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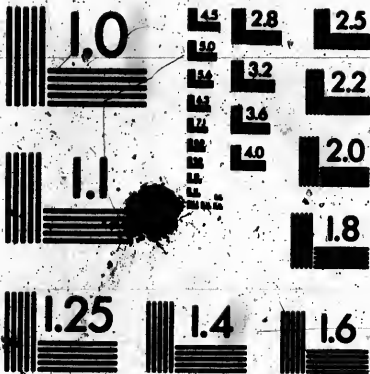
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OUR ISLAND;

Its Duties — Prospects

LECTURE

BY CAPT. ORLEANS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE YOUNG MEN'S GYMNASIUM ASSO-
CIATION AND LITERARY INSTITUTE

DECEMBER 4TH, 1862.

CHARLOTTE, N. C.

PRINTED AT THE "SOUTHERN" PRESS

1862

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OUR ISLAND;

Its Duties — its Prospects.

A LECTURE,

BY CAPT. ORLEBAR,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSO-
CIATION AND LITERARY INSTITUTE,

DECEMBER 4TH, 1862.

CHARLOTTETOWN:

PRINTED AT "THE PROTESTANT" OFFICE, QUEEN SQUARE.

1862.

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OUR ISLAND:

ITS DUTIES — ITS PROSPECTS.

My Friends;

I have ventured upon this subject with some misgiving, because there is always a certainty in taking up so familiar a matter as *our Island*, that I shall meet a large class of critics, jealous of its reputation and confident in their superior knowledge, and in whose eyes my shortcomings, and my probable ignorance, will be grave faults. I confess at the outset that I really know less about our Island than I thought I did, but still I cannot doubt there is enough to interest in what I may bring forward, that I shall have your forbearance and be favored with your sympathy.

In choosing such a subject, I also hoped at the commencement of our course to secure a large attendance. For although I do not underrate the importance of leading your minds to overstep the narrow bounds of our insular position and to take an interest in what is foreign and remote,—for indeed such teaching has a great tendency to enlarge the mind, and to lessen that inordinate attention to the little things and gossip of our daily life so fruitful of evil in a small community,—yet I am under the conviction that it becomes us *first* to know all about our island home, and our own duties with regard to it; and therefore it is a most important matter to bring it early under your notice, so that, apart from

your family and social relations, you may be interested and stimulated to seek its welfare.

In undertaking this task, it is my duty to be honest and truthful, and it is my earnest desire to be free from undue bias to political party or class prejudice. I dare not say I am free from either; and my stand point is so different from those about me, that I hardly expect many will agree with me, whilst possibly the prejudices of many will be offended. Believe me, I do not, in pointing out faults, seek to throw the first stone as if my own conscience were clear; I feel I am little better than those I seek to improve. I can say however that you shall have an honest expression of opinion, and I only ask you to give me your kind attention, and to bear with me, even if I say what you may not possibly at first sight consider just and right. If I suggest thought, and direct the public mind to efforts more worthy of our country than our present petty squabbles, I shall be thankful, even if my name is cast out as evil.

I have been living in these North American Colonies now nearly thirty years; the life of one generation of my fellowmen has passed before me, and if I am asked what have I seen and witnessed, I might say truthfully strife and wickedness in the cities, unrighteousness in the country, and a low state of morals nearly everywhere. I do not say this is peculiarly the case of our island; but standing here to give evidence of my observation of life and character, I must not amuse you with imaginary tales of virtue and of goodness. I stand too near the brink of the grave to deal in flattery. I know and am *thankful* to know, there is virtue and goodness, but like the lowly violet it hides its perfume in the leafy shade and neither looks nor seeks for men's ap-

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proval; and there is piety, but men so commonly keep it like their Sunday clothes for church and chapel, that in the mart and busy throng of business it is sought for in vain, and in our Legislative Halls and amongst our grandees it has seldom long abiding.

To resume. Young men, I speak to you in this lecture, because on you will ere long devolve the manning of the ship of state, and if we have in you a skilled and able crew, well agreed as to the best chart to be consulted, the best course to be pursued, and the best pilot to have charge of the ship,—one that will consult the Bible chart, and sail under the Gospel flag of truth and love. I say if we have a crew well agreed to sink their minor differences and to labor heartily for the best interests of the ship, we may safely foretell a prosperous voyage, and a happy future. If on the contrary, a love of self triumphs, if narrow sectional differences separate you from your brethren, if you despise the weak and rail upon the superstitious, if you are only intent upon the triumphs of a party and the dominance of a sect, the stately ship, this beautiful island, will remain what party has made it now, without progress, without national enterprise and without influence.

