

# THE EARLY DAYS OF OWEN SOUND.

BY A. M. STEPHENS.

THIRTY YEARS AGO.

(The following letter to a friend in a foreign country was published without a signature in an Owen Sound paper in the year 1873:)

NORVAL, UPPER CANADA, NOV. 15, 1840.

Dear—,

In my last letter I think I told you that I intended leaving home and seeking my fortune in the far west; but since then matters and things have changed, and I have changed with them, and am likely to remain in my native country, which has need of all her sons, and plenty of room for them too. It is true that she has a good many adopted children, but their love for her is measured by the amount of money they can make. They are divided in sentiment as to forms of Government and political matters generally. The one party can see in the United States nothing but freedom, equality and enter rise; and in England, aristocracy, oppression, poverty and slavery. With the other party all that is great, glorious and free is concentrated in what they call the British constitution; and the Yankees are a nation of cowards, knaves and cut-throats. It is to be hoped these people will either get more sense or die off soon, and leave a good number of children behind them, who will be in no respect inferior to their fathers in all that constitutes true manhood, and possess a much greater amount of common sense. And while they will regard with respect and veneration the land of their fathers, and be devoted to the land of their birth. They will be willing to live on friendly terms with their neighbors over the line.

The interest of Canada is safer in the hands of her own children.

There is something in the prospect of leaving one's native country that to me at least is anything but agreeable. The old log house, with its old fashioned fireplace, where my father breathed his last, commending his family to the care of their father's God; where my mother has toiled and is still toiling, making herself miserable for fear her children will not be happy; the trees that my father planted and nursed with care; the creek in front of the barn, where I had caught the little chubs with a pin hook, and pelted the frog with stones as he appeared above the water. In fact, fields, fences, barns, trees and hill, all appeared to possess charms that I never before noticed, and caused me to feel more than my pride would allow me to acknowledge.

Well, you will perhaps laugh at such sentimentalism; but I don't care, a man that has no love for home or country doesn't deserve either. I am now going to tell you the reason why I am not going to the west. Our Government appear to have, by some means, (perhaps by the slashing given them by Hincks through the Examiner newspaper,) been waked up to the importance of settling our back country, and one of the McNabbs of Norval has been appointed Land Agent, with instructions to locate his headquarters near the northwest corner of Garafraxa, and to take a number of men with him to open up the road to this place, and erect a dwelling and store house. As soon as I heard this, I made up my mind to go with him, and