

and transporting troops stood out in bold relief from the general monotony of the campaign. The citizen soldiers were not only subjected to the most trying privations, but supplied with scarcely a moiety of the accoutrements absolutely essential to their own comfort and to the successful combating of the enemy. If errors of a like magnitude should distinguish the administration of the militia department in operations against an outside foe, the results could not be other than of a deplorably damaging character. Those who are charitably inclined might be willing to attribute a portion of these grave mistakes to Canada's want of experience in conducting hostilities, although Wolseley's expedition of 1870 was as brilliant a feat as can be found inscribed on the pages of American history.

As an instance of the demagoguism, that runs riot in the regnant school of politicians it is only necessary to cite the offer of the Canadian government to raise thousands of men to do service in the cause of England should the stability of the nation be at any time threatened by continental neighbors. In London, Sir Charles Tupper, Canada's High Commissioner, has offered England any number of Canadian regiments that the exigencies of the case might demand. Nothing could be more ridiculous even at the first blush. In the event of England being driven to desperate straits a few needy individuals might be found in the Dominion who would be willing to go whither they were lead. But they would be prompted by motives of a purely mercenary nature. Patriotism in the colony is not sufficiently elastic to be the sole cause of any number of men volunteering to fight on the other side of the Atlantic for their mother country. To defend British possessions on this side of the water would be an entirely different thing. Love for the old country, however, is, in Canada, rapidly approaching the last stages of decline. Casting our eyes over the whole continent we can see to-day but one remnant of old time autocracy—the garrison at Halifax. There a few red coats, becoming fewer year by year, are the only indications of the queen's supremacy. Cosmopolitan ideas have spread with such celerity that arbitrary Englishmen, stalking round on official stilts, cannot be suffered—in any part of the western hemisphere, where the trend of public opinion is so overwhelmingly in favor of republican institutions. The prevailing and ever-widening sentiment of the new world, accurately embodied in Bartholdi's liberty enlightening statue, seeks an untrammelled existence, and the most unqualified freedom. The rapid disappearance of tyrannical dominion, which seems to have been driven away on the fleeting wings of the wind, is one of the gladsome pictures in Canada's colonial annals.

[CONCLUDED].

C. P. M.

[FOR THE CRITIC.]

## OUR WINNIPEG LETTER.

WINNIPEG, Dec. 9th, 1885.

Dear Critic,—A son of thy city, one who has some of the dearest fancies of boyhood's earliest, happiest days next his heart, sendeth thee greeting. Having strayed from the shadows of thy streets to the far away Northland, this City of the Prairies, a few lines of interest will, I know, be acceptable, and may this gold nib of Arkin Lambert & Co.'s be inspired to pen with true and good intent, respecting men and events, and from a standpoint far above all party politics.

Methinks your humble servant would make a most reckless and unsuccessful pioneer, for necessity alone would compel me to live on the prairies. A sense of loneliness comes over one which is appalling, and we look around to see if there is a road of escape; and it naturally would be to any one who could recall the past vividly before them even without the desire to do so, congenial companions, good books, and plenty of work, would be the only panacea for such cravings. This city of Winnipeg is such a flat place, so devoid of interest in the way of natural scenery that I can't understand how anyone can content themselves to live here unless compelled to by business associations. I walked out of the city a short time ago and just on its outskirts found myself on the prairies, lines of telegraph poles lost in the far distance indicating the railways, here and there some lowly hut constructed of logs or boards, and banked up as high as possible with hay or manure ready for the winter frosts; in other places houses of larger pretensions, but these few and far between, a few plots of ground fenced off with juniper posts and barbed wire fencing; then again stacks of hay, some on the distant horizon looking like the hulls of disabled ships, whilst around there is not a tree to be seen, and in the intervals between the houses and huts, nothing but the vast prairie far out as the eye can see, on leaving the outskirts of the city and launching out on this wide expanse of treeless ground one seems like a ship at sea and an instinctive feeling of dread and loneliness comes over you, and a silence, as if the to the repent of some impending catastrophe seems to reign around, whilst an impulsive desire seizes you to walk on and on till some goal is reached, this is at least my experience of the prairies. When I say there are no trees, I mean on the portion I was exploring, trees and brush of a stunted growth are to be seen elsewhere by the river, which I will make mention of at some future time. This dreary waste of land I have just pictured is caused by its being held by speculators who mostly live out of the country, and, not having very heavy taxes to pay, can afford to hold on whilst Winnipeg suffers in the meantime. Every effort should be made to break up this monopoly, for the land could be portioned out, kitchen gardens, and dairy farms would then supply all the city's needs in these lines, and it would be a pleasure to walk out amongst cultivated fields and gardens and well-stocked farms, instead of as now across acres upon acres of prairie land producing nothing but hay.

