

BODING.

WHAT shall I do in the years to come
 When the hours lag now?
 What shall I find to fill your place,
 When above all things I see your face,
 With its delicate lines in trancing trace
 On classic brow?
 I walk the floor, forget life's hum,
 And ask me "how?"
 A beautiful shadow will always be
 A solace—a power to abide with me,
 And sometimes a handclasp of life and thee
 Will help as now.
 Ye martyrs who died by the flaming brand
 Holding fast your vow!
 The wish of my life's a crucified thing,
 That ever and ever again will bring
 Thoughts of the tempting "might have been,"
 That is nothing now.
 Nor flaming pile, nor tyrants wand,
 Could pale my brow,
 While yet remains the beautiful light
 Of a love too late that will ban the night
 With a glorious gleam above every height,
 For you love me now.

D.

THE LATE MR. W. A. FOSTER, Q.C.

"THERE are few heroes in our Pantheon," is an observation made by the subject of this brief sketch, in his ringing, national address on "Canada First," delivered now almost twenty years ago. "Where every man does his duty," adds Mr. Foster, "heroes are not wanted and are not missed." At the grave of one who eminently, though unostentatiously did his duty, and who, in doing it so well, sadly shortened his active, useful life, these wise, sane words, if recalled at all, must have come home with impressive force to the hearts of all who knew him who uttered them. The age is too commonplace and the pursuits of the time are too unromantic for heroes. Yet if we cannot call him a hero who honestly and earnestly does his duty and lives a true, honourable, and unselfish life, the few, at least, to whom such a one is known feel how allied well-performed duty is to heroism, and how great is the wrench when they have to part with one whose brief life was distinguished by those qualities. The memory preserved in the public heart of the best that ever lived, we know, is comparatively short; but short as it is, it cannot with truth be said that a good and useful life counts for little, or that, by its contemporaries at least, such a life will not be missed. After one is gone, the perspective of the passing years is often cruel to individual memory. That the memory of Mr. Foster, with the recollection of his fine professional career and high personal qualities, will be kept longer green than is the meed of thousands, we do not say. But this we say, that before the influence and impress of his character has faded, and before regard for him as a friend has died out from the hearts of those who knew and loved him, Time will have taken hence most of those who were his contemporaries.

It would be foolish to claim for Mr. Foster a position far above the average of his fellows. As a professional man, he had many and uncommon gifts. He was shrewd and clear-sighted in counsel, and apt and skilful in the management of cases in Court. He was moreover, an indefatigable, though not always a ready worker. He was painstaking in all that he undertook, straightforward in his dealings, courteous to all with whom he came in contact, and possessed a largeness of soul and a geniality of disposition that endeared him to thousands. That he spared himself in nothing, his devotion to business, and the strain he suffered himself to endure before his weakened frame and shattered nervous system broke under the load, sufficiently attest.

It was in his early days, however, and as an aspirant for literary and political, rather than for legal and forensic fame, that the writer of this knew him best. When we first met, he had graduated at his *Alma Mater*, and, like many of his young associates, not a few of whom, alas! have preceded him to the tomb, he had qualified himself to follow law as a profession. Notwithstanding this fact we found him much drawn to literature, for the pursuit of which he had marked gifts, and, like some of his college contemporaries, had a strong mental bias. Politically, the times were favourable for a young man of ardent temperament, as well as of acknowledged ability, to make his mark in literature. Compelled to seek a way out of the party deadlock of the time, the country had just committed itself to the experiment of Confederation. A new and higher national life opened before the people. Many of the political leaders were journalistic athletes, and some of them at least—like Cartier, Howe and McGee—were in sympathy with literature. Under the influence of these—especially of the ill-fated McGee—literary enterprise, for a time at any rate, felt the glow of national aspiration and the quickening of a new birth. Of those to feel the effect of the new awakening, young Foster, as the most fervent, was the first. Besides his overflowing patriotism, he had added to his natural gifts facility in literary composition, and had already published an article in the *London Westminster* on "Canadian Nationality." This he followed by his lecture on "Canada First," an eloquent and inspiring resumé of Canadian achievement. Others catching his enthusiasm, "Canada First" soon became a rallying cry to the youth of the budding nation, and the

next step was the organization of a party with the rousing watchword on its banners. Space here forbids us from following the fortunes of this young nationalist party. Its vicissitudes, however, are well known; and though it accomplished little in practical politics—partly because of journalistic and party jealousy, and partly because the people had had enough of the political ailments of the time—it awakened youthful desire for intellectual freedom and for an increased measure of political independence. In this good work it was fortunate in winning the advocacy of an able and brilliant pen, till then new to the country, which, heedless of abuse and obloquy, was trenchantly wielded in the cause which the young patriots had at heart. With amazing public ingratitude and inconsistency this writer, forgetful of what he has all along done for the best interests of Canada, is to-day called disloyal, and accused of burrowing beneath the feet of the nation. The trouble with this charge is that the nation is still but a colony and has never yet got upon its feet. Not the least of the valuable results of the "Canada First" movement were the founding and the maintenance, for a while, of *The Nation* and *The Canadian Monthly*, and the erection in the city of the National Club.

