

## \* Special Papers. \*

## CANADA.

THE following is an address delivered by Mr. Thomas Hammond, Principal of Aylmer Public School, in a competition for a prize offered to the Public School teachers of the County of Elgin and City of St. Thomas, at the county Public School picnic held at Port Stanley on June 27th :

*Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen :*

The subject announced for me is "Canada," and, although I had nothing to do with the selecting of this subject, yet the committee could not have chosen a theme more congenial to my sentiments. Ladies and gentlemen, I have neither the presumption nor the vanity to imagine for a moment that I have the ability to do justice to so grand a subject. But I assure you, that though I fail, I can say with one of Scripture, that "the spirit is willing though the flesh is weak."

A nation's greatness consists chiefly in its geographical position, its natural resources, and the intellectual, moral and religious education of its people. The nation about which we are to draw conclusions lies truly in a temperate zone,—temperate in its geographical position, temperate in its political institutions, temperate in its religious sentiment,—for all of which we should feel grateful; grateful that we are spared the severities of an Arctic region, where the greatest exertions are requisite to satisfy the cravings of appetite, and keep warmth to the body; even more grateful that our lot is not cast in a tropical climate, where little or no exertion is necessary to supply the individual's demands, leaving him weak physically and morally, passionate, and given to vices. May it never be said of Canada as Goldsmith said of Italy, "Man seems the only growth that dwindles here."

I said that we are temperate in our political institutions. We think our constitution second to none on the globe, being the happy mean between the two extremes—despotism and republicanism. Having all the liberty of a republic, we have none of its license, and having a reverence for a Royalty we are governed by a democracy. Thanks to our true liberty and just laws we are not afflicted with the nihilists of Russia, the socialists of Prussia, Belgium and Switzerland, the communists of France, or with the anarchists of the United States.

And what Canadian does not feel proud of our statesmen? I care not whether you refer to a Mowat or a Meredith, the practical Mackenzie, the theoretical Blake or the wily Sir John. Such men have done much to make our young country a land of peace and plenty. The carpet bag politician is unknown in Canada, and the demagogue is almost as rare.

We have reached the acme of religious freedom; and instead of warring sect against sect, we war against sin.

Canada, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, whose provinces are bound together by the silken chain of commerce, opened up by that greatest of all overland routes, the C.P.R., is rapidly rising into national prominence as a producer of the world's necessities.

Its fisheries, of which our American neighbors are so envious, feed the million.

The coal fields of Nova Scotia in the east and British Columbia in the west are sufficient to supply the nation for ages.

The weavers of Manchester and Glasgow, the cutlers of Sheffield, the miners of Cornwall, the cockneys of London, eat bread made from wheat grown on the well-tilled farms of Ontario and the vast prairie lands of Manitoba.

Our American cousins imbibe beer brewed from Canadian barley. Timber from New Brunswick is found in the dockyards of Glasgow and Woolwich. Great Britain, owning nearly half the shipping of the world, whose sons loyally sing, "Britannia Rules the Waves," obtains the oaken ribs of her great fleet from Canadian forests.

In short, our fisheries, forests, agricultural and mineral resources, the development of which is yet in its infancy, excel those of any other nation, either of the old or the new world.

With regard to shipping and tonnage, young Canada stands fifth in the list of nations, having

more vessels than old France, Spain, Italy or Russia.

Nature in her kindness has furnished us with the finest water system on the globe.

I can appreciate the pride with which our neighbors to the south point to the great "Father of Waters," which is the outlet for all the produce from the Rocky Mountains to the Alleghanies, and from our great lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, but I pride more in our picturesque St. Lawrence, whose waters sweep past the pictured rocks of Lake Superior, leap the cataract at Niagara, and carry the keels of Canadian commerce.

Yes, I pride more in our noble St. Lawrence, whose shores have never echoed to the stroke of the slave-driver's lash.

With these natural advantages surely Canada has a hopeful future. Were she to make progress during the next century equal to that of the past, she will stand among the foremost nations of the earth. England, from whose loins Canada has sprung, has grown in wealth and opulence for more than a thousand years, and yet is far from her dotage; then why should not her offspring, with even greater advantages, reach national greatness?

The natural position and condition of Canada are not its only encouraging features; her school system, founded by that grand old U. E. Loyalist, Rev. Dr. Egerton Ryerson, has made such rapid strides of progress that it is being largely copied by the old European nations.

With reference to our queen province of Ontario is this especially true. Even the great German system, the pride of Europe, must take second place as regards our system of inspection, of training and of institute work for teachers.

The peasant in his hamlet on the shores of Georgian Bay or Lake Superior has a trained teacher for his children. Herein, ladies and gentlemen, lies the promise of much of our future greatness—an educated peasantry.

"Princes and lords may flourish or may fade,  
A breath can make them, as a breath has made,  
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,  
When once destroyed, can never be supplied."

Canadians are truly a moral, a religious and a loyal people—loyal to Canada, loyal to the empire to which we are proud to belong, loyal to political and religious liberty.

