

# THE SATURDAY READER.

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FIVE CENTS.

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BY MRS. C. L. BALFOUR.

## CANADIAN DEATH-ROLL.—1865.

The glories of our birth and state,  
Are shadows, not substantial things;  
There is no armour against fate:  
Death lays his icy hands on kings;  
Sceptre and crown  
Must tumble down,  
And in the dust be equal made  
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

SHIRLEY.

THE beautiful lines of the Elizabethan drama-  
tist, which we quote, give a true illustration  
of the uncertainty and utter hollowness of every-  
thing of the earth earthy. The king as well as  
the peasant; the powerful leader of a mighty  
host as well as his meanest soldier; the wealthy  
lordling, whose ancestry dates back to a remote  
period, as well as the poor foundling who was dis-  
covered on the door-step;—must all elbow one  
another on the same road, on the same long  
journey, and must all mingle together in their  
original dust.

Thoughts such as these arise in our mind as  
we ponder over the lives of the many whom we  
yearly see carried to the tomb; and the question  
not unnaturally suggests itself whether men live  
for good or for evil. Alas! that we should have  
to make the confession for frail humanity, that the  
number of the latter strongly outweighs the for-  
mer. But as our duty is almost exclusively to take  
a retrospective glance at the obituary list for the  
memorable year which is now rapidly drawing  
to a close, and as our space for this purpose is  
necessarily limited, we will have to defer the  
consideration of this mournful topic until a future  
occasion.

The bill of mortality for 1865 is a heavy one.  
If, in Great Britain, the Premier, PALMERSTON, and  
in the United States, the chief Executive officer,  
LINCOLN, have been numbered with the illustri-  
ous dead, so have Canadians to mourn the loss  
of SIR E. P. TACHÉ, the head of Her Majesty's  
Government in the Province; and many other  
indigenous sons and residents who have been cut  
off by the untimely hand of death. The list is pain-  
fully large, and forcibly reminds us that the sands  
of that good old stock who have raised Canada  
to the position she now occupies on the map of  
the world, are nearly run out. Heaven guard  
those of them who are spared to us, and conserve,  
by their good example, in the right path, the ge-  
neration which is to succeed them.

Great havoc has been made amongst the public  
men of the Province. We need but point to the  
honoured names of TACHÉ, McLEAN, MORIN,  
McCORD, FERLAND, DEBRAUJEU, MOFFATT, GALE,  
MOARIS, and GORDON, as a sad exemplification  
of our statement. But to take the deaths in chro-  
nological order, we find that early in the year two  
pious churchmen died, one the REV. OACON RED  
of Frelighsburg, the oldest member of the Church  
of England in Lower Canada, and one of the  
most remarkable and learned ministers of the

day; the other, L'ANNÉ FERLAND, Chaplain of the  
Forces at Quebec, and a zealous member of the  
Church of Rome. M. Ferland had done much  
in the cause of Canadian nascent literature; his  
*Histoire du Canada* promised to be a valuable  
addition to what has already been written on the  
subject. He was not a brilliant man, but he had  
in him a patient industry which served him well  
in his literary researches and labours; to this  
was united one of the most genial and kindly  
dispositions which it has ever been our good for-  
tune to meet.

In the same month (January), DR. A.  
M. CLARK, formerly of the Indian army,  
expired at Yorkville. Mrs. CHRISTIE, wife of  
the historian of that name, the cheerful and  
ruddy faced old gentleman, well known to us in  
our boyish days, also died in the early part of  
the year. The most notable death in February  
was that of the HON. GEORGE MOFFATT, one of  
the oldest as well as one of the most upright and  
honourable of Canadian merchants, who died at  
his seat, Weredale Lodge, Montreal, on the 28th  
of that month. Mr. Moffatt had figured in the  
political arena, and his course therein had been  
marked with the same regard to the high prin-  
ciples which governed him in his professional pur-  
suits. Although an Englishman by birth, he bore  
an ardent attachment to the land of his adop-  
tion. His loyalty was pure, fervent and devoted.  
As a volunteer in '12, as a legislator in both  
charibers, in times of great public emergency,  
as leader of the constitutional association in '37,  
and as President of the British American League  
in '49, this was amply proved. There never  
existed so good a conservative or so stout a  
loyalist. How true the lines written in his  
memory:—

Oh! loyal friend—oh! statesman wise and just,  
Peer of Old England's noblest merchant sons—  
What though thy ashes mingle with the dust,  
Life's record lives—and speaks in trumpet  
tongues.