But I speak to the fair sex also, for—though we are slow to concede to females equal political rights with ourselves, or the power to speak in large assemblies, as we in our fancied superiority are privileged to do—yet, we know, and we are proud to know, that you are man's best and truest counselor, and that the more advanced the religion and civilization of the people, the more established and recognized will be the influence of woman in the family and in the church. Although as weak as you are graceful, your weakness is a power, and *triumphs* where the strongest fail. Yes I speak

to you my female friends, for oftentimes our noblest aspirations come from you, and I wish you, above all the fashion and conventionalities of life, above all the claims of social visiting and pastime, to arise to a consciousness of your high calling.

Your throne is the affections, and your empire is our homes,—man visits his home, but you live there, and its purity, cheerfulness and happiness mainly depends upon you. It is from home that we gather strength for the battle of life, its hallowing influences smooth our careworn brow : and the gentle love of wife and children wins us from our worldliness and from ourselves, and warms us into the enjoyment of domestic love. In its atmosphere we lose our coldness and reserve, and breathe freely in the unrestraint of affection and mutual confidence. Perhaps while I speak there are some that feel this is not true of *their* homes. My friends, I have described what the home ought to be, and what I have experienced it to be, but I know many, many homes here and elsewhere, where there is no love and no happiness, because restless passions and depraved appetites have poisoned the life springs of love in the hearts of either husband or wife, and God despised and dishonored, has cast upon all they touch, the blight of His displeasure.

Young women, adorning and beautifying every grade of our social life, bringing light and sunshine upon the rugged path of our toil and travel, keep yourselves pure; foolish men would help and flatter you to be ever vain and trifling. Turn away from them, see what the Lord would have you to be, and humbly seek to be useful in your families and helpful in the church.

I am thankful to know there are many young women in this island who adorn the Gospel in their families, and

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others who, putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, have consecrated themselves to the work of teaching and visiting the poor and needy.—Blessed are they. Also, I know there are many mothers, praying anxious mothers, who have nourished and brought up children for the Lord,—but the Island wants more of such mothers, mothers bringing up children for God and their country. Let them rejoice in the privilege of being British, but let them also remember they are Prince Edward Islanders. We want to see the growth of this nationality, not to inflate us with pride, like the frog in the fable, only anxious to appear big by our bluster and our arrogance, but as a stimulant to the faithful performance of our duties, so that by us our country be not dishonored. Yes, mothers, your round of duties may be small and circumscribed, your voice may be seldom heard beyond your own door, and yet on those dear children the Lord has given you, you may exert an influence and engraft principles, that may lead to the saving of their souls and the benefit of thousands.

It is now nearly 20 years since I first spoke on the subject of Education. Many of those I then spoke to, have become heads of families, but there is one thing I remember protesting against which is still too often followed and permitted. I allude to the children being turned out upon the streets. In the day it cannot be avoided, but in the evening a boy's best place is, or should be, at home. Try to make your home attractive, give the boys something to do, give them games and books to read,—but if you wish to see them grow up in the fear of the Lord, keep them off the streets at night.

But now let me speak of our Island. Its situation, in the southern corner of the great Gulf of St. Lawrence, with Nova Scotia and Cape Breton interposed

between it and the fogs of the Atlantic Ocean, gives it an unusually clear atmosphere; and it possesses a summer climate of great brightness and beauty. At no times are fogs frequent, and although the winters are very severe and trying to the poor and weakly, yet to the healthy and strong it is a time of much enjoyment, and altogether the climate is favorable to human life. Our Island has great natural advantages, compensating much for its long winter and backward spring. Its soil is fertile, and being free from rocks or stones, is easy of tillage, and its gentle undulations of hill and dale present rare facilities for drainage. Wheat, although uncertain, grows and ripens well; but of all the crops, oats and potatoes appear to be the surest in yield and quality. All the live stock common to a farm thrive well, especially sheep and horses, and the care taken of late years to cross and improve the native breed of cattle, has greatly improved its character, and increased the demand for our stock in foreign markets. Considering the ordinary quality of the land on this Island, it is not high at its usual rental, and the price at which it may be purchased is, under the circumstances, cheaper than it can be obtained in the neighboring provinces, or even in Canada. I believe it is cheaper than where it can be had for nothing, for on this Island, provisions and labor are low in price, roads intersect the Island at every point, and the farms are never more than 12 miles from a harbour or a market. In the spring and early summer shoals of mackerel, herring, gasperaux and other fish, visit our bays, creeks and rivers. The taxes are low, averaging 10s. stg. annually, direct and indirect, and the numerous harbours are favorably situated for trade and commerce. Agriculture, with its kindred sciences of raising cattle, horses, sheep, hogs, &c.

