

the line of separation between the United States and Lower Canada touches the St. Lawrence. So far but slender reinforcements had been sent out. These consisted of the 103rd Regiment and a weak battalion of the 1st or Royal Scots from the West Indies, with a few recruits. The British Orders-in-Council, the ostensible cause of the war, had been revoked seven days after war had been declared by Congress, and on learning of this Sir George Prevost, hoping that affairs would now be amicably settled between the two countries, proposed an armistice to General Dearborn, commander-in-chief of the United States army, who had fixed his headquarters at Greenbush, near Albany.

General Dearborn readily consented to an armistice (except as to General Hull, who, he said, acted under the immediate direction of the Secretary of War). Happily, however, General Brock had succeeded in taking Detroit before being stopped by any such suicidal instructions as those which now awaited him on his arrival at Fort George in the shape of armistice.

In vain General Brock urged the importance of immediate action, and the harm which would be done to the British cause by stopping just when they had a chance of expelling the enemy.

Writing from Kingston, he said: "Attack Sackett's Harbour from here; with our present naval superiority it must fall. The troops at Niagara will be recalled for its protection. While they march, we sail; and before they can return the whole Niagara force will be ours." In reply he was told to do nothing, to remain on the defensive and not provoke the enemy, who, quietly taking advantage of the armistice, even removed some fine vessels from Ogdensburg under the guns of Fort Wellington at Prescott to Sackett's Harbour, the nursery of the enemy's fleet, while Commodore Chauncey made the most active exertions to increase on Lake Ontario and Lake Erie their fleet, which was as yet far inferior to the British, and which later on gave the Americans that ascendancy on Lake Ontario which enabled them to destroy Toronto, besides giving them time to transport their stores and reinforcements.

As General Brock watched these proceedings, his strong spirit chafed against the orders which compelled him to submit to such near-sighted management. His feelings on the subject are shown by a letter which he wrote about this time:

"A river about 500 yards wide divides the troops. My instructions oblige me to adopt defensive measures, and I have evinced greater forbearance than was ever practised on any former occasion. It is thought that without the aid of the sword the American people may be brought to a due sense of their own interest. I firmly believe that I could at this moment sweep everything before me between Fort Niagara and Buffalo. The militia, being principally composed of enraged democrats, are more ardent and anxious to engage, but they have neither subordination nor discipline. They die very fast. It is certainly singular that we should be two months in a warfare, and that along this widely extended frontier not a single death, either natural or by the sword, should have occurred among the troops under my command, and we have not been altogether idle, nor has a single desertion taken place."

And now word came that the United States Government refused to agree to the armistice which had been entered upon by the commanders of the British and American forces, no doubt thinking it emanated from a sense of weakness on the part of the British Government. The American forces had by this time increased rapidly, and threatened Montreal by St. John and Odelltown, while the force on the Niagara frontier under General Van Rensselaer gave ample proof that an attack in that quarter was to be looked for. General Harrison was also collecting an army at River Raisin. That a second attack might at any moment be expected, General Brock well knew; for never for one instant did he relinquish his watch over the enemy's movements, and he kept his small force ever ready for the occasion.

PERSONAL AND LITERARY.

The fourth section—geology and biology—of the Royal Society of Canada has elected Dr. T. Wesley Mills, of this city, as one of its members. Dr. Mills will do credit to the Society.

Prof. Roberts has been elected a member of the English Literature Section of the Royal Society of Canada. The author of "Orion" and "In Divers Tones" has our cordial congratulations.

Mr. W. Blackburn Harte had a characteristically vigorous letter on Canadian aspirations and prospects in a late number of the *New York Tribune*. We do not, however, accept his conclusions.

The young author of "Fleurs de Lys" is bringing out another volume of verse, entitled "The Romance of Sir Richard." Subscribers are requested to send their names to Mr. Drysdale, publisher, 232 St. James street.

Dr. Thomas O'Hagan, one of our esteemed contributors, has taken charge of a literary column in *United Canada*. Dr. O'Hagan should be a welcome acquisition to any journal or periodical that has the benefit of his services.

