

CHAPTER I.

AND it came to pass in the days when Viétromache was Queen over Britain and all her dependencies, even in the fiftieth year of her reign ;

2 That in the Province of Quebec of the Dominion of Canada, there arose two men, and the name of one was George the Stiffun, and the other Donald the Smith.

3 These men had prospered marvellously in the land to which they had come, and their riches were even as the riches of Solomon.

4 And George the Stiffun said unto Donald the Smith : Verily, if thou wilt give five hundred talents of gold, behold I will give the same, that we may build an hospital for the halt, the main and the sick.

5 And Donald the Smith made answer unto George the Stiffun, saying, Verily I am with thee.

6 And when the people heard it they rejoiced greatly and praised the love and charity of these good men.

7 Now, when John the Clericus, who was a priest of the order of the Protests heard these things, he was mightily pleased and went to the palaces of these good men ;

8 And he blessed them and said, Surely the Lord will prosper your handiwork. Build your hospital among the poor and needy, so will you and your children after you ever receive the prayers and thanksgivings of the afflicted.

9 And he departed.

10 Then these two men looked upon one another and George the

Stiffun said, What think you, O Donald, of the speech of the priest ?

11 And he answered and said, He speaketh as a fool ; behold, if we build this great hospital in the midst of the dwellings of the poor who shall see it ?

12 On high land must it be built, even on the mount that is called Royal, so that all men shall see it.

13 And these men took land and bought it ; land high unto the homes of the rich, and from the Sanhedrim of the town were they given a portion of land that belonged unto the people.

14 They took no heed of what the Lord had done unto Ahab when he took the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite ; but surely there will trouble come of this thing.

15 Ye, O people of Montreal, have given up a piece, it may be a small piece, of the land that your fathers handed down to you, and behold it shall all be taken from you piece by piece.

16 Ye will build your temples and high places and cry, We have no pollution.

17 While in the valley beneath, even in your town, your sons walk through the fire to Molock and your daughters are made wanton in the groves of Asteroth.

18 Leave your mount as nature has given it unto you, but clean and wash out the murky sin-sinks of your town.

19 Better, O George the Stiffun and Donald the Smith, to spend your shekels in this wise than raise a monument of stone that shall perish.