

NOTES TO CANADIAN POEMS.

"A Ballad for Brave Women."

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Mrs. Secord's exploit at a grave crisis in the War of 1812 was of priceless service to the British interest. Like the "Return of the Glove," it is one of those unique incidents which stir the imagination, and become the common property of poets.

The feat has been frequently versified in Canada, and has also been dramatized by the late Mrs. S. A. Curzon, of Toronto, one of the most patriotic of Canadian women, who had herself all the will, if not the physical energy, for such an adventure. Mrs. Curzon's drama is her heroine's best memorial. Canada is no longer neglectful of her past. Monuments have been erected on several battle-fields of the War of 1812, and the memory of the heroine of that momentous struggle has, in like manner, been fittingly perpetuated. Her grave, now a national shrine, is annually decorated in the presence of a large concourse of patriotic Canadians. His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, when in Canada in 1860, had an interesting interview with this devoted loyalist, then still in full possession of her faculties, and subsequently sent her a handsome present in testimony of his admiration of her conduct. Her name is on the bead-roll of our bravest and best, and Canadian women fittingly unite to do it honour. The ballad follows Colonel Coffin's record, and was written sixteen years ago.

"The Last Bison."

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These verses, first published in 1890, were suggested to the author by a personal experience near the Elbow of the North Saskatchewan, in 1882. No buffalo has been seen since on that river, although several were subsequently killed on the south branch of the Saskatchewan. A few hundred wood-buffaloes still roam the angle of the Peace and Great Slave Rivers, in the Athabasca Territory, but the bison of the plains is extinct. Its extermination is one of the most melancholy facts in natural history. In order the more readily to subdue the hostile plain tribes its destruction was encouraged by the American authorities, and owing to its migratory habit, the building of the second trans-continental railway completed it. So vast was the havoc then instituted by great hunting parties, outfitted at Chicago, Omaha, Kansas City, and