

be solved. In alluding to this subject here, I trust I have not overstepped the limits, within which, in this place, I ought to confine my remarks, but it is of such paramount importance that scarcely any effort to attract attention to it can be condemned as either ill-timed or misplaced.

But it is time that I bring these desultory observations to a close. More than thirty-six years have passed since I first knew Western Canada. An eye-witness of most of the leading events that have happened in her history during that period, an actor in some of them—I cannot compare what is, with what was, without feelings of mixed wonder and rejoicing. The wilderness has given place to fields of standing corn; towns have sprung up where the first blows of the settler's axe had not yet awakened the echoes of the forest; the locomotive dashes on with fiery speed where the early pioneer explored his dubious way by the Indian path; the vessel launched on the waters of Lake Michigan finds her moorings in the River Mersey! I might compare the Province as it was then, to the bark canoe floating on the waters of a river—as it is now, to a gallant ship entering upon the billows of the broad ocean. At first:

“Through pleasant banks the quiet stream
Went winding pleasantly;
By fragrant fir groves now it past,
And now thro' alder shores;
Through green and fertile meadows now,
It silently ran by!
The flag flower blossomed on its side,
The willow tresses waved,
The flowing current furrowed round
The water-lily's floating leaf,
The fly of green and gauzy wing
Fell sporting down its course.
And grateful to the voyager
The freshness that it breathed,
And soothing to his ear
It's murmur round the prow!”

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“But many a silent spring meanwhile,
And many a rivulet and rill,
Had swollen the growing stream.
And when the southern sun began
To wind the downward way of Heaven,
It ran, a river deep and wide,
A broader and a broader stream.

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