The *Catholic Review*, of New York, recently contained a graceful tribute of praise to the poems of Dr. O'Hagan. The *Review* is edited by the Rev. J. Talbot Smith, author of "A Woman of Culture," etc. Mr. Smith is a man of fine literary tastes.

Mr. Nicholas Flood Davin's lecture on "Culture and Practical Power," delivered at the opening of Lansdowne College, Portage la Prairie, has reached a second edition. The first edition was favourably reviewed both in Canada and England. Mr. Gladstone, to whom it is dedicated, considers it "interesting and valuable"—"a stroke struck for civilization."

Mr. W. J. White favoured us with a double quarterly number of *Canadiana*, which contained a view and description of Trafalgar Tower, the conclusion of Miss. B. L. Macdonell's excellent paper on Canadian Literature up to 1841, the continuation of Mr. Cruikshank's "Reminiscences of Col. Claus," and contributions from Messrs. W. D. Lighthall and R. C. Douglas on the Rebellion of '37-'38 and the old Lachine Canal. We hope that by and by this size will become permanent.

Mr. Gerald E. Hart's grand collection of rare books, manuscripts, autographs, prints, etc., will be sold by auction on Tuesday and following days, April 15th to 19th, by Messrs. C. F. Libbie & Co., 13 Hayward Place, Boston. This collection, the careful work of many years, is rich in *Americana* and *Canadiana*, which it would be a serious loss for Canada to part with. It is to be hoped that some of our munificent book-lovers will secure some at least of them either for their own shelves or to enrich our public libraries.

ROBERT BROWNING.

To the Editor of THE DOMINION ILLUSTRATED:

SIR,—On a hint some time ago from your excellent and kindly contributor, Lockhart, that he was contemplating a Canadian symposium on Browning, I sent him the lines I subjoin, and was rather disappointed at finding from the extract in your now last number, from the *Transcript Monthly*, of *Portland*, that the editor had not found room for them, as I hope you will. My praise seems reasonably strong—Mr. Roberts, I see, gently comments on our poet's love of the obscure—and the clear and loving spirit of Mr. Lockhart's own verse leads me to believe that he would not object to a little more light and love, and will not be angry with me that I incline to agree with Mr. Duvar, in preferring the wife to the husband as a poet; I say nothing as to his psychological analysis or just and keen satire, or the theosophy of *'Caliban on Setebos.'*

BROWNING.

Since you ask me, gentle Lockhart,
Leader of the band of minstrels
In the songs of our Dominion,
What I think of Robert Browning—
Take my thoughts for your symposium.
What he wrote, and what he taught
Is bright with wit, with wisdom fraught;
Large and lofty, strong and pure.
His pregnant verse at times secure,
But still with some deep thought behind it—
So deep that many fail to find it.
Old proverbs say, that of the dead
Nothing but good should e'er be said;
Yet, I should better like our bard
If his hard things were not so hard.
Is there not something of the sphinx
In Caliban's mysterious "Thinks"?
Something not Hebrew, Greek or Asian,
And not exactly Athanasian?
Some hidden thing we long to see
In that deep, mystical "So he"?
Must we not Browning's spirit call
To lift the veil, and, once for all,
These riddles to explain and solve
With all the mysteries they involve,
And thus from all reproach our honoured bard absolve?

Ottawa.

W.

GEORGE MONK, DUKE OF ALBEMARLE.

Monk is one of the least understood of English historical characters. By turns a soldier of fortune in the Low Countries, an officer in the service of Charles I., a prominent and implicitly trusted lieutenant of Cromwell, and, finally, the man who placed Charles II. upon the throne of England, he has commonly been denied a place among England's worthies. That a man could serve successively a line of masters such as these was not in accord with common impressions of virtue. It has been most obvious, to superficial observers, that such a man was a timeserver and turncoat of the purest type. This, however, is not the view which a study of his life has produced in Mr. Corbett's mind. Before Monk there lay a labyrinth which it was his destiny to tread; it was given him to tread it with extraordinary success, and Mr. Corbett finds a very simple rule of life that he employed for his guidance. This was "to be true to his paymaster." At the same time he had a very simple political creed. This was "to obey the civil authority which employed him."

