

## THE GENERAL HOSPITAL, QUEBEC.

Years had passed, since Jacques Cartier's little fleet weighed their anchors, spread their sails, and bade a last farewell to their winter quarters in Canada; and save a solitary sail or two appearing at long intervals on the broad bosom of the St. Lawrence, our country still slumbered in solitude, the red man still remained monarch of her soil, and the frail canoe ruled her native waters. But events thickened as years swept past—the bare-footed Reccollet appears upon the scene, and with him the dawn of civilization and the tramp of European adventurers.

The dwelling of these Reccollet fathers occupied the site of the present General Hospital, which is situated on the banks of the St. Charles, about a mile higher than the scene represented in my last sketch. Here it was that the 'untutored' mind of the poor Indian first listened to the secrets of salvation; on this spot, the inhabitants of the great forest first learned to kneel and pray to the God of the red man as well as of the white, and here was raised the first link between Canada and Heaven.

The present building, founded in 1668, has therefore the high privilege of standing on ground sacred to the sweetest recollections of Christianity in our native land; but it has still further the honor of being one of the earliest (if not the earliest) existing of our religious establishments. True, the Ursuline Convent, and one or two others, were endowed some years before this, but so frequently have they suffered from fire, so often have they been altered or rebuilt, that as yet I have not been able to ascertain positively, that a vestige of their original masonry remains; but these walls have stood in the days when the harvest was gathered on the Place d'Armes of our city—when the river upon whose banks they are—embowered in the foliage of the stately elm, ran its uneven course over huge boulders that lay embedded in the sand, these boulders were afterwards collected to form a jetty of masonry for the protection of the harbor against the British under Gen. Wolfe—from these walls was witnessed the hard-fought field of Abraham, here could be heard the death-rattle of the British musketry—the deafening yells of the untamed native—and the impetuous cheer of the brawling lads of bonnie Scotland, who, discarding their muskets, grasped the Andrew Ferrara of their country, and rushed, as only Highland torrent can, upon the gallant but devoted foe, scattering heads and arms like chaff before the whirlwind—and when to the peal of victory had succeeded the death-throes of the Gallic power in New France, and England's purchase had been made with the blood of her children; we have but to look within the walls of this building—and there in the chapel lay the poor wounded victims of that field of blood—English or Scotch, Frenchman or native, friend or foe, lay writhing in agony, attended with unwearying solicitude by the black-robed Congregational nuns. And here let us inscribe upon our hearts eternal gratitude to our generous foes, whose lofty character shone forth, on this noble institution, as brightly as it ever did under the famed, world-renowned banners of France.

Again sixteen years rolled round, and before our good old walls appeared the United Americans under Generals Arnold and Montgomery. Arnold was wounded and carried to the General Hospital, so that even to our neighboring Republic, the place is not devoid of interest; but by this time the nuns of the congregation had transferred their labors to another place. The ladies who attended the General were, 'the Hospitaliers,' clothed in white; and to the present day the building continues in the possession of that Order—who still

preserve the honorable name of their predecessors—in affording relief to the poor and rest to the aged and the infirm.

ALEX. DURIE.

## GLEANINGS IN GEOLOGY.

THE CARBONIFEROUS PERIOD—ITS GEOLOGICAL AND INDUSTRIAL FEATURES.

There is not a substance in the mineral kingdom which is better known, or more justly deserving of our highest appreciation, than coal; it is familiar to every eye; its combustible properties enable it to meet the requirements of thousands; and there is scarce a British subject who cannot tell that the same black material had originated within the interior of the earth; but few, perhaps, have once contemplated the probable cause which gave rise to the production of the social comfort, or sought to ascertain the nature of its constituents, which render it pre-eminently of more value to a nation than the royal gem which sparkles with the rarest effulgence as the richest of earth's treasures.

