

## A RAMBLE THROUGH QUEBEC OF OLD WITH A SPECTRE.

MIDNIGHT MASS ON CHRISTMAS EVE, 1535, ON BOARD  
JACQUES CARTIER'S LITTLE SQUADRON, NEAR  
HARE POINT, ON THE ST. CHARLES,  
AT QUEBEC.

"On the 24th December, 1885, at Quebec, the author of 'Une Fête de Noël sous Jacques Cartier' met Laverdière on the Grande Allée."

As Charles Laverdière, the learned annotator of the voyages of the discoverer of Canada and of those of the founder of Quebec, had then been dead twelve years, it is evident that the personage who accosted Mr. Ernest Myrand on this memorable night, and who furnished the subject of his weird dialogue, was not the good Abbé Laverdière, such as we knew him in the flesh, but a ghostly, though genial, phantom, delegated to wander on earth in our frosty December weather, even on nights not specially set apart, by popular belief, for supernatural visitations, such as All Souls' Day.

The reader may expect, strange though it may seem, a vivid, perhaps not unwelcome, appeal to the teeming realms of the imagination in order to obtain a portraiture, in bold relief, of scenes purporting to have been enacted in our midst more than three hundred and fifty years ago.

Our cicerone will be a youthful writer, loosing the rein to his exuberant fancy, and seeking both to amuse and instruct by carefully paraphrasing the records of the past.

What Jules Verne did for science, Flammarion for astronomy, Mr. Myrand would fain undertake for Canadian history. A very competent authority\* tells us in plain terms he is not unlikely to succeed.

The writer has chosen as the *locale* of this ghostly encounter the *Grande Allée*, leading to Sillery, where it diverges into the Belvidere road. Assuredly, one could not select a more apt instructor in Canadian history than the Rev. Abbé Laverdière. The Abbé's ghost is not one of those morose, ill-mannered spectres, peeping at nightfall from behind tombstones in rustic cemeteries, but an alert, sprightly, well-informed, disembodied spirit, evincing at every step proofs of the scholarly learning which brought it, when in the flesh, academical honours. To a most natural question put to it by the young student of history—as to where it came from—it replied that at that late hour, 11.30 p.m., it had just returned from paying its respects to the monument.

Trusting Mr. Myrand won't object to us having a word to say, especially when the sacred name of Sillery is mooted, we might point out several neighboring spots where the ghost of a historian, waked for the nonce, might love to linger—such, for instance as the green wood where Father Liégeois was beheaded in the summer of 1655, where now stands Clermont, while a few rods to the west Arnold's Green Mountain Boys made a successful raid at Christmas, 1775, on Lieut.-Governor Cramahe's larder, stripping his farm house of all its valuables. These broad acres, dear to our youthful neighbour, Gustavus Stuart, Esq., Q.C., are now known as Meadowbank. Let me first formally introduce Mr. Myrand's learned phantom: "Nothing fantastical," says Myrand, "was apparent in the demeanour of the archaeological priest; no flowing garment over the bust of a skeleton; nor was his a grave, solemn chilling, silent deportment; nothing sinister in his looks, sepulchral in his voice, livid in his countenance. The gusts of the night wind affected him not, nor was his form transparent as that of an ordinary spirit should be; his outline was projected on the snow in immaculate whiteness, and gave one the idea that his shadow would yield to the touch."

"Can your gaze," softly said the phantom, "take in this Quebec of the past? There goes Brulart de Sillery, a Commander of the Order of Malta; Charles Huault de Montmagny, a brave knight of St. John of Jerusalem; Bras de Fer de Chateaufort. Here comes Champlain, M. de Monts, M. de Chates, Chauvin, the Marquis de la Roche, Roberval, Jacques Cartier, Verrazini," and Laverdière seemed as watching in silence and lovingly the stately procession of discoverers, great captains and administrators, as they passed before him in chronological order. "No," added the ethereal visitor, "it is not the Quebec of to-day one cares to study, but the sturdy fortress alive with warlike alarms in the past—the triumphant Quebec of the 21st December, 1775; the sorrowing city of the 13th September, 1759; Frontenac's proud fortalice of the 16th October, 1690; Kirk's puritanical town of the 20th July, 1629, when British colours were temporarily floating from the bastions of the Chateau St. Louis; Champlain's nascent *Kebecq* of the 3rd July, 1608; primitive and wild Stadacona, the barbarous home of Chief Donnacona and his copper-coloured warriors; the cluster of Algonquin huts, nestling like chickens under their mother's wing; the Canada grasped on the 14th September, 1535, by the immortal Jacques Cartier."

