

# The Canadian Journal.

TORONTO, MAY, 1853.

Address Delivered at the Annual Conversazione of the Canadian Institute, April 2nd, by Mr. Justice Draper.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—

Our Annual Conversazione unites with the other signs of the times, to remind us that Spring is at length emerging from the icy thralldom of Winter, that the season of opening leaves and blossoming buds is just arriving. May we not, without forced analogy, trace the signs of the same spring time of the year, as applied to the state and condition of Upper Canada.

The few posts, whether military or trading, or even those of the earliest missionaries, which were established in any part of what was afterwards declared to be Upper Canada, before the peace of 1783, were too inconsiderable to require notice as forming any exception to the general proposition, that this part of Canada was then a mere wilderness, in which civilization was at Zero, and into the gloomy depths of whose primeval forests, neither the light of Science nor the radiance of Christianity had penetrated. It was after that period that the settlement of Upper Canada was begun by that loyal and devoted body of people, of whom Edmund Burke spoke as "persons who had emigrated from the United States," "who had fled from the blessings of the American Government," and with regard to whom he further observed: "there might be many causes of emigration not connected with government, such as a more fertile soil, or more congenial climate—but they had forsaken all the advantages of a more fertile soil, and more southern latitude, for the bleak and barren regions of Canada." It is to them and to their enduring efforts that this country owes its first germ of improvement. And let it be borne in mind, that they were not of a class who emigrated from the mere pressure of want, or to escape the danger of starvation—whose principal craving was to find such employment of their physical energies, that in return for their labour, they should obtain food for themselves and their little ones. They had been accustomed to the most valuable enjoyments of civilized life, to the advantages of Education and Christian teaching, and they sought in Upper Canada a home, where, in the course of years, their unremitting and fearless toil might realise for them those advantages—which their attachment to their Sovereign, and to British institutions, had caused them to abandon. Their numbers were increased, and their exertions aided by the partial influx of other emigrants, among whom, in time, came the well-known Glengarry Highlanders, and they soon wrought a change. The luxuriant bounty of nature, as exhibited in a fertile soil, and a not unfavourable climate, was appropriated to the use of man; lands hitherto occupied by primeval forests were cultivated, schools and churches were built, and those who had struggled through the privations and hardships of the winter began to look with confident hope for the enjoyment of the spring time of this young and rising Country.

The war of 1812, however, checked for a time the progress which had been so favourably begun, and while in some respects it gave an unnatural impulse to development, it was exhausting the vital energy, so that when peace was restored, it became apparent, that if there had been no retrogression, there had been at all events little, if there was any, advance. This check was, however, but temporary. Those exertions, which for the time

had been devoted to other, and in some instances, sterner pursuits, were soon restored to their proper channels, and became devoted to the improvement and development of the country. The unemployed inhabitants of the British Isles began to arrive in hundreds and thousands, to unite in the task of turning the wilderness into a smiling field; the population of Upper Canada, which, in 1791, was estimated at ten thousand, in 1824 exceeded 150,000; and in 1837, was increased to 375,000; and the observations, long before made in the House of Commons, with respect to the thirteen old Colonies, might have, with full force, applied to Upper Canada:—"Such is the strength with which population shoots in that part of the world, that state the numbers as high as we will, whilst the dispute continues, the exaggeration ends. Your children do not grow faster, from infancy to manhood, than they spread from families to communities, and from villages to nations."

In the full tide of this prosperity, however, there came another check—of no long duration fortunately—though of painful character—to which I allude only as forming a part of that truthful picture, which I am endeavouring to exhibit before you. This, as well as the war of 1812, may (in strict adherence to that analogy with which I set out) be compared to those tempests of the vernal equinox, which, though disastrous in their immediate consequences, whether to individuals or to localities, are ordered or permitted by an all-wise and overruling Providence, in furtherance of its general and beneficent designs, and now that they are passed over, and calm is restored—now that the sufferings they cause are removed or alleviated—may we not indulge ourselves in the application of the poetical imagery of Solomon:—"The winter is past—the rain is over and gone—the flowers appear on the earth—the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."

But the song of rejoicing would lose half its power and beauty if its application were confined by us to the consideration of advancement in material prosperity alone. It is not only foreign to my present purpose, but it would occupy far more than the limited time I mean to detain you, were I to attempt even an outline of the various efforts made for public education, for intellectual, moral and Christian cultivation. It is not, however, the least significant proof of the success of those efforts that they have created and fostered an earnest longing for more extended knowledge—a desire which exhibits itself at different times, and, among other ways, in the attempts to establish societies or institutions to assist in scientific research—in intellectual development. Such was the literary and philosophical society formed more than twenty years ago by the exertions of the eccentric but talented Dr. Dunlop, and which was followed afterwards by the City of Toronto Literary Club, and the City of Toronto Ethical and Literary Society—both formed in 1836—all which, with perhaps some others I might more particularly mention, seem to have been put forth a little too prematurely, and, like precocious blossoms, to have been nipped, and to have perished without reaching any maturity. Such is—may it flourish and take deep root—the Canadian Institute, established, as you well know, principally for the purpose of promoting the physical sciences—for encouraging and advancing the industrial arts and manufactures—an establishment which I am well assured we all regard as one of the fairest promises of our spring, and to the unfolding of whose blossoms, and the perfection and maturity of whose flowers and fruit we cannot but feel it a duty—one well rewarded in its own accomplishment—to contribute our best exertions,

Among other advantages to which I look forward with great confidence as the result of the success of the Institute, is the attention it is likely to attract to this Province, and the consequent