

### MAJOR-GENERAL WILLIAMS, K. C. B.

GENERAL WILLIAMS was born in Nova Scotia, in the first year of the present century. In 1825 he joined the Royal Artillery and passing through various grades was made a Captain in 1840.—From that date to 1843 he was employed in Turkey, and for his services there received the brevet-rank of Major. He was sent on a political mission to Erzeroum and took part in the conferences held by the Turkish and Persian ambassadors which led to the treaty of that city. He was afterwards appointed English Commissioner for the settlement of the Turco-Persian boundary. For these services he obtained the brevet-rank of Lieut-Colonel and in 1852 admitted as a Companion of the Order of the Bath. On the breaking out of the war between Russia and Turkey he was appointed British Commissioner, and joined the Turkish army with the rank of Colonel, and soon after was made a Brigadier-General. It was not till after the memorable victory gained over the Russian General Mouravieff, on the heights above Kars, on the Morning of the 29th of September, 1855, that his name became familiar to the British public. Though he had ultimately to surrender the place it was not till all that men could do was done in its defence, and when the troops were worn out by famine. On being restored to liberty, he returned to England and was rewarded by his government with a baronetcy and a pension of £1000 a year for life. The Sultan also bestowed some honors upon him, Oxford, the honorary degree of D. C. L. and the Corporation of London, the freedom of the city. He was elected a member of Parliament, retired in 1859, and was soon after appointed to the command of the troops in Canada, which post he still holds.

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### THE CANADIAN Illustrated News.

HAMILTON, DECEMBER 27, 1862.  
EIGHTEEN HUNDRED & SIXTY TWO.

'THERE are moments in the life of man,' says the plotting astrologer in Schiller's great drama, 'when he is nearer the world's spirit than at others, and has the privilege of questioning destiny.' There are likewise seasons which forcibly turn the mind of man outwards from himself, leading him to review the past, and meditate on the uncertain future; and certainly there is no season of the year so well fitted for such a task, as the close; furnishing as it ever does, such a ready observatory for all who incline to the study.

In the waning year and decay of vegetation the informed soul of man sees a striking emblem of his own frailty and mortality. And not this alone does such a period speak of. It teaches him also that decay is but a process of regeneration; destruction, but the first half of improvement. The sap rises in our forest trees according to its law, the beast of the field is directed to its appointed destiny by instinct, but among the formative forces of man is his intelligence, by which he knows the past and can prepare for an expanding future.

To man, therefore, the close of the year speaks encouragingly of work unperformed for the survive of the future. It cannot tell the oak of seed unsown, but man it does. The beast cannot retrace the history of its kind and describe the pitfalls into which they have fallen; but to man, although the events of the past are numbered amongst the things that were, yet

its lessons remain 'a precious legacy' for you, and for us, reader, to reckon up, as best we may and treasure for the years to come.

Some few years ago, men—thinking men even—were everywhere exulting like schoolboys on the morning of a holiday, for the world's great holiday seemed dawning at last. It was the fashion in those days to predict things great and bright as the immediate issue of events then emerging; and the rapid strides made in the cause of education, of reform, of science, of peace, were pointed to triumphantly as an earnest of this. The impulse of self advancement, and self culture then communicated, was to be rapid and unimpeded, and humanity, we were told, was to be carried illimitably upward. That these hopes and predictions were but dreams—the day dreams of the philosopher and the statesman—the great events of the year, whose hours are now all but numbered, have sufficiently demonstrated.

A year has drawn to a close—a year of war and convulsion—a year of famine and suffering—a year destined to be ever memorable in the annals of the world's history. Hundreds of ready pens are now at work throughout Christendom narrating the crowd of events which during its course have signalized it—events, which from their previous incredibility, have bewildered the public mind—passing like a dream, but not like a dream to be forgotten.