Doubtless to an eye untaught in the principles of geology there may appear but little of an attractive cast which would call forth consideration of its unseen beauty; still the same material extracted from the deep recesses of the earth by the miner's pick, under the faint glimmer of a Davy lamp, has made the land we live in the noblest and the happiest under heaven. But to consider aright the character of the substance, it is necessary to revert to the period in the history of our planet when each fragment of that material formed a portion of a luxuriant vegetation, over a low-lying plain or marsh, and boundless in extent, wherein must have flowed some mighty river, or in the centre of which may have existed an extensive lake, out of which gigantic reeds stretched forth their slender stems under a tropical sky. Behind stretches a trackless forest of tree-ferns; sigillaria, and palm-like lepidodendrons, with a thickly spread covering of smaller ferns and club mosses over the woodlands for leagues. Such a scene of luxuriance in vegetation stands unparalleled in the world's history. Where the huge araucaria reared their proud heads over the marshy platform, spreading out their broad leaves to the sunlight which struggled through the misty vapours floating like a canopy upon the vernal clad earth, as the alternate breeze swept through the phalanx of reeds which fringed the lagoons or river sides, disturbing the deep silence of the lonely earth. But the scene changes, and the twilight gains upon the rich prospect, while deep darkness descends, and casts a gloom over the once smiling plains and perfumed groves. The river which had flowed in tranquillity before is now seen to rush with impetuous force, and overflow its banks, uprooting the huge trees and calamites, carrying down the stems and branches of upland plants; the falling debris also thickens the water, and it assumes a dark, muddy character as it reaches the level platform and spreads out the heterogeneous materials.

At length, however, the waters abate, and the bright sun shines forth upon the watery surface of the earth, drying up the moisture and leaving the dry land once more. Such are the imaginative scenes of that period during which the beneficent Creator stored up for the future use of man those inexhaustible resources of coal and ironstone, which have been the prime movers of mechanical advancement and industry.

We follow now the prostrated trees and submerged vegetation into the rocky tomb, and trace the succeeding changes which it underwent ere it became the mineral we now possess. Like other minerals we find it entering into the composition of the crust of the earth, occurring in most cases at a considerable depth below the surface, forming strata of a variable thickness, from half an inch to several feet. Respecting the true

origin of coal many theories have been invented by men who have held the highest rank in the scientific world, but there ought to exist no longer any doubt regarding its true vegetable origin. In composition it is the same with the existing plants, being composed chiefly of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen, and further retaining in its structure the woody fibre which is characteristic of all vegetable substances.

Nor does the theory of its 'vegetable origin' at all disagree with the evidence which is manifested in the stratified deposit. For, when we perceive the alternate layers of mud and sand with the interlacing bands of coal, we find evidence sufficient to warrant our acceptance of those fancied scenes of the past conditions of that age, whereby the submerged or drifted matter became overlaid by deposits of mud and sand carried down by the rushing torrents from the higher platforms upon which the plants luxuriated. And as each succeeding elevation or depression of the land was effected, so we have the alternate bands of shale, sandstone and true coal.

But, in addition to coal, there is associated in the same system another material which, commercially speaking, plays a no less important part, viz., iron. As it occurs within the carboniferous system, it is of vast importance in an economic point of view, seeing that the very materials required in smelting the ore are side by side arranged in bands, so that whenever one occurs there, too, are present the others. And it is from this fact that Great Britain has gained her exalted position among the many nations of the earth, whereby her achievements in mechanical enterprise have made her fame to resound through every land—that with whirlwind speed we can be transported along the iron pathway over deep ravines or through dreary moors, and all the while comfortably seated within the railway carriage. The same medium by which a thousand cities, towns, and hamlets are linked together, and every hour conveying with rapid motion the produce of distant lands, or the epistolary receptacles containing the dictates of individuals widely remote from each other.

The value and uses of coal and iron are never-ending: they are daily bestowing new bounties, for the progress of mechanical skill is every day increasing, and the elements they possess made to undergo new changes, so as to accommodate the wants of human industry in driving the complicated machinery of our factories, by which the textile fabrics are produced, from the coarsest pack-sheet to the most delicate lace.

But in the economy of the coal measures there is presented the highest degree of preternatural design possible to imagine, by which the future requirements of the human race had been premeditated myriads of ages ere they became the inhabitants of the earth, and at length found the means for displaying the wonderful powers of ingenuity and achievements over the natural products of the mine.—[British Paper.