But the movement into which Mr. Foster and his friends enthusiastically threw themselves was, as we know, short-lived. Canadian patriotism was fatally handicapped by Party, and Party neither looked then, nor does it look now, to higher ends than its own ignoble interests. Since that period the fibre of Canadian nationality has, we fear, relaxed instead of hardened, and the aspirations born of the time have, in the main, vanished into thin air. For this Mr. Foster was in no way responsible, for, with the ardour and persistence of youth, he clung to the movement until he and his allies were accused of tilting at windmills and of "dreaming dreams." Though loth to accept discomfiture, Mr. Foster could not fail, however, to realize facts, and he now turned aside to take up his profession. In law he found, if not the pursuit on which his heart was set, that which pecuniarily was more to his interest. With the exception of occasional contributions to journalism, literature he now and forever forsook. In this, from a worldly point of view, he no doubt did wisely; though had he followed letters as a means of livelihood, and practised it where it is recognized and rewarded as a profession, he would have won, we feel sure, both fortune and fame. To these allurements, and to everything earthly, his eyes and ears, alas! are now dull. The familiar figure of our friend is to us now but a memory. It is a memory, however, that we would fain cherish, for, as with all who knew his worth, we esteemed him and gave him our heart. At his grave, where his remains were paid the honours due to a beloved friend, his fellow-townsmen took leave not only of a good citizen but of a true patriot.

G. MERCER ADAM.

LONDON LETTER.

(NOTES ON AN AUTUMN HOLIDAY.)

GREAT white clouds sail slowly, drift idly, in all manner of fanciful shapes across that forget-me-not-coloured space, "which men call Skye." The sunny air, delicately chilled, is full of sweet shrill robin-songs, of musical sounds of everyday labour, of the cries from children over against the red brick almshouse, who are playing under yonder elm, old when Elizabeth was Queen. A touch of worldly splendour, contributed by those flaunting carnation folds on the beautiful grey church tower—a paragraph as it were in the dull news-sheet of the village proclaiming that Royalty is staying at the Priory—is the one thing necessary (a Turner-like trick and admirable in its scarlet brilliance) to bring into harmony all these hints and suggestions of hues in the atmosphere, in the many tints of cottage walls, of glowing autumn leaves. Out of the doorways women lean to watch me, the stranger, as from shadow into sunlight and so again into shadow, I climb the hill up the side of which, in most picturesque fashion, their village is set, till, at the brow, I reach the latch-gate going on to those silent graves that lie around the House of Prayer. As I turn before slipping the latch and look back down the wide tranquil street, I feel how much I would like to be able to send you even the faintest outline of this exquisite English scene—a very Caldecott, or Walker. As it is, with only a pen instead of a brush, ink with which to work instead of a colour-laden palette, I shall fail to give you a true notion of the hundred indefinable charms surrounding me, which you poor lodgers in a new world can have no conception of. It has taken many and many a century to make our country places what they are, many a year to bring these pictures to the absolute perfection most of them have attained. In this on which I am gazing the light falls exactly where it should on that girl's figure in her lilac gown and sunbonnet, on this little child's brown hair, and illuminates everything it touches like the golden scrolls in the margin of a breviary, throwing into relief the fine Tudor ornaments of this wonderful spot. So in design, in tone and feeling, everything is altogether what it should be, a position of affairs in nature which landscape painters will tell you does not often exist.

A little to your left is a vicarage built like one of Nash's exteriors of the time of James the First where clumps and bushes of gay autumn flowers burn and blaze against the twinkling mullion windows, lattices which many successive generations of parsons' daughters have thrown wide open of a summer morning. It is so still you can hear the modern Miss Primroses at their afternoon talk, and from the Jacobean house with its chrysanthemum garlands, a word or two, a half laugh, and the clatter of teacups reach me as I go past the gravestones, and push open the clanging church door.

Here, according to the ghost of a certain powdered shrewd-eyed, thin-lipped divine in a black gown and buckled shoes—ready in the aisle to