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is now becoming the one great business in this Island. The wood for ship building is fast disappearing, and of late years the number of ships built has greatly diminished. It has been said that few if any of our farmers have realized fortunes by their farms, but when we consider that most of our people, or their fathers before them, came to this Island poor, and ignorant of farming, that they had no capital to buy stock or implements of husbandry, and that now many of their descendants have substantial, well furnished houses, with many acres under cultivation and a good stock of cattle, we must conclude they have done well. There are some that have not done well, but it is more frequently their fault than their misfortune, and can be too often traced to their idleness and incapacity, and their love of drink. If we could banish from our Island intoxicating drinks, there would be less crime, less poverty and less suffering. The Island Agricultural Societies have done much to encourage a better system of farming, but man is slow to improve everywhere, and there is still a large portion of the land badly and ruinously cultivated. Looking back over a past of more than 20 years spent amongst you, both agreeably and profitably, I can testify to the great improvement evident on all sides. But of late years this improvement is more marked at Bedeque, Summerside and Casoumpeco, than in Charlottetown. In fact, whilst Englishmen are justly proud of their vast and yearly increasing London, I have observed in this Island a jealous opposition on the part of country members of the Legislature to measures introduced for the improvement of their Capital. Forgetting that the prosperity of Charlottetown, the improvement of its wharves, of its ferries, the drainage of its streets, the proper making of its roads, and the perfecting of its

market accomodation, is an advantage to the whole Island. The roads within a few miles of Town have been nearly impassable, and I hope our people will see the necessity of doing something for road improvement. For my own part, I feel confident that sound legislative action for the making of good roads and bridges throughout the Island, would do more to develop our resources and encourage settlement, than any interference with the land tenure question. I would suggest that authority be given to the Government to raise a loan, (through the Bank or private channels), whose interest shall be provided for, by or out of the annual grant for road money, at such a rate as may extinguish the debt in a certain number of years, like the loan drainage system in England and Scotland; and that one competent road surveyor be appointed for the whole Island, under whom the bridges on the main lines of road be substantially built, and portions of the roads within a few miles of the principal towns, be macadamized. By degrees, also, new grades ought to be taken for the roads, so that the present steep hills be avoided, especially between Town and St. Eleanor's. But Charlottetown, with its Mayor and Council, might be expected to take the lead in the race of improvement. For some unexplained reason it has not justified our high hopes, and little has been done of a permanent character to improve the Town, except the production of that usual city excrescence, a *public debt*. Yet there is spirit and liberality amongst us; look at the effort made by town Counsellor Alley to ornament our streets by avenues of trees. It was done well, and appeared to be approved of by all, and yet how soon have they been ruthlessly destroyed? Mr. Alley's trees deserved a better fate at the hands of his fellow-townsmen.

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The system of direct taxation by assessment on property, as adopted in Charlottetown, is excellent; it might well be applied to the whole Island. But no sort of taxation is popular, and so taxation is kept as low as possible to please the people. Nevertheless, if we choose to live in a town, we ought to be prepared to accept taxation, as a necessary condition of our dwelling comfortably and safely together. If we won't accept taxation, and by that means stop all improvements, we shall some day bitterly repent it. We ought no longer to delay making public sewers in the main streets; it is much needed, and in few towns could be done so easily. Our cesspools in every back-yard, are preparing for us pestilence, and will soon poison our wells;—and I say emphatically that, if we value our own lives and the lives of our brother townsmen, we ought to raise money for this purpose. The fact is, we do tax ourselves for grog, and wine, and tobacco,—for luxuries we might easily do without; let us more wisely tax ourselves for cleanliness and health.

