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A YOUNG BRITISH OFFICER'S FIRST IMPRESSION OF SPAIN AND HER PEOPLE.

1811.

Strange land! where all that bounteous nature gives
Of fertile dale, or rich luxuriant mead,
Washed by a thousand grand historic streams,
O'erhung by mountains, noble in their pride,
Of savage nudity, and bordered gay
By the blithe flow'ret and the balmy shrub
Is various still, and captivates the soul!
How oft transfixed, in wonder and in awe,
Does the rude pilgrim dwell upon the scene,
And revel in the never-ending change
Of crag and cliff, of mountain, shrub and tree,
Of gushing torrent and of peaceful stream!
The traveller sees th' adventurous goat-herd's shed
Beside the convent's turret, rising proud
From the hoar summit of the mountain steep,
That beetles o'er in the expanse below,
A world of hamlets, girt by bleating flocks,
Proud Spain! though homely is thy peasant's fare,
Yet mark his mien, his penetrating eye,
His tall athletic form, and port of pride,
Nor deem that luxury's unnerved sons
Can boast of souls as free, or hearts as brave,
Or blood more lavish in their country's cause!
Land of romance! where ev'ry crag combines,
In its rude grandeur, to inspire the mind
To thoughts heroic and to deeds of fame,
To steel the arm to valour's daring strife,
And nerve the soul with all enduring pride;
What pity! that instruction's golden page
(Fond nurse, and guardian of the human race)
Has never led thy children's thoughts to glow
With useful lore, and bade the noble mind
Its thirst assuage at revelation's spring!

What, without her, is valour's brightest aim,
But vengeful cruelty and brutal rage?
What is the love of freedom, but the scorn
Of beauteous order, and protecting law?
What is ambition's son, but envy's slave?
And what religion's fair and virtuous rule,
But superstition's yoke? the glance of love,
But jealousy's distrustful scowl of hate,
Hast'ning to plunge the foul assassin's knife
In kindred blood? whilst honour's soul recoils
From deeds of stealth, and stabs of treachery!

W. S.

THE "GENERAL SMYTH," THE FIRST STEAM-BOAT THAT PLIED ON THE RIVER ST. JOHN.

In 1812, John Ward, Robert Smith, George D. Berton, James C. F. Bremner, James Fraser and Latchlan Donaldson, Esquires, petitioned the Legislature, praying for the exclusive privilege, for ten years, to be granted to them to run a steamboat between St. John and Fredericton for the conveyance of passengers. The prayer of this petition was granted on condition that they completed a boat in *two years*.

In consequence of the breaking out of the war between Great Britain and the United States in 1813, the Legislature extended the time for the completion of the boat to within two years after peace should be proclaimed. On February 12th, 1816, the first advertisement of a steamboat to be run between St. John and Fredericton was published in the *Royal Gazette*, and on the 11th of April she was launched at St. John. A considerable degree of diligence seems to have been exhibited in fitting her out, for she arrived at Fredericton, on her first trip, on the 21st of May of the same year. In 1819, we find by an Act of the Assembly that "Whereas, from the very small profit which the large capital invested in the said boat has produced, there is good cause to believe that the residue of the term of ten years granted by the said Acts will be insufficient for the purpose of remunerating the said proprietors for the heavy expense heretofore incurred and which must be hereafter incurred." The Legislature extended the monopoly to ten years from the passing of the Act, *i. e.*, from 24th March, 1819. It was common enough in those days for the boat to leave Indiantown at 7 a. m. and to reach Fredericton at 11 or 12 at night.

Previous to this time the mode of conveyance was by means of sloops, owing to the almost impracticable state of the roads. At this period ten and even fifteen days were frequently occupied in making this voyage.

The editors have much pleasure in announcing that at the end of the year, dating from the issue of our first number, they will give to the person who has been most successful in discovering the answers to the Historical Questions a handsomely bound copy of "Hannay's History of Acadia." The answers to be legibly written and sent, together with post office address of solver, to W. G., P. O. Box 578, St. John, N. B.

49. Who was the first Governor of New Brunswick?
50. When and in honor of what event was an ox roasted whole in King Square, St. John?
51. When and by whom was the *Royal Gazette and New Brunswick Advertiser* first published?
52. When and where did the first Parliament of New Brunswick meet?
53. What building in St. John was used as a gaol in 1785?