No need for monumental brass to grave  
Memorial lines for curious eyes to scan;  
Deep in our hearts we bear his epitaph—  
"One of God's noblest works—an honest man."\*

We next have to record, among those called  
away, the names of the Rev. RICHARD FLOOD, of  
Delaware, a member of the Established Church,  
who had done much in his neighbourhood for  
the spiritual welfare of the resident Indian tribes;  
MAJOR MUNDOCH McPHERSON, of Glengarry; MR.  
FREDERICK WIDDER, formerly chief commissioner  
of the Canada Company; MR. GILBERT T. BAS-  
TEDO, of Nelson, an old U. E. loyalist; MR. COLIN  
D. READ, of Hamilton, and MR. JAMES McDONNELL,  
an enterprising merchant of the "Queen City." Passing on, we come to the name of CAPTAIN  
BAXTER, a retired officer of the army, much  
esteemed in his locality.

The HON. SAMUEL GALE, late a judge of the Court  
of Queen's Bench in Lower Canada, was called to  
his fathers on the 15th April. He was "a loyal  
subject, a learned and upright judge, and a kind  
true, steadfast friend." As the author of the  
letters of "Nerva," he showed the possession of  
no ordinary ability as a public writer. The  
HON. ALEXANDER GORDON, a Life member of the  
Legislative Council, died in the same month.  
He had served the country as an officer of militia  
during the war of 1812. Was present at the  
taking of Detroit, and had the honour of being  
first to hoist the British flag over the conquered  
city. He was also in the action at Frenchtown,  
in the succeeding year and was seriously wounded  
there. He sat in the Legislative Assembly of  
Upper Canada, prior to the Union. Another old  
and valued citizen was carried away towards the

close of April, in the person of COL. E. W. THOM-  
SON of Toronto, also a volunteer in '12, and again  
in '37;—a member of Parliament in '36 (defeating  
the late Mr. W. L. Mackenzie), one of the con-  
structors of the locks on the St. Lawrence and  
Welland canals, one of the founders of the Pro-  
vincial Agricultural Association, and a repre-  
sentative of Canada at the London Exhibition  
of 1851, as well as an extensive farmer. Col.  
Thomson's career was one of singular benefit to  
his native country. We have next to chronicle  
the loss, in May, of MR. DUNBAR ROSS, Q. C., an  
advocate of great ability, and at one time  
Solicitor General for Lower Canada; of MAJOR  
CHARLES STUART of Zorra, formerly of the H. E. I.  
C.'s service in Madras; of MR. THOMAS SANDILANDS,  
manager of the Gore Bank at Guelph; of EDMA,  
the amiable relict of that fine old Canadian  
gentleman, SIR JOHN BEVERLEY ROBINSON, Bart.  
D. C. L., Oxon; of MR. HENRY ATKINSON, who  
for half a century had been a prominent mer-  
chant of Quebec, and was a gentleman of a refined  
taste and education. One of the saddest of  
the many deaths of the year is that of a young  
Canadian soldier, LIEUTENANT JAMES EDWARD  
VAUGHAN, of the 2nd Battalion, P. C. O. Rifle  
Brigade, which occurred in India on the 17th  
May. Mr. Vaughan was a native of Quebec,  
and had distinguished himself in many of the  
most sanguinary contests of the last Indian  
Mutiny. He had also attained a remarkable  
proficiency in Oriental languages, and had  
passed the searching army examination on these  
subjects. Far away from the land of his birth—  
the scenes of his childhood, the home of his friends,  
he peacefully sleeps in his quiet Bengal grave.  
The demise of MR. BENJAMIN HOLMES, Collector of  
Customs at Montreal, took place on the 22nd  
May. In his day he had been a merchant of  
standing in the commercial Metropolis of British  
America. He also had been to the frontier in  
'12 and in '37—in the former had been taken  
prisoner by the Americans—and held until the  
end of the war. As member of the Legislative  
Assembly for Montreal in two Parliaments, he was  
invariably found ranged on the loyal side. He  
had besides held many important positions—the  
duties of which he had discharged with credit  
to himself and advantage to the interests of  
the institutions with which he was connected.

We now come to the name of MR. JUSTICE  
McCOAN, who expired at his seat, Temple Grove,  
Montreal, on the 27th June. The deceased Judge  
had filled many offices of trust and honour during  
his long and useful career. He had raised a com-  
pany and commanded a brigade during the re-  
bellion. He was Chancellor of the University  
of Bishop's College at his death. An ardent  
student of Natural History and Meteorology, and  
a lover of Horticulture, he evinced great interest  
in the societies which have been formed for the  
development of these important branches of  
study. He was, besides, a zealous member of the  
Church of England, and the void which he has  
left in the community will be long felt. The  
sudden death of that veteran politician and jour-  
nalist, as well as upright judge, the HON. A. N.  
MORIN, on the 27th June, occasioned a painful  
feeling throughout the whole of Lower Canada.  
He was a member of the Legislative Assembly  
before the Union, and long afterwards; the influ-  
ence of his pen as well as his voice had been felt  
in the councils of the country from an early period  
of his career, but no just estimate of the many im-  
portant services he rendered Canada can be formed  
until his life be written by some competent person  
acquainted with the momentous times in which  
he figured.

We have already briefly adverted to the  
loss Canada sustained in the death of SIR  
ERNEST PASCAL TACHÉ. The late Premier was