

etc," it may be doubted whether it might not have been "nothing more" to many another beside Peter Bell! It is too bad to have no sweet, homely name, of two syllables at least, for the charming little *hepatica*, which peeps out from the covering of brown leaves, before the winter frost has left the ground, and before even its own downy leaves have begun to uncurl. The *sanguinaria* or "blood-root" fares a little better, but the latter name conveys no suggestion of its exquisite clusters of snowy cups, shining out amid the rich masses of deep-green leaves, like stars in the dark recesses of the woods. The graceful *trillium*, of purest white, or delicately tinted with pink, or here and there dyed deeply with blood (a good foundation for a legend), would be better named, if we simply called them "May-lilies," which would not be at all inaccurate, botanically speaking, as they belong to the great lily family. The delicate blue and white and yellow violets, which in congenial spots almost carpet the ground, are the only ones that have anything like an old-fashioned, simple name, and this, of course, they owe to their relationship to the violets of the old land, though they miss *their* delicate fragrance. As yet we have not had sufficient originality to supply picturesque idiomatic names to our Canadian flowers. "Jack in the box," however, with his brown and white stripes, and the graceful scarlet Columbine, springing in bright clusters among the grey rocks and green ferns, are among the few exceptions to dry scientific nomenclature. So is the waxen fragrant flower of the May-apple, and, a little later, the snowy masses of hawthorn and alder. The *viburnums*, of which there are two or three varieties, are not so fortunate. The "dog-wood" has its short name, and so has the "shad bush," the very earliest shrub to put on its snowy livery, though its botanical name—*amelanchier Canadensis*—might well frighten the most enthusiastic lover of flowers. But in the end of April and the beginning of May, its snowy plumes bedeck the forest with bridal bravery, and must have seemed verily like Noah's dove with the olive leaf in its bill, to the weary, half-starved "Pioneers of France in the New World," after their first wretched winter in the ice-bound ships.

But to make a *catalogue raisonné* of the flowers of spring would swell this paper to the size of a botanical dissertation, and the best thing that any reader can do is to go out and make a personal acquaintance with them for himself. One word more, however, and that is a plea for the *birds of spring*. Without these we should hardly know our spring woodlands. The wistful pathetic trill of the robin is a still earlier and more familiar token of the spring than even the delicate blossom of the *hepatica* or the snowy plume of the shad-bush. The welcome cry of the blue-bird, the sweet liquid warbling of the "Canadian canary," as it is not inaptly called, the borrowed song of the imitative catbird, and the untiring brisk twilight recitative of the Whip-poor-Will, not forgetting the measured tap of the wood-pecker, are all component parts of our Canadian spring. It is time we should have some Act of Parliament to protect these charming denizens of our forests from the "St. Bartholomew of birds," which, either stupid and misplaced human selfishness, or a barbarous fashion of ornaments now beginning to meet with a deserved condemnation, or the mere recklessness of destructive boys, eager to show their prowess with a gun over timid and harmless creatures, is ever threatening our otherwise peaceful forests. It is high time that the restriction of a license should be placed on indiscriminate shooting, and that, to borrow an idea from Dr. Johnson, every fool, who happens to be at the butt end of a gun, should not have it in his power to scatter death and destruction among our forest warblers, and to rob our spring woods of one of their most subtle and poetic charms.

FIDELIS.

CANADIAN ARCHIVES.

MR. BRYMNER'S Report on the Archives of Canada for 1885 has been issued within the past week. It is fully equal in interest to the four preceding reports issued since 1881, and may possibly meet with equal general disregard. Estimating its character in the full recognition of the labour, care, and learning bestowed, upon it, we fear that we must look only upon its value in the light of what it will be to the student of the future.

Undoubtedly one of the safest modes to direct the views of those who confer the distinction of office is a study of our history correctly related. In the last ten years our views on this subject have been greatly enlarged. Our writers on history, as a rule, indulge in the repetition of a series of assumed facts which nobody hitherto has dared to dispute. But the Reports of the Archive Office have done much to stimulate opinion in this direction, to lead to a critical and judicial tone of mind, and not merely to suggest but to establish that there is a great deal of evidence, but little known, to be sifted and examined, and that the judgments of the past have to be submitted to the fresh ordeal of examination. There has

been great carelessness and recklessness in writing history, and there has been a desire to make the facts sustain theories, and to draw conclusions, which we are now beginning to understand, in many cases, a few years will see entirely reversed.