Our isolated position during the four winter months, when our ports are closed by ice and all foreign commerce is denied us,—our only intercourse with the neighboring colonies being effected by a boat at Cape Tormentine,—is doubtless a draw-back to our prosperity, and has some influence upon the character of our people. The island grows, however, such a superabundance of crops, that the quantity of food remaining in the country keeps down the prices, and makes the living cheap even in the depth of winter. The winter business is considerable, the country people having to bring in the produce for market and to collect fuel, and perhaps none need be idle; although if our ports were open, there would be still more activity and enterprize.

In glancing at the past history of our island, with our present experience, we are at once ready to condemn the action of the Parent Government, in granting away all the broad acres of this beautiful colony to parties, who, whatever their services were to the British Government, appear to have taken little interest in the welfare of the Island. But by the wording of the grants, it seems plain that they were made solely or principally for the purpose of inducing emigration. I do not, therefore, think it fair to condemn the Government,—all that can be said is, that it was a fatal mistake, and the effect of which mistake we feel to this day. The same minister who did us innocently this wrong, Lord Egmont, as far back as the year 1770 sent out a Governor and organized a Council; and soon afterwards, when there were only 150 families in the island, granted us a Legislature, showing his sanguine expectation of our future eminence. Notwithstanding this auspicious commencement, there was little progress made towards the settlement of the Island; so that, for more than 50 years, no census was taken nor was there at any time any great influx of immigrants. Lord Selkirk's introduction of 800 Highlanders in 1803 seems to be the most noticable event for many years. In 1827 there were 23,000 people, and in 1861 our population was 80,600; so that in 34 years we had nearly quadrupled our numbers. Our revenue had also increased proportionably; but as the march of liberal sentiments amongst our people took the practical form of a wish to release themselves from paying rents, the increased revenue was absorbed in meeting the interest of money borrowed for the purchase of the Worrel and other estates, to be sold again to the tenant. This plan has also been followed in the case of

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Lord Selkirk's property, and has met with marked success. For this reason we are still poor, and still the attention of the Legislature is directed to various schemes for benefitting the Tenantry, which, interfering with the rights of property, must alarm the capitalist and bring disappointment to the people, whilst they help to paralyze industry and enterprise and dangerously unsettle moral character.

I have long hoped to see the settlement of this Land question, but there are such irreconcilable and opposite opinions held by tenants and proprietors on this subject, that it still seems as far removed from solution as ever. I was glad to see it stated, that there are now not much more than one half of the population tenants, and that the number is yearly lessening; and I also hear that the proprietors are willing to sell on terms that in the other provinces would be considered reasonable. If this is the case to any extent, if left alone, things will soon right themselves,—for, it is certainly not the policy, nor the interest of the freeholder, great or small, to go in for any legislation that may directly or indirectly unsettle the rights of property. Nor is it their interest to spend more time and money upon matters that may properly be left to private arrangement or the action of the law courts. Good faith is as necessary to be observed by a people as by an individual, and to set aside the right of a man to dispose of his own property in his own way, and according to his own price, is (except in making roads or works for public benefit) to commence a vicious course of legislation, as contrary to the spirit of the English Constitution as it is contrary to the real interest of the community. Extend the principle thus initiated, and we shall have the Legislature enacting the prices at which

bread and meat shall be sold—and interfering between the buyer and seller in the market. If men hold back from sale large tracts of land, and thus retard the settlement of the country—it seems competent to the Legislature to tax all such property (in common with other landed property) for purposes of revenue, or improvement of communication; and this of itself ought to operate as a stimulant, and lead the proprietor to sell or lease the land in his own defence.

I have spoken of the population as now amounting to 82,000 people. They are made up of many nationalities, and in which the Scotch element sensibly predominates. Judging from the mother country, I should consider the differences of nationality, as likely to improve the physical character, and to stimulate the mental development of the people. But concurrent with the differences of nationality, there are differences of religious faith, and these so often engender bitterness and lead to strife, that it seems impossible, under such circumstances, to secure united action and combined effort for any useful purpose: so much are men blinded by prejudice and swayed by passion. But in my mind, I do not think this ought to be the case; indeed, I protest against it as unwise and foolish. It has nothing to do with true religion, which both parties in the strife profess to draw from the Bible. That book teaches us to love one another, to live peaceably with all men, to do good even to those who despitefully use us and persecute us, and that the weapons of the christian warfare are not carnal, but spiritual. But need I remind you of such texts? They are familiar to you doubtless, as well as to those who do not often join us in this Hall;—I only wish they were influential on all and swayed all hearts, and that both parties would

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be wise enough to see how much more loss than gain there is in our present divisions.

