

Literature, Historical Notes, etc.

[We interrupt this month the usual historical chapter on Education, to insert a paper prepared by Mr. R. Lawe B.A., Principal of Three Rivers Academy. Such papers are of the greatest value to the compiler of history, and if others of our teachers would only follow Mr. Lawe's example, material that may be lost but for such industry, will fall into the proper hands for safe-keeping.]

Three Rivers claims the honor of having had the first school in this province, that of Father Duplessis, 1616; but for the first English school we must come down nearly two hundred years later. Away back in the dawn of this century, before any one of our many Canadian universities was founded, before there was any educational system in Canada, Stephen Burroughs, an American, six feet high, weighing about two hundred and fifty pounds, a physical giant, taught the boys of Three Rivers for several years. Many were the stories related by Stephen of his daring deeds and great exploits, performed chiefly along the American border.

“ Full well his pupils laughed

At all his jokes, for many a joke had he.”

“ But past is all his fame,”—for though he wrote a history of his life, his sons bought up the books and burnt them. A daughter of Mr. Burroughs' became Superioress of the Three Rivers convent.

In 1814 arrived from Ayrshire, Scotland, Selby Burns, a friend of the poet, but not a relative. Mr. Burns had a large school of both boys and girls, and received aid from the Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learning. He was for many years warden of the church of England in Three Rivers. It is said that the Royal Institution threatened to withdraw the grant on account of the Methodists having been allowed to preach in his school-house. Mr. Burns taught in Three Rivers for over thirty years, during the greater part of which time Phoebe Thompson (whose father had been gardener and barber to Governor Craig), had a school for girls.

In 1843 the Rev. James Thom, a Presbyterian minister, opened a school in Three Rivers and taught till 1850. There being many Presbyterians in Three Rivers during Mr. Thom's time,