The sad, sad story of that mighty strife in the forests and valleys of the 'Old Dominion,' and on the banks of the mighty 'father of waters'—those fearful workings of a selfish national diplomacy, which, during the year, has kept his native soil wet with our neighbors' blood, shed by the hand of his brother—cannot fade from our memories, nor be lost to the view of future generations. Neither will the tale of the patient, silent sufferings of those brave, famished sons of toil in England and Scotland—through no fault of theirs—deprived both of bread, and of the means of earning it, be speedily forgotten; or remembered but as a nine days wonder; nor the story of those upheavings in the political atmosphere of the old world, finding vent in fresh struggles by her valiant sons on behalf of a regenerated Italy; or in renewed and noble efforts by the Greeks on behalf of freedom; no matter if, in the struggle, a king should lose his throne, and a nation go begging for a monarch. The term revolution is too feeble to express the magnitude of the change that is taking place in the world around us. The material and the social interests of people and princes, of people and governments, are engaged in a mighty struggle the end of which is not yet. Here in Canada, we have hitherto considered ourselves so far removed from the world's great highway, so much out of reach of the strife and contentings of nations, so little was the estimation in which we were held—we in our modesty considered—by other monarchs and governments, than our own, that we had little difficulty in felicitating ourselves on the expectation of being passed by, and left untouched, if not unharmed, amid the din and turmoil of the great strife. Our readers will well remember how rudely this pleasing dream of ours was dispelled, when, on that bright December morning, shortly before the birth of the now waning year, the tidings reached us from across the ocean, that the insulted Majesty of Britain had given the choice of two alternatives to our nearest neighbors—alas! that they should be any other than our best friends—either to undo the wrong which they in their folly had committed, or suffer the penalty decreed for the offence. How like a bombshell the tidings fell amongst us, startling us from our fancied security, and making the most indifferent thoughtful, knowing as we did, that in the event of the latter choice being taken, Canada would become the battle field

for contending armies, our industry paralyzed, our homes turned into mourning, our country into a desert.—Thank God, wiser councils, than that many feared, prevailed, and for another year, the blessings of peace and prosperity have been granted to us; our contentings being that alone of peaceful rivalry in the business of every day life; the even tenor of our way undisturbed by influences other than those inseparable from our condition and circumstances. Taking warning from the errors of the past, a well regulated system of military discipline has been introduced amongst us, and volunteer corps are springing up over our land with a rapidity which shows the necessity for them, is both felt and appreciated. And this is well. 'Put your trust in God and keep your powder dry,' was the quaint observation of Cromwell, and the fundamental maxim of all free communities should be analagous to it in spirit. Cultivate with equal assiduity all the arts that enoble civilization; but neglect not that art, the knowledge of which may yet be necessary to maintain your freedom—that freedom without which all enjoyment is insipid, all civilization worthless.

In pursuance of the task promised to ourselves at the outset, we turn now to our immediate neighbors, that great people to the east and south of us, the two sections of which are engaged in such a deplorable and deadly strife, and ask, what has the year done for them? We certainly were not of them—if any snob there were amongst us—who envied the greatness of the 'great Republic;' on the contrary, we were well contented to see her gradually enlarging her bounds, daily increasing in wealth and prosperity; and now when bloody war stalks angrily through her borders, when the genius of destruction presides over her people, when voices are heard—not echoing in the gentle strains of humanity and love—but roaring senselessly, and cursing recklessly—we willingly render her the tribute of our sincerest sympathy. The months, betimes, have betokened victory to each of the opposing parties, and now, to all appearances the situation differs but little from what it did twelve months ago, except in the dreadful load of debt bequeathed by both to posterity; in the mourning and suffering introduced into thousands of once happy homes; and in the demoralized feelings and propensities which such a dreadful state of things engender in all classes of society.