Some are tempted to say I wish we all thought alike in this island,—I wish there were no Roman Catholics here; but the Christian may be sure that good is to be found in the present providential arrangement of our people, and let him seek earnestly and lovingly for that good. My own experience in life shows me there are far worse things than Roman Catholicism. The zeal of the Roman Catholic for what he is taught to consider his duty toward God, often shames the lukewarm Protestant; and I have often looked with reverence to the humble self-denying work of the Roman Catholic trudging to Chapel, regardless of the weather, scanty of clothes, and going to early mass, often before there is even the smoke rising from the chimnies of our "love of ease" Protestants. And look at their liberality. I believe the largest subscription with respect to ability received by me for the relief fund for widows and orphans in 1857, was from a working shoemaker in Pownal Street, who gave me half a sovereign, probably the earnings of a week's labour; and this he did as cheerfully as if he had left a pile of sovereigns behind, whereas the very shop he worked in was not his own. No, my friends, they have many noble qualities; but they are too often misguided, and their very openness of character and warmth of heart leave them an easy prey to superstition and prejudice. But prejudice is not all on one side, and for the truth's sake, must I not speak of the skepticism and shameless immorality of multitudes of our people; their mammon worshipping, their gluttony, their drunkenness, and their covetousness. Might it not truly be said, there is one sermon that has not been often enough

preached in this Island, and without which, all our onslaught on error and superstition in the newspapers may and will be as waste paper : that is the sermon of a life spent in the service of God, and in self-denying love to our fellow man. Do we think them blind, that they, who are in our families and in our workshops, who see us in our undress, cannot note how hollow are, for the most part, our professions, and how shallow our piety,—how thoroughly self is the great centre round which our great men circle, and to exalt which all their efforts tend. It is not only the bigots of one sect who think there is no religion except in themselves ; but it is a mournful fact, that, tried by the Gospel standard in this 19th century there is too little of the old style of Christianity anywhere, and less in the old country than in this.—Especially I grieve to see amongst us the political religionist. There is no type of it in the New Testament ; it is the growth and development of a later day. That a good man should exercise his political rights and use his influence for the advance of the truth, and for the good of his country, I heartily subscribe to, let him be priest or layman ; and woe be to that country that is separated from such influences. But what I mean, is the man whose religion is only seen in the bitterness and acrimony of his political tendencies and the fierceness of his polemical arguments. He is only warm for religion when he wields the pen of controversy, and only zealous for the truth when he sees his opponents growing in political strength.

That such men are found both here and elsewhere, taking either side in the great party questions of the present day, is a misfortune and blot upon our common christianity.

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I have still further to observe as to the character of our people, that though they are generally considered apathetic, if not positively indolent. My own observation would lead me to say, whilst physically and intellectually they are equal, if not superior to any people in the British Empire, there is amongst many a slowness of movement and indolence of habit, that perhaps may arise from the cheapness of food, but which must materially check their own advancement, and, if persisted in, be a fatal drag upon the Island's progress. Now idleness is a sin, and neglect of punctuality is a vicious habit far too easily allowed amongst us. They are the little foxes that spoil the vines and make the christian unfruitful and inoperative for good. Time is a talent given us for improvement, and when I note the late rising, the unpunctual attendance upon meetings, the easy neglect of long engagements, the indolent way of doing business, the aimless gossip and foolish talking, and the quiet satisfaction with which hours and days are passed by with nothing useful done for purposes to be done, I tremble for the future, and remember it is written "what thy hand findeth to do, do with thy might." The Poet says,

"Not enjoyment and not sorrow
Is our destined end or way,
But to act, that each to-morrow
Finds us farther than to-day."

Perhaps there are some here, that think me needlessly severe upon what they consider at most only social foibles, and they are not satisfied at being considered other than good decent people, and do not feel it right that I should be so hard upon our own side of the Island family. They may say, it is true we do not make a fuss about our religion as some do, we do not pray for

revivals, we do not disturb our friends by everlastingly boring them with our crotchets about religion—but we go regularly to church and all that sort of thing, and what more can we do? We give also to the poor what we can spare, which is not much, but indeed it seems to us as if we were always giving,—what more would you have us do? Oh friends, especially young friends, bear with me for a little, and I will tell you what I do want you to do, and that because in doing it, your truest good, your everlasting happiness will be secured.

