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LITERATURE.

EIGHT YEARS IN CANADA, &c.

EMBRACING A REVIEW OF THE SEVERAL ADMINISTRATIONS OF LORDS DURHAM AND SYDENHAM, SIR CHARLES BAGOT, AND LORD METCALFE;

And Dedicated to the Memories of THE FIRST AND LAST OF THESE DISTINGUISHED DEAD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ECARTE," &c.

DE OMNIBUS REBUS ET QUIBUSDAM ALIIS.

[A difficulty of arrangement having occurred with the only two London publishers to whom the following pages have been submitted, the Author has decided on reversing the usual practice, and publishing in Canada first, thus affording that means of direct communication with other metropolitan publishers, which his absence from London renders a matter of much inconvenience. It will be borne in mind, therefore, by the Canadian reader, that what is now offered to his perusal, was intended for an English public.]

{ Deposited at the Office of the Registrar of the Province. }

CHAPTER IV.

In tracing the foregoing synopsis of the plans and general policy of Lord Durham, I embrace not only what he did me the honor to communicate to me on the day when I first dined at the Castle of St. Louis, but the substance of all that was elicited during the many interviews to which I was subsequently admitted. His attention to myself personally, founded principally, no doubt, in his desire to stand well in the estimation of the "Times," was extremely marked indeed. The Aids-de-Camp, his Lordship assured me, were instructed to admit me at all hours, and I found that when, on my arrival, other visitors were in waiting, I had but to give my card to the gentleman charged with the duty of presentation to ensure an immediate introduction into the audience chamber.

It was during one of those interviews that Lord Durham asked me if there was any appointment in the country that I desired, and which it was in his power to bestow upon me; adding that there was, in the mean time, a particular mission intended to be sent to the Indians which, if worthy of my acceptance, he would feel great pleasure in entrusting to me. I thanked his Lordship, but declined the offer, stating that circumstanced as I was, it might be inexpedient to accept any offer or appointment under his Government, and moreover that I could better serve his policy at a distance, that is to say, untrammelled and in a spirit of independence, adding that I felt assured that should I ever require his good offices, they would not be withheld from me. Lord Durham replied with much feeling, "you may rely upon it that I shall never lose sight of your interests, whether in Canada or in England." The mission to the Indians was, I believe, subsequently entrusted to Mr. Simpson of Coteau-du-Lac—the late member for Vandrevuil.

This grateful feeling on the part of his Lordship, for I can term it no other, arose from the support I had given to his policy in my communications to England. Most of these failing to meet the approval of the proprietors of the "Times," were suppressed, but the few that were published were, as conveying a dispassionate review of the affairs of the province, considered of so much importance by the "Examiner" and other leading London journals on the liberal side, that they were gladly quoted by them, and held up to the consideration of the British public.

Nor were these letters the result of any mere whim or unworthy desire to uphold Lord Durham's policy at the sacrifice of my own principles. I certainly had re-visited Canada with rather a prejudice against Lord Durham, and a vague impression that he would seek to rule the country with a high-handedness wholly inapplicable to its wants and to its condition; but his Lordship had been at such pains to convey to me an accurate estimate of his designs, and had so clearly pointed out the bearings and tendencies of the measures he proposed to adopt, that I was compelled to admit the injustice of the prejudice I had originally

conceived, and to give him credit for a sincerity of motive, and an anxious desire for successful execution, which reflected the highest lustre upon his character. I moreover felt assured that the whole tenor of his policy was such as, in the disturbed state of the country, would most rapidly secure its return to tranquillity. Under these circumstances, and with this conviction strongly impressed on my mind, I should have been wanting not only in justice to myself, but in duty to those who sought truth at my hands, had I suffered any particular or party interests to have influenced my commentaries on a policy I conceived to be the best adapted to a land which (another powerful consideration) was that of my birth.

In the course of the month of June, Sir John Colborne, who had just returned from a tour of inspection of Upper Canada reached Quebec. I had not yet seen this officer, but calling on him a day or two after his return, I was informed by him that he had received Sir Henry Harlingo's letter introducing me to him. Sir John was, what all the world know him to be, a frank and courteous old soldier, with an erect and military carriage, and an unpretentiousness that is by no means common to men conscious of being high in the public favor. I was particularly struck with the general expression of his strongly marked countenance, which greatly resembles that of his Grace the Duke of Wellington. In figure, however, he is much taller.

The first day of my dining with Sir John Colborne was marked by a circumstance not unworthy to be recorded here. Up to this moment every thing had been tranquil in the country since the affairs of St. Denis and St. Charles in the Lower Province, and the attack by Theller upon Amherstburg, in the Upper. Sir John had expressed his belief that the rebellion was now wholly put down, and that no future attempt would be made to disturb the province, either by Patriots or Sympathizers. On the morning of the day in question, my wife had rejoined me from Niagara, bringing the intelligence of a sharp affair which had taken place at the "Short Hills," in that District, only four days previously. I of course mentioned the circumstance to Sir John at table, adding that there were minute facts connected with the account which scarcely left a doubt of its accuracy. There were several officers of the Garrison present—among whom the Quarter Master General, Col. Gore, who commanded the troops at St. Denis,—and I could easily perceive, by their incredulous look, as well as that of the Staff generally, that they wholly disbelieved the report. Sir John himself seemed inclined to smile, and declared the thing was impossible, since had such been the case, he would assuredly have received a despatch apprizing him of the new and threatened danger. I could not but feel that I was half ridiculed, although in a most courteous way, and began to suspect that there might have been a mistake in the matter; nevertheless, I maintained my position. There are few things more absurd, in my estimation, than the narration of minute particulars of that which is supposed to have been, but which, in fact, has never occurred. Still my conviction was strong the other way, and I remarked to Sir John that, however incredible it might seem, I had not the slightest doubt, from the very circumstantial manner in which the information had been communicated to me, that he would later receive a despatch on the subject. Four days afterwards I called upon him, and in the course of conversation allusion was made to the Short Hills affair. Sir John said that he had received no communication relative to the attack, and therefore, from the lapse of time since I had first made mention of the matter, must infer that the whole story was a hoax. I bit my lip, yet was fully satisfied that what I had communicated to him was, in substance, correct. On the fifth day, an express arrived conveying the whole of the particulars I had related. The difference in time was occasioned by the express travelling by land, instead of taking the steamers, and this delay did not at all seem to please Sir John. His smile was now exchanged for a very serious look, for although the affair was of little importance in itself, it was impossible to divine, at that crisis, to what it might be the prelude, and in his position as Commander of the Forces, there could not but attach to him the heaviest responsibility.

As this is a book in which, to suit all parties, the serious and the gay, the important and the trivial, the stern political stricture and