And yet not altogether fruitless has been all this expenditure of blood, and toil, and treasure,—this mortgage placed on the wealth of the present, and on the hopes of the future. It has cleared the path for a great principle. On the first of January, 1863,—the President in Washington has decreed it,—slavery will cease in all the dominions that own the sway of the United States. We will not pry into the motives for this glorious decree,—we will not seek to speak of it as many even of the Abolition party have done; but are content to chronicle the fact. If the South should be lost to the Union, all is not lost. If the plague spot of slavery is eradicated, the civil war, dreadful as it has been, has not been too great a price to pay for it.

And here we cannot but give expression to our feelings of deepest regret that so many causes of strife, and contention, should have arisen during the year, between Great Britain and the United States, and especially that an influential portion of the press of both countries, should have done so much to embitter the minds of their several readers, causing feelings of estrangement and ill-will, such as years of friendly dealing can hardly obliterate. The press of Britain and of Canada, should, at least, have learned, to make some allowance for the state of excitement under which the minds of men engaged in a desperate and agonizing conflict, must be found laboring. Would it not be more grace-

ful as well as more christian, to tender expressions of sympathy and good-will, rather than charges of madness and degeneracy, to that people, who alone save themselves, have ever stood up for the rights of humanity, and freedom; and who, amid many errors and many crimes, are still consciously toiling on and up, to a higher and brighter future.

That Britain has had some cause for irritation we cannot but admit. At the very outset of the war, she rejected the counsils of self-interest, and scorning the proffered bribes of the South, nobly resolved to endure and suffer, rather than interfere in behalf of cotton and trade. And no class of her population have submitted with such heroic self-denial as those noble, pining, free men and free women of Lancashire, whose all depended on the sacrifice, and the tale of whose dreadful sufferings, during the year, have elicited so many expressions of sympathy, and so many deeds of noble-hearted charity, throughout the civilized world. And not merely is it in the cotton districts of Britain that want and destitution prevails, for every other great branch of industry is affected to an appalling extent. Glasgow, Leeds, Sheffield, even Birmingham suffers; and in most, if not all of them, the number of paupers have doubled within six months. There is in truth a moral dignity in the present aspect of Britain, that challenges the world's admiration. We in Canada see it, and we can but express the regret which we feel, that our neighbors cannot see it likewise; then, might we look for other feelings to prevail than those that unhappily do—then, might Britain expect in return for what she has done and suffered—gratitude and not insult.

Yet there is a more cheering and satisfactory view to be taken of the year, in connection with Britain; and it is, that she has passed through its trials as bravely, as she has done, weathering the storm with comparatively little damage. There has indeed been much distress and suffering, but the wonder is that there has not been more in such a complication of evils and embarrassments. Every thing has been put to the severest trial, during this momentous year, and all have bravely stood the test—the sense of the country, its attachment to order, its loyalty, in the most exalted meaning of the word—while the vast resources and commercial energies of the empire, have enabled it to meet and overcome the difficulties which beset it. The vessel which has weathered in safety such a tempest, can have been in no bad trim, and under no incapable guidance.

Something more we purposed saying, regarding the waning year, and our concern with it. Something regarding France, that great country so influential for good or evil, in the world, whose most hopeful aspect at present is the melancholy homage, which she is offering to the cause of peace and order. Something we had also to say regarding other countries, old and young, and what the year has done for them; but we have already exceeded the ordinary limits of a newspaper article, and we must have done. What has been left unsaid we will reserve for another opportunity. In the meantime glancing at our subject and revolving in our minds the great Drama, of which, during the past year, this earth of ours has been the scene, we cannot but perceive that it is but part of the old protracted struggle between Light and Darkness, the final result of which it is not difficult to determine. The struggle still goes on, and the solution of not a few knotty questions has been left by 1862 to its successor. The sky even now is overcast with clouds, the heavens big with blackness; but grateful for present blessings, and privileges, and confident for what the future has in store for the human family, we turn our eyes from the dark cloud on the horizon, to Him who holds all things under His control, and sigh forth the prayer, 'May God avert the evil, may he vouchsafe the good.'