

Within the past few years in Ontario much work has been done in rearing with a view to clearer recognition the noble structure of this history of the province. It is for that purpose this association exists. The second article of its constitution is in these words:

"Its objects shall be to unite the various pioneer and historical societies of the province in one central head or organization, thereby the better to promote intercourse and union of all such societies, for the better preservation of historical and other records and memorials of the province, for the forming of new societies, for promoting and extending the influence and benefits thereof."

But further than this, the chief purpose of the association is to foster the spirit of British Canadian nationality, which shall remain strong and steadfast for generations to come. That was the spirit of the United Empire loyalists and others of 1783, the pioneers and founders of this and each maritime province.

Strong indeed and steadfast was each province in itself for long years under the British flag; but stronger than ever are these provinces now in the bond of Confederation, consummated in 1867. The same spirit held together, united as one man, the brave and successful defenders of Upper and Lower Canada during the period of 1812-14, again in 1837, again in 1866, again in 1870 when Louis Riel rebelled in the Northwest.

But we were referring to the work of the association being to preserve historical records, to keep alive the memories of the pioneers and loyal defenders of this country.

At the same time we are not unmindful of others filled with just the same spirit, persons who are fellow-workers with us in the study and cultivation of Canadian history, or who have been such in recent years. My memory fails to recount all the names, but among writers eminent in their day were Hon. W. H. Merritt, Rev. Dr. Egerton Ryerson, Francis Parkman and J. C. Dent. Again, at the present time there are Dr. J. G. Hodgins, Dr. Canniff, Captain Cruikshank, Rev. Dr. Scadding, Mrs. J. D. Edgar, Mrs. Curzon, Miss Fitz-Gibbon, Professor Bryce, D. B. Read, Q.C., W. Kirby, F.R.S., O. A. Howland, M.P.P., Chas. Durand, Miss Carnochan, Rev. E. J. Fessenden, Dr. W. H. Withrow and Canniff Haight. I must not fail to mention Dr. Kingsford, of Ottawa, and his most valuable history of Canada, which has reached its seventh volume and will probably reach twice that number before its completion. It is a great work and labor of love. Moreover, I ought not to seem to omit from the list of able writers belonging to this province the name of the Hon. G. W. Ross, biographer of the late Hon. Alex. Mackenzie, statesman and prime minister of Canada, or the names of G. M. Mercer and Joseph Pope, separate and independent biographers of the late Sir John A. Macdonald, statesman and prime minister of Canada. Further, I should not neglect to note the fact that a gentleman is now engaged in writing the biography of the late Sir John Abbott and the late Sir John Thompson, both distinguished statesmen and prime ministers of this Dominion. Besides these eminent names (and I shall regret the circumstance if I have unconsciously omitted