

JOURNAL OF EDUCATION

Upper Canada.



VOL. V.

TORONTO, UPPER CANADA, MARCH, 1852.

No. 3.

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TWO LECTURES

DELIVERED BEFORE THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE, TORONTO, ON THE 13TH AND 27TH MARCH, 1852.

BY THE REV. ADAM LILLIE.

CANADA—ITS GROWTH AND PROSPECTS.

LECTURE FIRST.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—The subject to which I am, this evening, to call your attention,—interesting in itself from its relation to the progress of our race and the providence of God,—must to us have a special interest, because of its reference to ourselves. My theme is the growth and prospects of Canada—in other words, the advancement we are ourselves making, with the anticipations we may cherish for ourselves and our children.

By the excellent lectures delivered by Mr. ROBERTSON, in the early part of the season, on the history of Canada, I am happily relieved from the necessity of occupying your time with preliminary details. Hence, with your permission, I will proceed at once to the topic announced, only premising that I speak chiefly, though not exclusively, of Canada West. This I do partly because I am better acquainted with it and have the materials relating to it more within my reach, partly because it is newer than Canada East, partly too because I think the comparisons so often made between the two sides of the Line fair only when confined to Upper Canada.

The population of Canada at the time of its surrender to Britain in 1760 is variously stated at 60,000 and 69,275, exclusive of Indians. Of these estimates, the former is that given by the Board of Registration and Statistics, which I extract from one of Mr. Scobie's very valuable Almanacs (that for 1850); the latter that supplied by Mr. Smith, (in his excellent work on which I have taken the liberty of drawing freely) from the report of Governor Murray.

With the exception of a few trading stations, of which Kingston and Detroit were the chief, this population was confined to the lower part of the Province; nearly the whole of its upper portion being then a wilderness, occupied by the Red Man as a hunting ground. From 1770, parties, chiefly old soldiers, began to come in from the other side; to which some considerable additions were made after the Declaration of the Independence of the United States by United Empire Loyalists from New Jersey and Pennsylvania, who located

themselves along the frontier Townships. So late, however, as 1791, the date of the Constitutional Act, the whole population of Upper Canada is declared to have been "calculated at less than 50,000." According to the authority already quoted (that of the Board of Registration and Statistics) it amounted in 1811, twenty years after the separation of the Provinces, to only 77,000. Hence it is not more than forty years since its growth can be said to have commenced, if so much as that.

From that time it has, with occasional interruptions, advanced steadily, and, especially during the last twenty-five or thirty years, at a rapid rate. Boucnette reports the population to have been in 1824—151,097; which, taking as he does, 77,000 as the numbers in 1811, makes it nearly double in thirteen years.—(Vol. I. p. 108.)

If for the sake of securing all possible exactness we connect with the above Mr. Smith's statement of the numbers in 1814 (95,000) and 1825 (158,027) respectively, the rate of increase, though somewhat reduced, is still 67 or 68 per cent in eleven years.

Between 1824, (from which period the calculations agree) and 1834, a rise takes place from 151,097 to 320,693; which is doubling in ten years, with 18,499 over. The next fourteen years bring us up from 320,693, to 791,000—the return for 1850. Within the brief space of a quarter of a century there is an advance from 151,097 to 791,000; which gives us at the close of that period over five times our population at its beginning—more than ten times our population in 1811, or according to Smith, close upon ten times that of 1806.

Lower Canada, during the same time, rose from 423,630, to 791,000; the same number with the Upper Province; being an increase nearly 90 per cent.

Taking Canada as a whole its population has increased from 60,000 to 1,582,000 in 90 years. Hence in 1850 it was over 26 times what it was in 1760; more considerably than 2½ times what it was in 1825, when it numbered 581,657.

"All this," exclaims Haman (Est. v. 13), at the close of a glowing description of the height to which he had been elevated and the glory with which he felt himself encircled, "all this availeth me nothing, so long as Mordecai the Jew sitteth at the king's gate." What "availeth" it, some of us peevishly exclaim, that we are growing at a rate which cannot be denied to be rapid, so long as our neighbours on the other side of the Line are so far outstripping us? How far do you conceive, are they outstripping us? Let us look at the facts, however terrible they may prove to be. Wise men hold it well in very bad cases to know the worst.

Compare we then Upper Canada, first with the free States of the Union, then with the State of New York, and lastly with Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois combined; and see what the result will be.

According to the American Almanac for 1851, page 212, and "The World's Progress" (a "Dictionary of Dates" published by Putnam of New York in 1851) page 481, the Free population of the United States, was, in 1806, 5,305,925. The latter work, (Ap-