

his country with self-denial when greed and selfishness prevailed on every hand, was committed to the dust when Papineau's casket was lowered in the tomb. For a number of years he had been silent, although with occasional oracular intermissions. After he was gone, the silence continued, only then it became eternal.

In writing of this famous man, I am not unmindful of the fact that although in the estimation of some of his biographers he is a hero, in the judgment of others he is a superficial politician, a vain demagogue, a personal coward, and a traitor to his country. Dent, who outlined Papineau's career in his gallery of Nineteenth Century Canadians, loses no opportunity to attack his motives, his ability and his conduct, and his fame. The writer concludes his fierce assault by proclaiming him unworthy of anything more than the very scantiest historical consideration. Yet, of the many famous men, whose lineaments that gallery preserves, few have been accorded more extensive treatment than Papineau.

These pages, however, are not the place for a defence of his character and his motives. No opinion may be ventured regarding his political sincerity but will have its ardent supporters, and its implacable opponents. The undisputed portion of his career constitutes a sufficient foundation for the formation of an adequate notion of his genius as an orator. The outlines which I have given in these paragraphs are those which lie outside of the boundaries of dispute.

Such then are the conceded circumstances in this great man's public appearance upon the stage of national history. It remains to make a further reference to his connection with rebellion, and to conclude with an estimate of his oratorical claims to permanent recollection.

De Celles, in his life of Papineau, complains that this great Canadian has been accused erroneously of disloyalty to his country. If the full extent of the charge had been proved,

it might form some reason for excluding the illustrious Lower Canadian Cicero from a conspicuous place in the gallery of truly Canadian orators. The truth is that Papineau, although he trod daringly upon the crust of treason, was at heart no traitor. In 1837 he did suggest the construction of Quebec into an independent nation, freed from the authority of Great Britain. In doing so he did no more amid the political darkness of his surroundings than Howe years afterwards did in the glare of a more modern illumination when he proposed that Nova Scotia should become a State of the American Union.

Papineau cordially detested the cliques and unsympathetic rulers who sought to govern Canada by despotism, and who regarded the masses and their grievances as an aggregation of colonial cyphers, meriting if anything oppression and contempt. It was against this tyranny that Papineau revolted, and although the means have been condemned by a more recondite interpretation of history, nevertheless, as a result of the revolt, he gained for British America a measure of long-deferred, but absolutely indispensable, justice. History long since has forgiven Papineau for his rebellion, as it also forgave the daring and implacable Mackenzie, and crowned him with laurels in his later years. There was this difference between Papineau and Mackenzie, however, that Papineau, being a Frenchman, was always the idol of his country, even during the long and critical years of his banishment from Canada, while Mackenzie, having been born in the English-speaking portion of the country, where personal and political idolatry are comparatively unknown, was, by reason of his sometimes pacific, sometimes revolutionary, conduct, perpetually hovering between a scaffold and a throne. Both of these tempestuous men were great leaders, great national benefactors, true, although sometimes misguided, patriots, and as a result of their perhaps unwise, but surely, comprehensible