One can well imagine how dreary the autumns are here with no trees to enliven with their varied colors in the red and yellow leaf, and I think what endears Nova Scotia to the lover of Nature more than anything else, is the

glory of her autumn scenery when the maple, beech, and mountain ash put on their princely robes of color, and challenge the artists skill to depict them on the canvass; a challenge which has often been taken up by our well-known artist *Fernand Day*, and although his pictures were gems of color, I can't say to my eye they gave with precision that soft atmosphere which always accompanies the autumn, at least in the Lower Provinces, his skies and atmosphere are in general too cold. In no other part of Canada does the maple seem to change to such a variety of vivid hues—even on the same leaf and tree—as in Nova Scotia; I have experienced autumns from Halifax to Winnipeg in all parts of the five Provinces, but none compare with your own, whether it is owing to the saltiness of the air acting with the frost (for it is always after the first touch of frost that the maples change) which tends to sharpen up and intensify the tones, it would be hard to say, but it is a point worth investigating. I have seen a maple tree by the side of a small brook, a blaze of red and orange, standing out against a back ground of the same trees as green as ever they were in the middle of summer, this brilliant exception led me to investigate when I found it was a rock maple, whilst the others were of the ordinary variety. Referring to the saltiness of the air, and the salt held in suspension by the fogs floating inland, its presence became strikingly evident to me on more than one occasion. Walking in from Bedford one autumn evening, when the roads were slightly frozen hard, with a slight perceptible dampness noticeable in the air, I found to my surprise, soon after setting out, that my face was apparently covered with dust; where did it come from? Not from the road. Was it dust? I at once passed my finger over my forehead, then touched my tongue, it was nothing more than common salt. What state or condition of the human system was it that salt exuded through the pores of the skin? I thought that some terrible sickness was about to seize me. The problem was soon solved; it was deposited from the atmosphere. I then found the backs of my hands and my clothing were also covered, even the leaves of the bushes, fencing, etc., all surrounding objects being warmer than the cool current of air blowing up the basin robbed it of a large portion of the salt held in suspension. This saltiness of the air is no doubt also one of the causes why the cold is felt more intensely than in this country, for what school-boy does not know the intense cold caused by holding a mixture of snow and salt, or ice and salt for a few moments in the hand.

Pardon me if I am deviating somewhat from the course laid down to write respecting this country. It would be treating my old home slightly indeed if at the outset I had not mentioned it, and I think if Nova Scotians would take pains to cultivate the love of country which I am sorry to say is much wanting in their craniums, they would speak less despairingly of their native land. Stand by each other to build up the country, and with pride they could then say to their children, "Go thou and do likewise." Yes, there is a sad want of unity, not so much in Nova Scotians, but in Haligonians; party politics has been, is and will be, if not squelched, the ruin of the country. It is not carried to such extremes here, although to take up the Grit and Tory papers a stranger would be inclined to think there existed at times a feeling anything but brotherly between contending parties. But I think with us, or rather with Winnipeggers, it is only on the surface, and I have many facts to substantiate what I say, the press does not launch out with such damaging scurrillity to blacken opponents' characters as in other provinces, and for which Halifax is noted, men here are ever ready to help along any scheme that may benefit the community or the province, and be it to their honor, I have never heard any man, no matter what his politics may be, affirm anything else of the country than that "it is a great one," and "has a great future before it," but further more that such a future can be forthcoming only through the combined efforts of all parties. A genuine unalloyed love of country is not a distinguishing trait in our statesmen and politicians of to-day, and I think they would do well in many ways to study the political lives of England's great statesmen—they would gain many a hint—rather than as at present leaning towards a system, which our brothers over the border have become such adepts in—but enough of this. If, as a young man I refer to politics—and young men should take more interest in the government of the country than they do—it is with a hope that at no distant day, true manly independence and respect for each other's characters, will distinguish the contestants in the political arena; in short that they will be "God fearing men."

The people of Canada, the English speaking portion at least, are heartily sick of the Riel affair, we are at all events, having had a surfeit of news in connection with the central character of the Metis-Rebellion; and now one seldom hears his name mentioned. There was great excitement throughout the city on the morning of the execution, no boys flying around with extras of the *Manitoban* paper, and as eager as any, was a young burly fellow, a French Canadian, calling out with his native accent, *Manitoban*, execution of Riel! I met quite a number of French half-breeds, but they did not appear at all excited or affected by the news, hearing one member of a small group of men and women mention Riel's name, I closely watched their countenances, there was no mistaking; there was a look of silent pity on every face, especially on that of an elderly woman, the principal figure of the group, who only restrained from shedding tears by a strong effort of the will, perhaps she was recalling pleasant memories in connection with the earlier years of the unfortunate man. Such thoughts would make the strongest heart feel a throb of pain. I did not notice a clenched fist or a look of revenge among any of the group. The family of the rebel seemed to have received the news with becoming sorrow and without any outburst of passionate revenge or imprecation on the heads of the Govt, perhaps their hearts were too full for any outward expression. The half-breed character is naturally stoical and reserved, even amongst themselves, they are not over inclined to be communicative, and to a stranger they merely answer direct questions, and after a long acquaintance only do they become friendly; they seem to be ever on the watch, not a direct look, but you can often catch