Thus magnificently discoursed to me the ghost of Charles Honoré Laverdière, M.A., at half-past 11 p.m. on the 31st December, 1885, as we leisurely walked along the Grande Allée, the antique and fashionable street *par excellence* of the Ancient Capital. Laverdière had died twelve years previous, on the 11th March, 1873. I ought to have recollected that the historian had ceased to belong to the living. Some how or other, I was, as I have since thought, under

some kind of a spell, else how could I have failed to ask him whence he came. I could not have been quite myself, else I should not have struck up, as I walked, an old French song on this Christmas eve. I may have felt a secret fear and sang:

"Y a trois petits anges  
Descendus du ciel,  
Chantant les louanges  
Du Père Eternel!"

We were rapidly nearing the City Gates; soon we ascended *les buttes-à-Nippen* (Perrault's Hill), casting, as we went along, a glance behind at the solid dismantled Martello Tower, dating from 1806, a mournful, forgotten sentry, seemingly left by the British legions. We both lingered here a moment, under the spell of the wondrous panorama spread around. To the north the populous, progressive city ward honored with the name of Montcalm; in the distance the verdant woods of Ste. Foye; to the south, across the St. Lawrence, the thickly inhabited heights of St. Romuald and St. David de l'Aube-Rivière; to the west, the waiving pine groves of Spencer Wood, the well-kept highway leading to Sillery, the smiling country-seats around and beyond Mount Pleasant, embowered like nests in the overhanging woods; lastly, the sweetly pretty valley of the meandering St. Charles.

"What changes in the *mis-en-scène* of the city!" exclaimed Laverdière.

"Are they not for the better?" said I, "though evidently you are not in a mood to be complimentary."

A faint smile stole over the placid features of the ghost; recovering itself, with becoming gravity, it thus continued:

"There, down in St. Louis street, I can descry the tenement of the cooper, François Gobert, where Montgomery was laid out, also the site of young Surgeon Arnoux's dwelling, where Montcalm, sorely hurt, was conveyed amidway on the 13th September, 1759. Close by stands Madame Hugues-Péan's house, a present from Bigot. Some few yards beyond, on the opposite side, at the corner of ParLOUR and Stadacona streets, Abbé Vignal had his house and gardens, close to the heavy and extensive cloister of St. Ursula, before he left the city at the call of duty for Montreal, where, at *La Prairie de la Magdeleine*, on the 27th October, 1661, he was murdered, roasted and eaten by the Iroquois."

"I own up to belonging to that class which Horace styles *Laudatores Temporis Acti*," added the genial phantom, "so do not be surprised at the tone of my remarks; please also to bear in mind I am not alone in this way of thinking. The time was when Quebec held, as administrator an enlightened diplomat—Lord Dufferin. To him the Ancient Capital owes the restoration of her city gates—a sacred inheritance from our fathers—when threatened to be razed by the stupidity of the Town Council. Pause and admire this far-sighted statesman!"

"Had I his wealth, power and prestige, I, too, would strive to complete his patriotic project."

"Can you wonder if I am led to recall only the glorified past?"

We had gradually penetrated into the neighbourhood of the Basilica, passing on our way through ParLOUR street, St. Ursula's heavy and extensive cloister, and next the deserted site where, until 1877, was the famous Jesuit College, whose solid walls at last succumbed to dynamite alone, where our ears were assailed by a deafening clangour of church bells: the *carillon* of the Basilica, that of St. John's Church, of St. Roch, of St. Sauveur, all the city bells, in fact, except one—that of the Jesuit's Chapel—silent, alas! all calling the faithful to Midnight Mass. The streets were crowded to excess. Just at that moment the musical chime of the Anglican Cathedral pealed forth its sweet, weird melody, passing dear to British ears, *Auld Lang Syne*; the old year, with its sorrows, ushering in a hopeful new Christmas. Evidently joyful tidings were at hand: *Adeste fideles, laete triumphantes*. How my heart yearned to enter the sacred edifice of the Basilica. I longed to hear again the solemn tones of its great organ—to inhale the fragrant incense ascending in clouds heavenward . . . but another mission awaited me."

The above is but a faint outline of some of the incidents most eloquently discoursed on by the youthful Mr. Myrand in the first part of his weird dialogue with a spectre who had joined him on the *Grande Allée* on Christmas Eve, 1885. Let us for the present close it with the appropriate old Christmas carol:

"Nouvelle agréable!  
Un Sauveur Enfant nous est né!  
C'est dans une étable  
Qu'il nous est donné."

J. M. LE MOINE.

Spencer Grange, Christmas Eve, 1889.

L's papa being a member of Congress, the child naturally inhaled politics with the air she breathed, and grew firm in the faith that nothing good could be found outside the Republican fold. Miss Blank, a friend of her sister, and a political heretic in her eyes, was visiting in the family. Late one evening the child, searching for her sister, wandered into the guest's room, where she found Miss Blank in the midst of her devotions. L. stared at her in open-eyed astonishment, and as the young lady arose from her knees exclaimed: "Why, Miss Blank! do you say your prayers? I thought you were a Democrat!"—*New York Tribune*.

## PERSONAL AND LITERARY.

Miss Helen Gregory's Tea, at the Russell House, Ottawa, on Monday, 7th inst., was very enjoyable, the guests greatly appreciating the instrumental and vocal music and the recitations.

