

which we may well call the Era of the Rifle! At last, in 1760, Canada became British. In the century which has since elapsed, how wonderful the changes which have passed upon the primeval and well-nigh unbroken forest! A good portion of this time was the Era of the Axe; and quickly following the wielders of the axe, came the bearers of "the Saddlebags."

It is not long since the people of this country had enough to do to keep the wolf from the door. Miles of dense wood lay between nearest neighbors. Travellers had difficulty in finding their way by the blaze of the trees, over tangled underbrush and fallen trees, the only well-defined road being that running east and west along the front. At length political questions arose, but they were purely local. The foundations of government began to be laid. The spirit of order began to brood over chaos, whence in due time came constitutional liberty and executive responsibility. The young community was found to have a will and passions and individuality of its own. The young bear would not be licked into the shape its rulers wished it to take; and as it came to know its strength, the domination of a favoured Church was thrown off, the yoke of "the Family Compact" broken, imperial interference in purely colonial affairs checked, until nothing was left to prevent self-government and free action. And we are bound on a career in which we shall endeavour to transmit to generations yet unborn, that large heritage of British freedom and British Protestantism which we have received from those above and before us.

In British North America we have the seat of a genuine national existence, in which there is no such powerful agent of disruption as that profound dissimilarity of interests which came so near rending asunder the Northern and the Southern States of the American Union. The different Provinces had, of course, their differences,—differences which prevented their being fused into one body politic, but not of such a character as to hinder federation. And such a union British Americans felt to be necessary as they reviewed their circumstances, and remembered the history of ancient Greece, of the English Heptarchy, and of modern Italy and Germany.

Fairly launched as a Dominion, with one flag overhead, one