I have marked many of you from your childhood; I have seen some of you when under instruction in the Sunday School or, at the Prayer Meeting, under those deep impressions of the truth that the cheek has flushed, the lip quivered and the tear started, and I rejoiced to think the Lord was still mighty to love and ready to save. But your after conduct showed, it was not conversion; and as years passed on, these convictions died away, and you became cold in your devotions and formal in your attendance upon public worship. You have felt that in taking your seat amongst your fellow worshippers you were not there willingly, it was merely in conformity with public opinion, or because you knew your absence would pain your parents or your friends.

Perhaps even in the assertion of your rights as a free agent, you have declined attendance upon the house of God, and joined that sadly numerous class in every society, whose freedom is licentiousness, and who greedily follow every way to sin. And why this change? Is it not because through carelessness you have been betrayed into some secret sin, and that seeking to excuse to yourself this sin, you have consoled yourself with the idea, that others are needlessly particular?

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And then to escape reflection, you have plunged into the stream of frivolity and pleasure. But is this enjoyment, is this happiness? Do not the terrors of a broken law often now startle you? and does not the still small voice of Jesus' love steal upon your memory and warn your cold heart with longings to return? Oh friends, take up the language of the Prodigal—arise go to thy Father and his father, and thy God and his God, and join again the family of the redeemed, for yet there is room.

I am glad, however, to observe, there are many bright examples of energy, industry and devotedness among our countrymen. And that some of our young men at home and abroad have distinguished themselves far above their fellows, especially as regards self-devotion to the service of Christ. Yes, young men, what a bright example to you was your countryman, the lamented missionary Gordon. With few advantages from early education, at an age when many would think themselves too old to learn, and whilst laboring himself for his daily bread, he gave himself resolutely to work for God, and to educate himself for the ministry. And by dint of hard labor and God's blessing, without any claim to talent, he became what he set before himself six long years before, a missionary to the heathen. He went out to that country, whose soil was reeking with the blood of a former missionary, and with rare courage, established himself amongst its wild heathen inhabitants; and after a residence of five years among them, he and his wife were murdered cruelly, in revenge for his bearing faithful testimony against their vices and idolatries. With the lesson of such a life ringing in our ears, it seems fitting to press upon my young friends the importance of recognizing the

proper object of life. I would say, be hearty for both worlds, that is be earnest and faithful for the work of your calling, whatever it is ; as far as possible make yourself master of it, but give your best affections to Christ, for He only is worthy of them. Do not permit yourself dull, listless ways in your work, or in your pastime. Be hearty and earnest. As you wish to live happy, live usefully. Besides getting your own living think of others and help them. Remember it is the duties which lie at our door for which the Lord holds us accountable, the Lazarus at the gate, the little child that crosses our path a dozen times a day, and yet for whom we have no kind word. It was a fine thought of Pascal that if the hard-hearted man could be induced to visit the poor in their abject misery, even he would be induced to part with at least some superfluity for their relief. Also when accused of giving too much away, that he would make himself a beggar—"Oh," he said, "I never knew a person yet who did not leave something behind him when dying.

But let me not lead you to suppose you all can do great things, and become great. The experience of a life now running over 50 years forbids that. Our greatest mistakes arise from over confidence in our own powers when young, and a too great haste to be rich, or to be distinguished. Little things make up the business of life, and the necessary attention to little things is a duty, too often overlooked. It is the plodding boy that oftenest gets on in life, 'tis the careful housewife makes the happy home, 'tis the tradesman who sticks to his business who is sure to succeed, and that homely proverb, "Let the cobbler stick to his last," has wisdom and teaching in it for every class. In short, let every

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one do his own work well in a community, and that community must thrive.

I have now to consider our present political position. As a Colonial dependency of Great Britain, we have in common with our brother Colonists, the right of managing our own affairs, and making our own laws, with the single exception that the laws we make shall not run counter to the principles of British jurisprudence, or trench upon the prerogatives of the Crown. Unrepresented in the Imperial legislature, we escape Imperial taxation, whilst we repose in perfect security under the protection of that Power whose flag of freedom has for so many years braved the battle and fluttered in the breeze. With respect to the other British provinces we stand practically independent, although in point of authority and therefore in case of emergency, the Governor General of Canada is paramount over all these colonies.