Mr. Corbett has at any rate made out an interesting case for Monk. The character of Monk was simple. Guile and subtlety were not parts of his equipment. His greatest endowment was "an absolute intrepidity which afterward served to terrify the carpet knights of the Restoration and even make Prince Rupert hold his breath." This, joined to his rule of life already cited, gives the key to his character. Monk was an English citizen first, a soldier next, a politician not at all. Of the real meaning of the strife between Crown and Parliament he was "incapable of grasping any conception." When confined in the Tower and writing his book, "Observations upon Military and Political Affairs," we are able to see him "looking mournfully from the place apart at the distractions with which his beloved country was torn." For him it was "all a mere question of the interior, and to his eyes no question of the interior, not even religion itself, was worth a civil war or the sacrifice of England's military renown."

When at last Monk stood before the crisis in his career, and could reflect, as he is reported to have done—"Counsellor I have none to rely on. Many of my officers have been false. But religion, law, liberty, and my own fame are at stake. I will go on and leave the event to God"—Mr. Corbett says, "No aim more patriotic was ever set up with more manly devotion." When Parliament made him Captain-General under Parliament of all the land forces in England, Scotland, and Ireland, he was by virtue of this rank "as fully as the sovereign of to-day the constitutional head of the nations in arms." And he might have been all this and more. He was urged to take upon himself the civil authority as well as the military; but, though it was held out to him that a restoration meant his own death, since, like Stanley, who enthroned the Tudors, he would be "too great to live," Monk yielded not. He merely asked others to fear nothing, and when they offered to bring a petition with 100,000 signatures he was obdurate and dismissed them from his presence.

Mr. Corbett accords to Monk the credit of having saved England from a revolution that should drag on a bankrupt existence with ever accumulating loss. He did what Cromwell strove to do and failed because the hour was not yet ripe.

Monk was laid at rest with extraordinary honours. Charles arranged the funeral, and the magnificence of it was almost royal. By the King in person were the remains escorted to Westminster Abbey and there deposited in Henry VII.'s Chapel with the bones of Kings. Among the great ones who were permitted to share in giving these last honours the humblest was the one upon whom was to fall the cloak of Monk, and then a simple ensign, named John Churchill. It was Charles's intention to raise a magnificent memorial to the man to whom he owed his crown. But none has ever been set up. The King was "too poor," the new Duke too profligate, and the homely Duchess died with broken heart while her lord still lay in state. "Since that day none but distant kinsmen have been found even to show posterity where lie the remains of Monk. The only son of Monk married a half-witted daughter of a Duke; no child blessed the union, and the extravagance of the woman drove the young man to evil courses, which dragged him to an untimely end. Thus it came to pass that with the crown of the Stuarts fell the coronet of Albemarle, "for, by a strange irony, as William of Orange was on the eve of sailing to dethrone the dynasty which the first Duke had so triumphantly restored, the last Duke was dying in Jamaica, a broken gambler and a sot."

THE OXFORD JONES.

At Oxford a good deal of fun is poked at the Welshmen who crowd to Jesus College; they are currently believed to answer mostly to the name of Jones. One evening a stranger arrived at the porter's lodge, and a colloquy began as follows:—Stranger: Kindly direct me to the rooms of Mr. Jones." Porter: "There are forty-three Mr. Joneses in college, sir." Stranger: "The man I wish to see is Mr. David Jones." Porter: "Twenty-one Mr. David Joneses in college, sir." Stranger: "My Mr. David Jones has red hair." Porter: "Seven Mr. David Joneses have red hair." Stranger: "This is very awkward. Mr. Jones asked me to come and take wine with him." Porter: "Why didn't you say so at first, sir! Second staircase, ground-floor, right. All the other Mr. Joneses drink beer."