"Heavenly Love" is the title of a painting, by J. B. Scholl, at present being exhibited in the new annex of the Windsor Hotel, Montreal. It has already been visited by a number of our best connoisseurs, and received from all the highest praise.

Mr. Oscar C. Bass, who, during the past year, has been on the staff of the Montreal *Gazette*, received the compliment of a farewell lunch on Saturday last, just before starting for Victoria, B.C., where he takes a position on the editorial staff of the *Colonist*. Bon voyage!

Mr. Archibald Lampman, author of "Among the Millet," spent his Easter holidays with friends in Montreal, and many warm admirers of his genius were granted an opportunity of grasping his hand and hearing his voice.

"Let those love now who never loved before:  
And those who always loved now love the more."

That rarely interesting novel, "The Children of Tomorrow," by Mr. William Sharp, a brief notice of which appeared in this paper last summer, has been brought out by Messrs. Frank J. Lovell & Co., of New York, as one of their International Series. We once more cordially recommend it to our readers.

We hope we are betraying no confidence in repeating a whisper that we happened to hear to the intent that Mrs. H. A. Hensley, of Mount Rundell, Stellarton, N.S., was about to give us an enlarged collection of the poems which were received with such favour last summer. Mrs. Hensley, as many of our readers know, was formerly Miss Sophie M. Almon.

Through the kindness of Mr. G. Mercer Adam we have been favoured with a most welcome gift entitled "Bay Leaves—Translations from the Latin Poets," (printed for private circulation). Our readers may judge of its value by the signature, "G. S.," to the Introduction. As an example of Canadian book-making, it does the utmost credit to Mr. C. Blackett Robinson.

We beg to acknowledge the receipt, through Mr. George Iles, of a copy of an admirable study on the "Constitution of the United States," mainly bibliographical. It is from the pen of Mr. William E. Foster, and is one of the excellent Economic Tracts of the Society for Political Education, with which Mr. Iles is closely connected. This tract was first published in 1881, but it now appears in an enlarged and revised form.

Those who would enjoy a really good novel—the author is disposed to call a Saga—should get a copy of "The Bondman," by Hall Caine, recently published by Messrs. John Lovell & Son. It deals with Manx and Icelandic life, and is equal in interest to "The Deemster," by the same gifted author. Messrs. John Lovell & Son have also published "A Girl of the People," a thrilling story of Liverpool life, by L. T. Meade, "Sylvia Arden," by Oswald Crawford, and other good novels by English writers of repute.

A Canadian novel, called "Marie Gourdeon, a Romance of the Lower St. Lawrence," written by Miss Maud Ogilvy, will be published shortly by Messrs. J. Lovell & Son. It deals with a comparatively new field. The scene is laid at Father Point and the neighbourhood of Rimouski. The book is said to be one worthy the attention of Canadians, who should strive to encourage a patriotic literature and develop a taste for description of the beauties of their own country. The subscription list is open at Drysdale's, 232 St. James street, Montreal.

It is rumoured that the Victoria Rifles (Montreal) will have a bazaar in their Armory some time next fall, and that if it is the success that it ought to be, not only will the amount still due on their new Armory be paid off, but also a machine gun will be purchased. At least so says their popular colonel, F. C. Henshaw. There is no doubt that such a gun would be a very good assurance against any serious disturbance in the city. A mob would not like to face a machine discharging some 1,200 or 1,500 shots per minute and sweeping a whole street.

The *New England Magazine*, of Boston, is devoting considerable attention to Canadian subjects. Since last December four articles have appeared in its columns from Canadian pens, and another article on Canadian writers is announced to appear in the May number. The writer is W. Blackburn Harte, and the article is in some sense a sequel to his article on "Intellectual Life in Canada," which was published in the December number of the same magazine. The forthcoming article will be richly illustrated, and it will contain sketches of every writer of prominence in the Dominion.

At a meeting held at the Cabinet de Lecture Paroissiale a few evenings ago, the St. Jean Baptiste Society of this city passed resolutions deploring the death of the late Hon. P. J. O. Chauveau, Sheriff of Montreal. The president of the Society, Mr. L. O. David, M.P.P., occupied the chair, and among those present were the Hon. Justices Baby, Jetté, Loranger and Mathieu, Aldermen Jeannotte, Perrault and Gauthier, the Rev. Curé Sentenne, Abbé Desmazures and Mgr. Tanguay. The Rev. Curé Sentenne, Judge Baby, Mgr. Tanguay, Judge Mathieu and Mr. F. X. Archambault, all spoke in the highest terms of the deceased statesman and scholar.

\*Rev. Abbé Bégin (now bishop), in introduction to work erected by the Silleryans to the founder of the settlement in 1637, Commander de Sillery, and to the Missionary Father Enimond Massé, at rest under the nave of his little chapel at Sillery Cove since 12th May, 1646.