

EDITORIAL.

We have a painful and melancholy event to state to the readers of the "Maple Leaf." The former Editor and Publisher, Mr. Robert W. Lay, is now no more. He is gone, we are confident, to a higher, and a better world! He died, suddenly, and unexpectedly, at Toronto, on the 18th inst., from a fit of apoplexy, thus adding another to the many proofs which almost every day presents, that:—

"Death, like an overflowing stream,
Sweeps us away; our life's a dream;
An empty tale; a morning flower,
Cut down and withered in an hour.

"To-day, we are upon the stream of time; to-morrow, we are floated forth upon the Ocean of eternity. There is no intermediate state of being; no line of separation between this world and the next."

Mr. Lay was born in the State of Connecticut, U. S., in the year 1814. He was therefore in his 39th year at the time of his death. His native place, Saybrook, is situated in sight of the Atlantic-billows, and is noted in American history, as one of those staunch old towns, closely resembling in genuine honesty, and manly material, the true English characters from which it originated.

Trained in childhood and youth, amid those invigorating, self-relying influences, which the New England sea-coast villages afford, he grew up robust in physical appearance, and early exhibited, not only great perseverance and enterprise, but originality of mind. In the States he practised very successfully, for some years, as a Civil Engineer, but the out-door exposures and anxieties, which the active duties of this profession demanded, seriously injured his health, and he was compelled to abandon it.

In 1845, he came to Canada. Here he saw at a glance, the great dearth of *good periodical* literature, and the great improvement the country would experience, if more interesting reading could be put in circulation. Although, to the writer's knowledge, he was, about this time, offered a lucrative situation, he refused it, and preferred the more arduous, the less profitable, but to him, the more useful task of personally endeavoring to circulate, by subscriptions, useful and entertaining works and periodicals throughout the country; but more particularly in our back settlements. With this object, he repeatedly traversed from below Quebec, up to Lake Huron; from the Eastern Townships, to the furthest settlements on the Ottawa.—At the outset of these labors, he was very much impeded by the restrictions which were then placed here upon American republications of English works. We have good reason to know, that his repeated representations to the government of the injuries these restrictions produced on the country, in a great measure led to their repeal. By this change, many a valuable English work is now placed within the reach of our poorer classes, which, formerly, could only have been purchased by the rich.—Mr. Lay was, moreover, noted for his urbanity, his warmth of heart, and his fearless avowal of Christian principles, and it has been remarked of him, by many, that no one ever spent a few moments in his society, without receiving some improving ideas, or hearing some pleasing hints on intellectual and moral subjects.

The "Maple Leaf" will be continued by his widow, for the benefit of herself and children. No pains will be spared to make its pages useful and interesting. In fact, many additional attractions for the magazine are contemplated.

A large amount of arrears are due for the volume of the "Snow Drop," which was published by Mr. Lay; and also, on the "Maple Leaf" for the current year. We are sure, that no further appeal than is presented by the above circumstances, will be needed, to induce the immediate payment of these sums to Mrs. Lay.