In the present report, the calendar of the Haldimand papers is continued—a remarkable labour, each letter and document has to be read and studied, and a *précis* given of it in the fewest words, but with nothing omitted. Mr. Brymner tells us that each paper is, in London or Paris, compared and checked before being sent, and again revised in Canada. Some volumes of the Haldimand collection are yet required to complete the number—232 MS. volumes. Allusion is also made to the archives in France. No few of them at this moment, Mr. Marmette tells us, are in Russia; they were secured by the Russian Secretary of Legation, M. Pierre Dubroski at the taking of the Bastille in 1789 and the pillage of the Abbey of St. Germain des Prés in 1791. In 1793 the Garde Nationale, on duty, lighted the stove with ancient French archives; and in 1830 an employé sold by weight what he could purloin. There yet remain many documents which can be profitably copied. A list is given of several of these documents by Mr. Marmette, who was specially detailed to the examination of them, extending from 1540 to 1709. An incomplete list is published of the Protestant marriages, births, and deaths in Montreal after the Conquest to 1787. The publication is suggestive of the carelessness which then existed as to this duty.

Mr. Brymner gives in French, with a translation, which, from the attention we have been able to give, appears faithfully done, the report of M. Dudouyt to Bishop Laval, dated 1677. M. Dudouyt was Grand Vicaire, and his object in proceeding to France was to see Colbert, and obtain a renewal of the prohibition of the liquor traffic: undoubtedly a valuable addition to our knowledge of that date. The country is indebted to the University of Laval that it is published. A letter from Carleton, afterwards Lord Dorchester, in which he protests against the treatment he received from Lord George Germaine, when the intrigues of Burgoyne obtained for him the command in which he was so disgracefully to fail, will be read with profound interest by all having knowledge of the subject—another proof of the miserable incapacity of the oligarchical English Government of that date.

We have likewise a short biography of the Jesuit Roubaud, whom Mr. Brymner traces through his chequered life as a theory to make him die in a workhouse or a garret. This man, who played some part in our history, first appears as a Jesuit missionary with the Abenakis at St. Francis. He accompanied a body of the Indians to Ticonderoga, and advanced with Montcalm in 1757, in their company, to the siege of Fort William Henry at the head of Lake George. After Montcalm's death in Quebec, Vaudreuil wrote to the Minister of Marine in France that Montcalm had placed in Roubaud's hands two packets of papers on the maladministration of the army, and cautioned him against their injustice. He must have been a man of ability and insinuating manners, as he attracted the attention and gained the good will of Murray himself; well educated, and of good family, knowing good society. Maseres was also partial to him. Of his versatility, Mr. Brymner gives references to show that he performed at the opera in London, and he is reported to be the author of the French publication of 1777, alleged to contain the letters of Montcalm, written in 1757-8-9 on the English Colonies, foretelling their independence if Canada were conquered. These letters are now believed to be spurious. Mr. Brymner contents himself with publishing a memorial of Roubaud, in which the latter explicitly states these letters to be the work of an Englishman whom Chatham intimately knew. The distinguished Archæologist, the Abbe Verrault of Montreal, Mr. Parkman informs us, after investigating the matter in London and Paris, has distinctly pronounced them to be the work of Roubaud. Like most of the men of his character, he married a disreputable woman, "who gave way to the last excess." The words are his own. In his day too, he was a spy for the Government, and doubtless a useful one, if not always reliable, certainly always active and without scruple.

The report reflects great credit on the Archive Department. It shows that a very great deal of labour has been performed—and wisely performed—during the last year and that we are now proceeding on a satisfactory and established system.

W.

"I MET," says Haydon, "that patriarch of dissimulation and artifice, Talleyrand, but once, and once only, but I shall never forget him. He looked like a toothless boa of intrigue, with nothing left but his poison. To see his impenetrable face at a game of whist, watching everybody without a trace of movement in his own figure or face, save the slightest imperceptible twitch in the lip, was a sight never to be forgotten. It was the incarnation of meaning without assumption."