Who sunk the 'Hatteras'? was a question which but a few days ago agitated all America. The solution appears in the telegraphic despatches. It was the 'Alabama,' that daring and ubiquitous coarsair of the South, that did the terrible work. After having sunk the Federal vessel, she went to Kingston, Jamaica, where she landed the crew—some one hundred and sixty in all.—At Kingston Capt. Semmes received quite an ovation from the merchants assembled in the Commercial Exchange.

SNOW SHOE RACE.—About 150 people were on the ground of the Montreal Cricket Club on Saturday afternoon last, to witness the seven mile walk, by the members of the Aurora Snow Shoe Club. The weather was very favorable. Eight gentlemen entered their names. Mr. Grey succeeded in keeping the lead until the fifth mile, when he was passed by Mr. Irwin, who won the race in seventy-seven minutes.

## Notes and Queries.

LITERARY, SCIENTIFIC & ANTIQUARIAN.

'Hic est aut nusquam quod quarimus.'  
'The enquiring spirit will not be controll'd;  
We would make certain all, and all behold.'

The Editor wishes it to be distinctly understood that he is not responsible for anything that may appear in this department. While every latitude is given for freedom of thought and expression, a discretionary power is reserved as to what 'Notes and Queries' are suitable for insertion.

Correspondents, in their Replies, will please bear in mind that 'Brevity is the soul of wit.'

### NOTES.

#### FROZEN WORDS.

Dickens, in his 'Old Curiosity Shop,' has made a very felicitous use of the idea, (to be found in Baron Munchausen and elsewhere,) of words being congealed at the time they were spoken, and afterwards sounding when thawed:—

'Don't be frightened, mistress,' said Quilp, after a pause, 'your son knows me; I don't eat babies; I don't like 'em. It will be as well to stop the young screamer though, in case I should be tempted to do him a mischief.'

'Halloo, Sir! will you be quiet?' Little Jacob stemmed the course of two tears, which he was squeezing out of his eyes, and instantly subsided into silent horror.

The moment their (Quilp and Swiveller) backs were turned, little Jacob thawed, and resumed his crying from the point where Quilp had frozen him.

#### TWO PUNS BY PORSON.

Porson observing he could pun on any subject, a person present defied him to do so on the Latin gerund, which, however, he immediately did in the following couplet:

'When Dido found Æneas would not come,  
She mourned in silence and was *Di-Do-Dum*.'

He gives an account of his academic visits to the Continent thus:

'I went to Frankfort, and got drunk  
With that most learn'd Professor—Brunck;  
I went to Worts, and got more drunken  
With that more learn'd Professor—  
Ruhcken.'

MONTREAL.

ATHENWOLD.

## For Leisure Moments.

A man with a scolding wife, when inquired respecting his occupation, said he kept a hot-house.

'What are you looking after, my dear daughter?' said an old gentleman at a Christmas party.

'Looking after a son-in-law for you, father,' was the witty reply.

'Will you marry me, miss?'

'Sir, you know I have often declared I would never marry.'

'O, yes; if I hadn't known it I shouldn't have asked you.'

An unfortunate sportsman at the West thus recounted the result of a day's excursion:

'Not a duck was heard, not a goose's note,  
As our skiff thro' the water we hurried;  
Not a fowler discharged his farewell shot  
O'er the pond where our hopes we buried.'

A young aspirant for fame, having a desire to see his name in print, sent his verses to a newspaper for publication. In the 'pome' the following line occurred:

'A fragrant rose found near the pendant  
coru.'

The compositor in whose hands the manuscript was placed, was pretty well 'set up,' and evidently 'set up' the line also, judging from the following, which greeted the astonished author the next morning:

'A vagrant's nose sounds like a pedlar's  
horn.'

If a man marry a shrew, are we to suppose he is shrewd?

Pleasure itself soon ceases to be pleasure when there is no object in it but pleasure.

Every man has a Paradise around him until he sins, and the angel of an accusing conscience drives him from his Eden.

A grave-digger, not a hundred miles from Dunblane, complaining of want of employment, remarked that he 'had not buried a livin' soul for the last three weeks, except a sma' sernt' o' a bairn.'

An Irish veterinary student, when under examination, was asked what he would recommend, if there was a horse brought to him with a particular disease. 'Och! and I'd recommend the owner to get rid of him immediately.'