

Book Notices.

The Life and Times of General John Graves Simcoe, First Governor of Upper Canada. By D. B. READ, Q.C. 8vo., pp. 304. Toronto: George Virtue, publisher, Price, cloth, \$3.50.

The accomplished author of this book has previously rendered valuable service to his country by his admirable volume of "Lives of the Judges of Upper Canada and Ontario." The present work is of still broader and more general interest. It traces with graphic pen the principal events in the founding of Upper Canada. It is well to revive the memory of those heroic days. No country ever had a more noble and illustrious band of pilgrim fathers than those true-hearted U. E. Loyalists who forsook lands and home, and braved the perils of the wilderness that they might found a new province, where they might worship the God of their fathers under the old historic flag which they loved so well, and for which they had fought and bled. Our author traces the heroic exploits of the "Queen's Rangers," under General Simcoe, during the revolutionary war, and describes the exile for consciences' sake of the pilgrim fathers of Upper Canada, recounts the founding of the first capital at Newark, the historic Niagara, the exploration of the western peninsula, the removal of the seat of government to York, and other events in the early history of the Province. It is well for the people of this "Queen City" to look back at its early beginnings and to discern the elements of the moral strength of the Province in the elevated and patriotic character of its original founders. A trustworthy account is also given of the ill-fated Major André, and of the able forest statesman, Captain Brant. Fine steel portraits of Simcoe and Brant are given, also portraits of Sir George Yonge, after whom Yonge Street

was named; of Captain Brant; Major André, from a pen sketch made by himself the morning of his execution; several engravings made from water-colour drawings of Canadian scenery, by the wife of Governor Simcoe on first coming to Upper Canada with the Governor in 1791, and other sketches.

The Provincial Letters: the Moral Teachings of the Jesuit Fathers opposed to the Church of Rome and the Latin Vulgate. By BLAISE PASCAL. Toronto: William Briggs, and Methodist Book-rooms, Montreal and Halifax. Pp. 400; price \$1.50.

The most illustrious name in the noble muster-roll of Port Royal is that of Blaise Pascal. He united in his own person the wit of Rabelais, the sublimity of Milton, and the terse vigour of Junius. He seized the French language when it was little better than a barbarous dialect, and made it classic forever. Such an achievement is accomplished only by men of the loftiest genius—by a Dante, a Luther, or a Shakespeare. The inimitable wit of his *Provincial Letters* stung to the very quick the Jesuit party. The sublimity, the pathos, and the piety of his lofty "Thoughts" on "the greatness and the misery of man," on God, and on eternity, awe and thrill the soul of every reader. Never did so precious a literary freight come down the stream of time in so crazy a bark, and with so narrow an escape from shipwreck. They were written on scraps of paper or the backs of letters, often amid paroxysms of pain, frequently breaking off in the middle of a sentence or of a word. These Sibylline leaves were then filed on a wire for future arrangement. This, however, was prevented by the hand of death, which cut off their distinguished author at the early age of thirty-nine.