

career has a peculiar interest for Canadians, if indeed it may not be regarded as an episode in the history of the Dominion.

The family from which General Wolfe sprang played a prominent part among the royalists of Ireland in the era of the Commonwealth. On the capitulation of Limerick, in October, 1651, to the Parliamentary General, Ireton, twenty of the most distinguished among its defenders were excepted from pardon, including George Woulfe, a military officer, and his brother, Francis, a friar. The friar was hanged, but his brother made his escape to England, settled in Yorkshire, and there, in due time, a grandson was born, who rose to the rank of Lieut.-General in the reign of Queen Anne, distinguished himself in the campaigns of Marlborough, and did good service in the cause of the new Hanoverian dynasty, in 1715, against the Jacobite descendants of those with whom his Irish ancestry had staked their lives on behalf of a Stuart King. As Colonel, he commanded the 8th Regiment of Foot; and this regiment his son, James,—the future victor of Quebec,—entered in 1741, at the age of fifteen.

Some quarter of a century ago an old gentleman died in Glasgow, in whose possession an antique military-chest had remained for upwards of fifty years. The key had been broken in the rusty lock; and so its contents lay undisturbed, till the executor of its custodian, in the administration of his estate, forced the lock, and disclosed a confused heap of regimental papers, reports, and old letters. For the most part they recalled mere formalities of the old military days of pipe-clay and pig-tails. But one bundle, carefully filed apart, proved to consist of thirteen letters written by Wolfe to a brother officer. They extend over a period of nine years, from Wolfe's twenty-second to his thirty-first year, and not only supply interesting glimpses of his early military life, but admit us to the confidence of the young soldier in far more tender strifes of the heart.

Wolfe was stationed with his regiment at Glasgow when he addressed the first of these letters, in all the frankness of youthful friendship, to Captain Rickson, then with his regiment at Dublin. He communicates welcome intelligence about a lady to whom the Captain has evidently lost his heart, and assures him that she is every way worthy of his regard. He then whispers, in strictest confidence, of a fair maiden, known to both, who has won all his own affections; a lady of great sweetness of temper, good sense, and most engaging behaviour—as to lovers' eyes young ladies are wont to appear. But "the course of true love never did run smooth." A guardian uncle of the young lady finds his youth an insuperable objection; for, as he himself admits, he is "but twenty-two and three months." The General and Mrs. Wolfe, moreover, have still graver objections to the match; Mrs. Wolfe having her eye, as clever matchmaking mothers will have, on a matrimonial prize of £30,000 for their only son. He adds, however, that if he gets expected promotion, he will certainly pop the question before the year is out, in spite of prudent uncles and mammas. "But," he concludes, "if I am kept long here the fire will be extinguished. Young flames must be constantly fed, or they'll evaporate!" And so, with this rather confused lover's metaphor, the subject drops out of sight, and the lady is heard of no more, having, probably, accepted the hand of "a very rich knight," concerning whom Wolfe indulges in sundry contemptuous allusions, as a rival whom he holds exceedingly cheap.

The tongue is an unruly member, but it is nothing to the tell-tale pen which thus blabs old lovers' confidences a hundred years after their hearts are dust. It was, in truth, a mere play of fancy, in which the heart of neither can have been deeply touched. Ere long a more genuine passion mingled its tenderness with his latest dream of glory and of duty. But the same letter touches on other themes. Such schooling as Wolfe-