

## THE UNITED EMPIRE LOYALISTS.

How little is known of the "pre-historic annals" of Western Canada! A belief that there settled on the shores of the great lakes, about the time of the Revolution, a number of men and women distinguished by the above name, is the sum of the knowledge possessed by very many of the present inhabitants of the colony, which these very people called into existence. What brought them there at that period, whence they came, how they did, what they suffered, are all questions seldom asked, and more seldom answered. Nor shall we at this time reply to them, any further than by saying, that these people were devoted subjects of the British Crown, who would not and did not join in the war of Independence, but took up arms for the United Empire, and who, when the victory went with the colonists, refused to abandon their allegiance, and, suffering the confiscation of all their earthly goods, went forth, in 1783, to seek a home in the wilderness of Canada.

In us, no ignorance of history can be more reprehensible than that which we now censure. It amounts to an utter obliviousness of our peculiar story. And surely, if a man would know anything of the life of nations, he should first know a little about the origin of his own. Here, then, we are, in the sixty-second year of our being in Upper Canada, with the only men who could accurately inform us, fast dying, if not already dead, all but grossly ignorant of our provincial parentage and birth. Such indifference is to be expected in barbarians, and the historian of this age sighs over the "hollow waste" which these have left our fancies to fill up; but in us it is wholly unpardonable, and, unless an effort be soon made, its consequences will be, to a large extent, irretrievable.

But, irrespective of our future, such carelessness is a cruel injustice to our fathers. We should know who they were. No bar sinister stains our escutcheon. They were men of whom we need not be ashamed. The United Empire Loyalists form an ancestry of which any people might be proud. They had every characteristic which can go to constitute an enduring substratum for a coming nation. They were men, of whom the descendants of contemporary foes, now utter disinterested eulogies. Respecting them, even prejudice is dead, and the grand-child of the Revolutionists can speak generously of the Political opponents of his ancestors. More is known and thought in Boston of the virtues of the Canadian Loyalists, than in this land, where their honor was tried as in a crucible, and their undistinguished ashes repose. And this is wrong. They merited a better fate, at all events, from us. They are *our* Pilgrim Fathers. They are our heroes. They were martyrs to their principles. Believing that a monarchy was better than a republic, and shrinking with abhorrence from a dismemberment of the empire, they were willing, rather than lose the one and endure the other, to bear with a temporary injustice. And their sincerity was put to the test. They took up arms for the king; they passed through all the dangers and horrors of civil war; they bore what was worse than death itself—the hatred of their countrymen; and when the battle went against them, they sought no compromise but forsaking their most splendid possessions upreared the banner to which they had sworn fealty, and, following where it led, went forth to seek, on the then inhospitable shores of Ontario, a miserable shelter, in exchange for the home from which they were exiled. Nor did they ever draw back. The Indian, the wolf, the famine, could not alter their iron resolution; and for their allegiance, they endured a thousand deaths. They lost every treasure but their honor, and bore all sufferings but those which spring from self-reproach. A still surviving and venerable son of that band, flushed with the feelings of his father, tells us that "their loyalty consisted of something more than a name. They did not stop even to weigh their lives with the crime of treason." Thus they lay down in the wild woods, "with a conscience void of offence, and in the enjoyment of that peace and tranquillity, which was a result of the performance of their duty, no less to God than to their king," such were the sentiments of the United Empire Loyalists, once more uttered by their aged descendant, and here repeated by us, that this generation may know the chivalrous race which has passed away.

It may be said by some, that all men now admit the Revolt of the American Colonies to have been a just one. And such we believe it was. They were ill-used. A foolish King sought to tread on them. We all know, and have said this a thousand times. But the fact that George the Third played the tyrant, makes nothing against our LOYALIST FATHERS. They were not tyrants, but faithful subjects. In many instances they held the Royal views, and even when they did not altogether endorse them, were willing to bear an evil which seemed to them little, when compared with what they deemed rank rebellion. We are as much bound to believe that they acted conscientiously, as we are bound to believe that those did so, who took the opposing side.—It was a question of opinion, and they made their election. As provincials, they had the right to make what choice they pleased. The dispute affected themselves. Thus, sentiments which in the King were tyrannical, and commands, which, when issued by him, we utterly condemn, are when held, and performed

