal school are now teachers in Upper Canada, and two from the Jacques Cartier school are teachers in Prince Edward Island." Respecting the attendance at the Normal schools the report says, "it is pleasant to observe that nearly all the pupils are from the country; and that nearly all the counties in Lower Canada have furnished their contingent." This is indeed a pleasing fact, and must tend to excellent results, inasmuch as these pupils, when they will have become qualified teachers, will, in most instances, return to their native counties, and be received with a degree of confidence and respect commensurate with their acquirements. Tables of statistics appended to the report show the present number of primary schools to be 3,011, an increase over the year 1858 of 147; the number of scholars 141,533, increase over previous year, 10,593. The statistics of superior education show as the number of pupils of Universities and Superior Schools, 509; of Classical Colleges, 2,756; of Industrial Colleges, 1,962; Academies for boys, 6,568; for girls, 14,278; Normal Schools, 219; total, 26,287; increase over the year 1858, 412.

Highly pleasing as is this report in its general bearing, it still has its dark side. "Wherever there is light there is shade." The concluding words give us the painful fact, "that notwithstanding the great number of schools of all kinds now possessed by the two great cities of Quebec and Montreal a large proportion of the children in both attend no school, and receive no kind of instruction. All the schools now in operation are literally overcrowded, but neither the number nor the dimensions correspond with the wants of the still increasing population." In connection with this statement Mr. Chauveau avers, that while "for some years past Quebec has voted an additional sum, Montreal has hitherto refused this boon." This state of things should no longer be disregarded by our Statesmen and Philanthropists. Ignorance in Cities is much more fatal than in the rural parts; and if it be the question of economy, which is interfering between our city poor and their right to protection from the heathen darkness, which we read of as abounding in some of the old-world cities, surely very little reflection would shew that it is cheaper, besides being incomparably more pleasant, to pay the school master than the policeman; and that a better return can be obtained for money given to Clergymen for teaching in public schools, than for the salaries paid them as Chaplains of Gaols, or as associates of the Sheriff on the demoralising public scaffold.

The Visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to America.

IX.

LOWER CANADA.

(Continued from our last.)

The following morning the Prince left for Ottawa.

While in Montreal and Quebec His Royal Highness had a good opportunity of forming a correct opinion of the civilization of the country; for in those old and well developed centres the heterogeneous elements of which society is composed, are all to be found, both distinct from each other, and amalgamated.

Though Montreal is not so old as Quebec its early history is as interesting, and still more stirring. The founding of this city, on the very confines of the country of the Mohawks, whose murderous inroads were the terror of the continent, was an act of great boldness, if not absolute temerity.

On the 17th May 1642, M. de Maisonneuve, the agent of a company formed in France, under rather surprising circumstances, for the purpose of founding a city in the country of the Iroquois, caused a small chapel, the first erected on the Island, to be consecrated by Père Vimont, the superior of the Jesuits then in the colony. The Island itself was, on the 15th August following, —the festival of the Assumption,—dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Hence the name of Villo-Marie, by which the town was long designated, and which is even now occasionally met with in

ecclesiastical documents. In 1663, the Sulpicians of Paris became possessed of this fine domaine, and soon established a house, far wealthier now than the one from which it springs and almost as old. During a long period the small settlement possessed for its protection against the hostile tribes nothing but a feeble palisade and the indomitable courage of its inhabitants. Sixty years later the town was surrounded by a wall, which was not removed until 1808, when it was found to be an impediment to the growth of the city, and quite inadequate to its purpose in a strategical point of view.

The line of these fortifications, as laid down on an old plan made in 1758, extends towards the west to the space now occupied by McGill street; following thence, in a northern direction, nearly the line of Craig street, it terminates in the east,—a little below the citadel, which occupied part of the ground now taken up by Da'housie Square and extending to St. Denis street.

The population of Montreal in 1720, was 3000 souls, and of the whole of Canada not more than 10,000. (1)

In the year 1765 a conflagration destroyed almost the whole town, involving 215 families in a general ruin, and causing a loss of about \$400,000. Public generosity was appealed to both in England and in Canada, and considerable sums were raised by subscription for the relief of the sufferers. That part which the fire had destroyed was rebuilt, and much improved,—a circumstance by no means unusual in such cases,—and Montreal soon rose from her ashes with renewed vigor and prosperity.

In 1775, Montgomery with some troops of the Revolution, occupied it for a few months, and then abandoned it. It was much exposed in 1812; nay, had Salaberry been unsuccessful at Chateaugay, it would in all probability have again fallen into the hands of the enemy. In 1837-8, after two insurrections, it was for some time subjected to martial law; many of its leading citizens were imprisoned through vindictive party spirit, or through the interested zeal of subordinates thirsting for money and honors; and twelve executions for political offences followed.

As a singular example of the vicissitudes of human affairs, it is worthy of notice that all the French Canadians who, since the Union, have filled the post of Prime Minister, and many who held portfolios under them, were either imprisoned, or molested at the time.

In 1849, the Act securing indemnification for losses sustained during the rebellion was assailed by the party in opposition as a direct premium offered to treason. A riot followed during which the building where parliament met was fired by the mob, and entirely destroyed. A splendid library containing about 30,000 volumes was lost; not satisfied with this act of Vandalism the mob kept the town in alarm until the government was at length removed to Toronto.

Montreal was the great mart of the fur trade with the Indians under the French and the English. Here the renowned *bourgeois* of the North-West lived in princely style; while their hardy *royaumeurs* carried the trade into the most distant regions of the continent. The town is not now dependent on this trade, which indeed has taken another direction, but by the vigorous energy and activity of its merchants has become the great *entrepot* of the trade between England and Upper Canada, and even of that between the former country and some of the States of the American Union. The obstructions in Lake St. Peter, which prevented vessels of great draught reaching the Port, were removed by dredging; canals were made, and extensive wharves and basins were built to accommodate the shipping; railways were constructed,—one to Portland, securing a direct communication with the sea-board at all seasons,—and thus prosperous and enterprising city, stimulated by the healthy development of the country, acquired a commercial importance which has increased ever since. At present it is connected by rail with River du Loup, Quebec, Portland, Sherbrooke, New York, Toronto, Sarnia, Detroit, and Ottawa. In 1859, the value of its exports was \$3,044,000, and its imports amounted to \$15,553,000.

The population is generally estimated at 85,000 to 90,000; about one-half is of French origin, and upwards of two thirds belong to the Roman Catholic faith. The wards St. Lawrence, St. Lewis, St. Mary, and St. Antoine are in a great measure peopled by Franco-Canadians. St. Ann's ward, comprising Griffintown, is principally inhabited by the Irish population, which is also distributed in the St. Lawrence ward, and the St. Mary's, often called the Quebec suburbs. The English, Scotch, and Americans dwell in the West, St. Antoine, and Centre wards. There are also

(1) *Montréal et ses principaux Monuments*.—Published by E. Senécal, 1850.