

was in keeping with the peculiar taste and talent of his boyhood. When very young he was remarked for his curiosity and interest in finding out the names of his neighbours and their ancestors. These facts would be so impressed on his mind that in conversation he would, to the astonishment of all, correct errors made by aged persons with regard to the names of their relatives or ancestors of two or three generations back. This peculiar talent was combined with the qualification of being able to rapidly arrange catalogues, clear and concise, giving the information he had obtained; he was a statistician by nature. He was regarded by his family in the light of a *walking dictionary*, and he had the same reputation at college among his fellow-students. He was sent to the College of Ste. Anne de la Pocatiere, at the age of nine years, and was the youngest pupil there. It was the year when this educational institution was first opened. About twenty years from that time, it happened that a list of the pupils who first entered this college was required, and those interested in the matter were astonished to find that Abbe Tanguay possessed a complete list. It appeared also, that during the three months which he spent at the college, he had made a note of many little circumstances, which were afterwards interesting in connection with the history of the college." The extent of the labour of this distinguished gentleman in the preparation of his Genealogical Dictionary of the old French-Canadian families, is simply amazing to contemplate. He has not alone visited every part of this continent whereto it was necessary to go for the verification of dates, births, marriages and other incidents, but he has been in Europe, where he conducted the most painstaking investigations in public and private libraries, baptismal registers and other church records. The dictionary is not intended to be a biography; it is entirely genealogical, containing reliable information in this respect. It is universal in its object, that is, it associates itself with all classes of people. The work, so far as it is advanced, embraces one hundred years in volume, the first which has been published. The second and third volumes will soon appear, comprising another period of sixty years, and these will be followed by three more volumes, which will extend to the present century; its completion is, therefore, being rapidly realized. The more the dictionary advances, the more interesting and important it will be. There are very few works of which so much can be

predicted. "It is natural that the French-Canadian portion of the population," we quote again M. Sulte's words, which we cordially endorse, "of Canada should highly appreciate their countryman, Abbe Tanguay, to whom they are in so special a manner indebted, his literary labours having been wholly directed to their benefit and honour, and it must be most gratifying to them as well as to their benefactor to find that the literary men of the English-speaking population of Canada, as well as of America, are not insensible to the important and valuable services, in a literary and historical point of view, which Abbe Tanguay has rendered to society. They view with envy, combined with admiration, the Genealogical Dictionary, and their regret is that peculiar circumstances should exist which make it impossible for the dictionary to embrace generally the ancestry of the English, Irish and Scotch Canadian." Upon the following circumstances was the book planned and the author guided. There were four distinct groups constituting the French population found in Canada during the seventeenth century, viz., first, that of Acadia in 1604; second, of Quebec in 1608; third, of Three Rivers in 1635; and fourth, of Montreal in 1641. In 1700 the Canadians (embracing only three groups) had spread themselves over a large extent of country, around the great lakes, towards the south-west, and had begun to lay foundations of large establishments which have ever since been continually increasing. To keep track of these groups, it was necessary to follow them over an extent of territory, which in a direct line would exceed 3,000 miles; and to classify the distinct families, their descent from generation to generation had to be carefully traced. For example, a man born in France was married in Acadia, went to reside in Quebec, where his children were baptized; removed afterwards to Montreal, where his wife died; he married again in Detroit; and at last he himself died in some parish on the banks of the Ohio or Mississippi, where some of his children settled, while others had remained in the valley of the St. Lawrence.

Vidal, Hon. Alexander, of Sarnia, member of the Senate of the Dominion of Canada, was born at Brocknell, Berkshire, England, on the 4th of August, 1819. He is the eldest surviving son of the late Captain Richard Emeric Vidal, R.N. The family, of Spanish origin, emigrated to England in the latter part of the seventeenth century. In 1834 Captain Vidal,