by the Colonists themselves, to be spoken of in a wholly different tone. They might be in error as to the use of the prerogative, but that creed cannot be a tyrannical one, by which we will to manage our own affairs. A man cannot be a tyrant to himself. George the Third acted despotically; the mass thought so; but the LOYALIST FATHERS were of another mind. Therefore, while the King did wrong, all that can be said of those who adhered to him is, that they differed from the majority of their countrymen as to the extent of his power. We find them then following the dictates of principle; we find them doing so in the face of ruin; we know, therefore, that they were sincere; and so, giving to them that freedom of judgment which we claim for ourselves, we see in them only fellow subjects, to whom we are bound by every tie which can unite the successive generations of a people.

In reality these men need no defence. But inasmuch as the world at large, now view the history of that period in another light, and not a few seem prone to condemn all who, two generations back, did not think with themselves, we deem it not an idle thing to vindicate the Heroes of the Province, from the unfair remarks which have often been made about them, and to urge their claims on our filial respect. It will be remembered, too, by all Canadians, that these men's deeds have been narrated by their enemies, and that we have heard of them oftener from those who most abhorred them. But this will not do. The Loyalists are our own men. Their reputation is ours. We must put ourselves, therefore, in their circumstances, and while we may not now see all things as they saw them seventy years ago, we are called on to defend them where we can, and to honor them always. Nor in doing so, is there any need for us to abandon any principle. We have nothing to do with the points in which we differ. It is our business to honor them for those in which we are agreed.

The Americans have set us an example in this direction. Their Puritan Fathers are held in perpetual remembrance. Men make pilgrimages to the place where they landed, and Plymouth Rock is now their monument. And yet the American people do not agree in every iota with these worthies. There are multitudes who can see in their principles, points, where there is room for difference, and in their conduct, some things to censure. On one matter, however, all are agreed, and this is to admire their zeal for Religious Liberty, and to reverence men, who could bear so much for the sake of their convictions. Precisely similar should be our treatment of our LOYALIST FATHERS. There are points in which we differ from the opinions which they held, but we can all agree in admiring their attachment to the Mother Country, and the patient sincerity with which they suffered for their loyalty. Thus we should venerate them. Nor do we know any better mode of doing so, than by seeking to learn more about them. To this end efforts should be made. Nor need there be any difficulty. There are those in Canada, whose position, talents, and connections, give them many facilities for full investigation. Why, for example, could not our Superintendent of Education perpetuate their story? The son of an U. E. Loyalist himself, such a work would be a graceful tribute to his ancestors, and a solid contribution to the literature of his country. Something must be done, in justice alike to the past, and to coming generations. Nor can we believe that the growing intelligence of the Province, will fail to produce some one patriotic enough, to tell the world a tale of lofty principle and noble sacrifice, which when set forth as veritable history, will kindle a healthful glow in every bosom. No people has made a figure in the life of nations, without its heroes. The LOYALIST FATHERS are the heroes of Canada. Let us therefore know all about them.—*The Globe*.

## WHAT A SCHOOL TRUSTEE SHOULD BE.

The time is now coming when another election of these functionaries must take place, and the subject is of too much importance to be neglected, if a word of advice as to the duties of electors, and the requirements of candidates, can be of any service. The position of a School Trustee is very important. It is his business to assess the city for school purposes; he it is who must examine into the education wants of his fellows; on him also devolves the duty of appointing Teachers, and examining these when appointed, and looking to the progress of the children under their care. Now, for the performance of such onerous and honorable services, varied qualifications are requisite. On Trustees sacred responsibilities rest, and they should ever be persons worthy of implicit confidence, and capable of wise and careful action. The mere matter of assessing demands the exercise of sound judgment; for, while it is of primary importance that the full sum needed be forthcoming, it is also important that no more rate should be laid on than the good of the city requires. No tax is more cheerfully paid than that for our Schools; but for this very reason, those who send the Collector to our houses, should be careful about the amounts which they authorize him to collect. A School Trustee, therefore, should be a good and honest man of business. If he is not, he is unfit for the office. New School-houses have likewise to be built, and much care is required in deciding on a plan, and seeing that the public work is