

the past, one which shall abide with us in the future, and ever remain the Canadian emblem on the British flag." Now, with all due deference to Dr. Sandford Fleming—for whom I have the greatest respect—could these remarks apply to a "star"? Has a star ever been associated with the national life work of our country? (Except as the rebel-badger of republicanism, as pointed out by Mr. Chadwick). Of course, we know that the maple tree is to be found in the United States and that stars shine over Canada, but it is an undoubted fact that, to Canadians, a "star-flag" is always suggestive of the neighbouring republic; and we should lose much of our identity were we to discard the Maple Leaf for a fraction of the pepper-box corner of the flag of the Union. It is, indeed, news to most of us that the Maple Leaf represents Ontario only! As to Dr. Fleming's objections to the colour, I think that a green leaf on a white disc or shield would form one of the most conspicuous devices it is possible to imagine; it is nature's everlasting colour, symbolic (according to the latest work of reference) of: that which is "characterized by strength or youthful vigor; undecayed, flourishing, fresh as, *green* old age." Mr. Barlow Cumberland strikes the nail on the head when he says that the Maple Leaf is already the flag emblem of Canada, and that if there be a change, the Leaf should be the cognizance in place of the arms. In my last letter to THE WEEK, I spoke of the Yankees boasting that we were obliged to copy a portion of their banner; and the ink was scarcely dry when the *Philadelphia Record* said that we were doing a "delightful thing" in adopting "the same flag," while we were making up our minds to join heart and hand with the United States; that one day we will "undoubtedly be added, seven points and all, to the Star Spangled Banner," where our little star would "shine with a lustre and brilliancy it never knew before!" Thus it is, as might be expected, because some of our people wish to see the star emblem on our flag, the Americans, naturally, imagine that we are anxious for political annexation; but they need not insult us by saying that *then* our national ensign will be crowned with a glory "it will never before have known!" We Canadians repudiate the idea; for we know that there is a glory that is grander, and a lustre that is far more brilliant, ever to be associated with the flag we love so dearly, which has "braved a thousand years"—the British Ensign.

H. SPENCER HOWELL.

Galt, June 29th.

UPPER CANADA COLLEGE.

SIR,—The impending catastrophe, as I fear it must be deemed, of Upper Canada College, will be deplored not by Old Boys alone. Upper Canada College has a history which is valuable in an unhistoric country; it is a centre of attachments and associations, while the pupils of one of our ordinary Public Schools, whatever may be their feelings towards their teacher, have, I suppose, little more feeling towards the school than one has towards a telegraph office or a fire station. It is about the only institution by means of which our wealthy class can pay to the common-wealth the most precious of all their tributes, that of youths who have undergone the very best attainable education without regard to mere commercial results. It has more-over a certain measure of educational independence and is more regulated by the general intelligence of the country and less by a bureaucracy than the ordinary High School. We acquiesce in the bureaucratic machine which may be taken to be unalterably established; but we do not want to be rolled quite flat.

It seems too probable, after what has happened, that the College will commence the next term with about a score of boarders. In fact, as matters now stand, it is doomed. The instruction in our High Schools has now been brought up to such a point that we can hardly expect parents to incur a large additional expense for the sake of withdrawing their children from the High School and sending them to a College in convulsions.

Justice to the members of the Managing Board requires us to say that duties have been imposed upon them by the Act of Parliament which they could not be reasonably expected to perform. Most of them are men of business whose time is much occupied, and none of them are experts in education. But they are called upon by the Act of Parliament almost to run the College. Their ordinary duties should have been

limited, as those of English Boards of Trustees practically are, to the supervision of the finance.

This, however, will not account for so extraordinary a step as the abrupt and ignominious dismissal of the principal and whole staff of the College without explanation or specific charge of any kind. It must surely have been evident to the members of the Board that they would thereby shatter public confidence and bring on the disaster which has ensued. The Government, I believe, has a veto on all the proceedings of the Board. Why did it not interpose? Its acquiescence gives colour to the suspicion—which I hope, however, is entirely unfounded—that it wishes to be rid of the financial difficulties connected with the College, and was not unwilling that the Board of Management should cut the knot.

The College, it is to be feared, has now little chance of life, unless the management can be at once transferred to the hands of men whose names are sufficiently well known in connection with education to regain the confidence of the public. It seems that there are nearly seven thousand Old Boys. Among that number surely a sufficient body of competent managers could be found.

If Upper Canada College falls, our wealthy men will very likely be led to send more of their boys to English schools, a practice, which, with all my respect and affection for English places of education, I cannot help thinking injurious to boys who are destined to pass their lives in Canada as well as to this country.

GOLDWIN SMITH.

Toronto, June 29th, 1895.

THE PROPOSED QUADRI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

SIR,—It is very gratifying to know that preparations are being made for the fitting celebration of the 400th anniversary of the discovery of this continent by Sebastian Cabot, on the 24th June, 1497; and I am quite sure that the people of the Dominion at least will be extremely grateful to Mr. Howland and his associates for assuring them of the opportunity for assisting in so agreeable an event.

But whilst I say this, may I be permitted to correct several historical errors in the committee's programme which appear to me to have crept into it, perhaps quite accidentally. In Mr. Howland's letter to you, published last week, that gentleman, as chairman of the committee, states that "on the 24th of June, 1497, John Cabot sighted that extreme eastern part of Nova Scotia known as Cape Breton. It was the first discovery of the continent of America authoritatively recorded in history." There are several mistakes in this quotation from Mr. Howland's letter which I desire to rectify. (1) There is no historical record to be found anywhere that John Cabot ever visited any part of this continent. (2) It was his son, Sebastian Cabot, who effected its discovery on the 24th June, 1497. (3) Nor is there any record anywhere to be found that Cape Breton was the first point of Cabot's contact with the continent. There is, however, abundant evidence that, in that day, Sebastian Cabot, in command of an expedition composed of five vessels, manned by about 300 men, "caught the first glimpse of Terra Nova" (Newfoundland); that he gave the promontory which he first sighted the name of Prima Vista (now Cape Bonavista); and that "in such abundance were fish discovered in its waters that Sebastian called the country-Boccalieu," a name borne by an island in its neighborhood to this day, which I have visited more than once. As Pedley says in his history*, "the explorers then proceeded southward and westward, taking observations of Nova Scotia and a considerable part of the coast," and necessarily of Cape Breton Island, its outlying north-eastern extremity. From the same history I quote the following "extracts from an account of the privy purse expenses of Henry VII., now amongst MSS. of the British Museum," and "copied from a note to Anderson's History of the Colonial Church (vol. i. p. 8):" the payments being made at periods immediately and some time after the return of the Cabotian expedition:

1497, Aug. 10.—To him that found the New Isle, 10/.

1498, March 24.—To Lancelot Thirkell, of London, upon a present for his ship going towards the New Isle, 20/.

April 1.—To Thomas Bradley and Lancelot Thirkell, going to the New Isle, 30/.

*"History of Newfoundland." By Rev. C. Pedley. London: Longman & Co. 1863. Pp. 5-7.