

legitimate calling. Notwithstanding the fact that his limited means scarcely permitted him the luxury of a library, still his house was full of books, and these always carefully chosen.

In that sparsely populated part of the country, there were few neighbours and, consequently, very little society; and, therefore, reading was the only amusement and occupation when the daily tasks were done. In this healthful, moral atmosphere, the eldest son of Mr. Joseph Abbott grew up to be a helping right hand to both parents, and his care of his younger brothers and sisters was unremitting in those early days, as well as in his later life. Throughout his career, he has ever been the mainstay of his family, a loving and helpful son to his father and mother, a judicious adviser and benefactor to his other relatives. In statesmanship, perhaps, these traits showing such kindliness of disposition may count for little, but they may not be uninteresting to the great mass of the people of the Dominion, to whom the details of the domestic life of him who is at the nation's helm must appeal in that "touch of nature which makes the whole world kin."

Throughout many a long winter evening, while storms beat without and fierce winds whistled round the corners of the Rectory, a little group of children were held entranced in the school room by the voice of their elder brother relating to them thrilling and wonderful adventures with a vivid, boyish eloquence, foreshadowing, and perhaps contributing to a command of language which, in future years, would attract larger, but not more interested audiences.

At the age of seventeen, Mr. J. J. C. Abbott left the paternal roof to make his way in the world, and proceeded to Montreal. Here he entered a mercantile house; but, after a few months, the close air and confinement of city life began to tell upon the country-bred lad, and a severe illness was the result. After his recovery, he went to Gananoque, where he had obtained a position in the general business establishment of the Macdonalds, and there he remained until he came to Montreal, in 1843, to study at McGill College. At this time, his family also moved to the metropolis, his father having been appointed Bursar of the University, and thus he was once more in the home circle. At this period, in spite of Mr. Abbott's busy life and arduous studies, he found time to join in social amusements, and made a study of vocal music, in which branch he became very