Its population is composed of the sturdy sons of England, the hardy highlanders of Scotland, the witty, but generous-hearted sons of Erin, the industrious German, and the Anglicised Frenchman, and the sons of the 30,000 United Empire Loyalists, who sacrificed homes and property for the love of freedom and the British flag. What better elements could be desired to make a great nation than the descendants of England's Hampden, Scotland's Knox, Ireland's O'Connell and Germany's Luther?

The union of all these different nationalities by social, religious, political and commercial intercourse, as well as by intermarriage, has blended all the better qualities, and eliminated the weaknesses of each, thus in a measure verifying the doctrine of the "survival of the fittest."

Long may the rose, thistle and shamrock keep company with the maple leaf.

The great question that is agitating the minds of many to-day is, "What is to be Canada's Future?"

Considered from a political standpoint it is generally believed that Canada will accept one of three options, viz.: Annexation with the United States, Independence or Imperial Federation.

The first is scarcely worth our time to discuss, as Annexation would be accepted only by the few who are not Canadians in any true sense of the term.

No intelligent citizen of Canada, considering the sacrifices we should make, morally, religiously, politically, and in many respects commercially, besides severing the cords of affection for the mother country would seriously consider the question.

We must also negative the second option, as we are yet too young to go alone, with such an overshadowing, and somewhat covetous nation in so close proximity. We are rapidly growing into maturity, still for some years to come we need the anxious, maternal parent's care.

Having rejected Annexation and Independence, we are inclined to accept Imperial Federation, and believe that within a few years we shall be a part of a great federation as one, and not the least of England's numerous colonies, with our representa-

tives meeting in Parliament with all those over whom the Union Jack floats, and bound together more firmly still by all the ties that such a union must necessarily strengthen.

Canada, having such elements of greatness within herself, when she becomes a part of such a union, that has for its object the better protection of one another's interests, will be a large factor in a national greatness that has not been eclipsed since the "morning stars sang together."

"In union is strength," as is shown by the Confederation of the British North American provinces. Had this union not been effected, at the wise suggestion of the late Hon. George Brown, and so well carried into effect by the present Canadian "Chieftain," perhaps the Maritime Provinces would not yet have been connected with the upper provinces by the Intercolonial Railway, and quite certain it is the C.P.R. would yet be unknown, and the inhabitants of British Columbia and Manitoba could hold intercourse with their sister provinces only through United States territory.

Canada's future will depend largely upon her national morality. That Divine Being who "decks the lily" and is mindful of the sparrow, surely is not forgetful of nations. History points to the fact that no nation ceases to prosper whose legislation is based upon the moral law, which was made as surely for nations as for individuals.

An aged man once said, "I have been young but now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, or his seed begging bread." This is as true to-day as the day it was penned, and as true of nations as of individuals.

Opposed as we are to Annexation we do not forget that our neighbors to the south and we are of the same blood and language, connected by social and commercial intercourse; and though opposed to political union, may we become more and more united in heart and hand, to battle for right, defend virtue, and war against intemperance and all its kindred vices, that are doing so much to retard the progress of our neighboring Republic and our beloved Canada.

But, ladies and gentlemen, before concluding, permit me to refer to our ancestral race. I must say something of our forefathers who shed their blood in defence of political and religious liberty.

When Spain's "Invincible Armada" was about to crush out Protestantism it was our ancestors that humbled that mighty fleet. When that French King was about to trample Europe under his feet, it was the Prince of Orange, with his British troops, that suppressed his tyranny; and when Napoleon Bonaparte had nearly the whole world at his feet, it was England's Iron Duke, on that Sunday afternoon, that closed his career on the plains of Waterloo. In fact, for centuries England has been the balance wheel of the world.

We look back with pride to the names of Crecy and Agincourt, to Alma's Heights and Inkerman, and what British heart does not beat faster when it hears the name of Waterloo?

But enough, and more than enough of such victories are blazoned on our flag. We want not the annals of our nation written in blood. May it never be truly said of us that we war merely to gain territory or for the acquisition of wealth.

Let us beware of the sin of Judas. The hand of history points to the fact that swollen fortunes and material wealth are not always signs of a nation's strength. In the contention between old Abraham and Lot, we find the latter choosing Jordan's rich and fertile valley, while the former was contented with the somewhat barren hills of Palestine, but that pillar of salt on Palestine's plains stands as an evidence that material wealth sometimes leads but to weakness.

Old Rome was never so strong as when her dictators came from the ploughshare, and never so weak as when in her colossal wealth she had scarcely a freeman. "He is a freeman whom the truth makes free, and all are slaves besides." Let us ever be freemen as far as the truth can make us free! Let us imbibe the sentiment of England's immortal bard who says, "I dare do all that becomes a man, who dares do more is none."

Happy is the man who loves his country and his home; thrice happy he who from his very heart exclaims, "God, Home and Native Land."

THERE is nothing like a fixed, steady aim, with an honorable purpose. It dignifies the nature and insures success.—SPOTFORD BROOKE.