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LITERATURE.

EIGHT YEARS IN CANADA, &c.

EMBRACING A REVIEW OF THE SEVERAL ADMINISTRATIONS OF LORDS DUBHAM AND SYDENHAM, SIR CHARLES BAGOT, AND LORD METCALFE;

And Dedicated to the Memories of
THE FIRST AND LAST OF THESE DISTINGUISHED DEAD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ECARTE," &c.

DE OMNIBUS REBUS ET QUIBUSDAM ALIIS.

(A difficulty of arrangement having occurred with the only two London publishers to whom the following pages have been submitted, the Author has decided on reversing the usual practice, and publishing in Canada first, thus affording that means of direct communication with other metropolitan publishers, which his absence from London renders a matter of much inconvenience. It will be borne in mind, therefore, by the Canadian reader, that what is now offered to his perusal, was intended for an English public.)

[Deposited at the Office of the Registrar of the Province.]

(CHAPTER VIII. CONTINUED.)

layer, on the inner surface of the fish, and, thus prepared, they are sold, according to their abundance or dearth, at from three to seven dollars a barrel. During lent, which occurs at a season when fresh fish are not to be had, they constitute an indispensable article of food.

The Americans have been truly said to be a go-a-head people, and but too prone to sacrifice the ornamental to the useful. Notwithstanding the many attempts which I made to discover the site of the old fort—built originally by the French, and a picturesque feature in the scene—which we had taken possession of in 1812, I never could trace the slightest clue to its situation, not even a ditch remaining to call up a recollection of the past. True, they who accompanied me pointed out what they affirmed (and no doubt correctly enough) to be the spot, but this did not render the matter in the slightest degree more evident to myself, and yet I fancied I had known every part of the immediate neighborhood. I could not but deeply deplore that the fort no longer existed, for associated with it were stirring recollections of an early period of the history of the country. At Detroit was laid a great part of the scene of my "Wacousta," and I confess that it was with bitter disappointment that I beheld the ordinary habitations of men covering ground which had been sanctified by time and tradition, and hallowed by the sufferings of men reduced to the last extremity, by a savage and vindictive enemy. Another object which naturally excited my interest was the ruined bridge, about two miles above the town and bordering on the river, where the execution of Frank Halloway is made to take place, and where, during that disastrous war when eight out of nine of the English forts were captured by the Indians, a company of the 42nd was surprised, and literally annihilated by the tomahawk. Here everything was changed. The ravine remained, but on its sloping sides were to be seen evidences of rich vegetation, while the bridge itself, known in those days as the "Bloody Bridge," had disappeared beneath the action of the waters which had risen and overstepped its ancient boundaries.

To my "Wacousta," I had written, but never published, a continuation of that tale under the title of "The Canadian Brothers," and as much of the action of this was laid in the same neighborhood, at a more recent period, I was strongly urged by my American friends to publish it forthwith. Having nothing else where-with to occupy my time, I assented; but aware as I was of the great pecuniary responsibility of the undertaking in a country so indisposed to the encouragement of literature as Canada, where the chief sale of the work was to be looked for, I stipulated for a list of subscribers which should in part guarantee me from loss, even although I did not expect to derive much profit from the publication: This was promised, and in a few days I found about a hundred names appended to a prospectus that had been left at one of the bookstores. The number was quite as great as I could have anticipated in so

small a place, and more than trebled anything that emanated from my countrymen, in cities containing a much greater population.

As there was no place in Canada where I could have the work published so well as in Montreal, I determined to continue there during the preparation of the volumes, and accordingly embarked for Buffalo in one of the very superior American steamers which ply on Lake Erie,* and which are some twelve or fifteen in number. From Buffalo, I took the car which (drawn by horses) leads to Lewiston, the great point of embarkation for the central and eastern portions of Canada. This trip was to me a rather nervous one. The road, on approaching the point which is opposite to the heights of Queenston, runs for upwards of a mile on the very verge of an abyss of great depth. With a view of seeing the country to greater advantage, I had quitted the body of the car and perched myself near the driver; and as I glanced downward and felt the shaking and yawning of the coach, which was pulled by two sluggish horses that seemed to have done duty on the same road for the last twenty years, I expected at every moment that it would overturn. Indeed, had there been anything to startle the horses (and yet from their appearance this seemed to be an impossibility), or had a stone or any other inequality found its unwelcome way in the track we were following, no human skill could have prevented us from being precipitated into the bowels of this not very inviting cavern, compared with which the Devil's Punchbowl in Portsdown Common is but a Queen Mab's tea cup. If we had gone over, I should certainly have fastened in the top of some tall tree of the forest that was far beneath us, and possibly I might have floundered into an eagle's nest, affording unexpected promise of a rich repast for the family. Be this as it may, however, I confess I felt that extreme dizziness which is common to many people, and which invariably assails me when on the edge of a precipice, and during our descent of the hill I kept my body painfully inclined to the opposite side, as if that movement could have the slightest effect to neutralize any undue leaning the car might have towards the abyss. Had there been a railing of any kind against which the coach might have fallen, and afforded even a chance of escape, appearances might not have been so bad; but there was no barrier of any kind, and a coach overturned towards the abyss, must, with all appended to it, have been dashed to pieces. We were nearly half an hour enduring this purgatory, and I was by no means sorry when the coach had gained the bottom of the hill.

Being desirous of conveying a compliment to Sir John Harvey, who, independently of his having borne a distinguished part in the American War of 1812, had, while Adjutant-General of the Canadian army, evinced the most marked kindness and attention to my brother, to whom I have already alluded as having been severely wounded in action against the enemy, and being furthermore aware that the introduction of this gallant officer's name on the title-page would do more than any intrinsic merit of its own, to induce the Canadian people, professing to be of any standing in society, to patronize the book, I wrote to him to request the honor of inscribing this second historical tale of the Canadas to one who was so familiar with its incidents, and who had so largely participated in them. The following post from New Brunswick, of which Sir John was then Lieutenant Governor, brought me His Excellency's reply:—

"GOVERNMENT HOUSE, FREDERICTON, N.B., November 26th, 1839.

"DEAR SIR,—I am favored with your very interesting communication of the 22nd instant, by which I learn that you are the brother of two youths, whose gallantry and merits—and with regard to one of them, his sufferings—during the late war, excited my warmest admiration and sympathy. I beg you to believe that I am far from insensible to the affecting proofs which you have made known to me of this grateful recollection of any little service which I may have had it in my power to render them; and I will add that the desire which I felt to serve the father, will be found to extend itself to the son, if your nephew should ever find himself under circumstances to require from me any service which it may be within my power to render him.

"With regard to your very flattering proposition to inscribe your present work to me, I can only say that, independent of the respect to which the author of so very charming a production as "Wacousta" is entitled, the interesting facts and circumstances so unexpectedly brought to my knowledge and recollection, would ensure a ready acquiescence on my part.

* Good as they were then, I am told that they are now absolutely floating palaces.