No great inconvenience has at present arisen from this independence, because happily there is one board of control (the Colonial Office) that carefully checks and disallows any vicious legislation. The Colonial Office is often in disfavour with the Colonists, and is often twitted with its want of knowledge. Possibly it might be improved, but when we consider it has been presided over by such minds as Lord Derby, Earl Russell, Gladstone, Grey, and the Duke of Newcastle, and that such men as Stephens and Merivale have been under Secretaries in the office nearly all their lives, bringing to their work great ability and large experience, I think all loyal subjects will acknowledge it to be entitled to respect; and I further think that often its action is most useful and necessary.

Let us remember also that there are 61 dependencies

of the British Crown, all requiring supervision and control from this office, and that some of these Colonies are as large, and nearly as populous as European kingdoms; we shall then in some measure understand the extreme difficulty of acquiring such an intimate knowledge of every Colonial subject as would satisfy the demands of the British Colonists.

The trouble in the neighboring United States, is now concentrating the attention of politicians upon these Colonies, and the importance of drawing them closer together by centralising authority and assimilating their institutions, is now seen to be necessary for our future progress and probable future independence. It is however beset with many difficulties, and the people in all these Provinces are too well satisfied with their present position to accept with readiness any change that may increase taxation and diminish their political importance.

These lower provinces, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, have many interests in common, and seem intended geographically and politically to form one country; but with the great Canadas there is at present comparatively little intercourse, and less sympathy. At present the currencies, the customs, and the Post Office are all on an independent footing in these Colonies, causing needless confusion, and hindering free intercourse. This as I have before urged should be remedied, and I believe will now soon engage the attention of our Legislature. We want also complete and unrestricted colonial intercourse.

I have said that our people are not in favor of a change, especially if that change should be a legislative union with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, by which

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the seat of Government would be removed from this Island, and the glory of our little court be eclipsed forever. Yet I think there is nothing to fear from such an union, but rather much to hope for. Time was when Scotchmen railed against the injustice of their union with England, but time has also long ago proved that the union, although carried by corruption against the will of the people, the union of the poor state with the rich was productive of immense good to both kingdoms. Our public men, in view of the future, must see that Prince Edward Island cannot stand alone, and if so, is it not better to combine with the other Lower Provinces, and in this hour of our country's quiet, perfect a union of the legislative bodies, and form one executive Government. I say this hour of quiet, because I cannot but feel anxious for the future. What we see across the border, is a lesson fraught with instruction to the English Colonist. The "let alone" policy will not answer much longer, our neighbor's house is on fire, and his country convulsed from North to South, and there is no knowing what turn affairs may next take. Even for such a time of anxiety, our position is most favorable; we lie sheltered in the deep valley of our own insignificance. The other colonies interpose between us and the great Republic, they may and will be called upon to act, and probably ere long to combine, and our island will be invited to co-operate. But we might aim at a nobler part, and it would well become some of our leading public men to take up this subject and digest some plan by which a union could be effected and the interests of our island be duly cared for.

I have thought, heretofore, of the union of all the Provinces; but I now feel persuaded that the first step should be a union of these Lower Provinces, keeping in

view ultimately the union of all, in a manner much more like the incorporation of England and Scotland, than that of the New England States of America.

In such a union, we shall miss our aim if we allow any squeamish love of our present state to keep us back from the most intimate and complete amalgamation. Let us shun the errors of the United States. To be powerful as a Government, we must be one and indivisible. Let no state rights mar our unity, but let our representatives be gathered in one House of Assembly, and let the united Legislature be binding for all, and upon all. This is what we want, and the sooner the better, so that our patriotism may have a larger field, a more becoming object; and let the old name of Acadia be revived in this new union, and be our generic name amongst the nations, and supplant (in a measure) those distinctive names that at present only proclaim the isolation of a feeble independence.

Naturally, here and elsewhere, the neighboring great republic has exercised considerable influence, and encouraged strongly the democratic element; but I think what is now passing before our eyes has increased immensely the attachment to England and her institutions, and under present circumstances, promises a long continuance to our intimate relationship and dependence on the mother country. The general impression in all these colonies seems to be that we could not better ourselves by any change, and that we are under the best and freest Government the world ever saw,—and blessed be God for it, and long live Queen Victoria. Yes, long live our noble Queen, not because she is the representative of one of the oldest reigning families in Europe, although that, in an Englishman's eyes, is some recommendation; not because she is the head of the most

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powerful kingdom the world has ever seen,—although power has its admirers, and I for one would be sorry to live under a weak Government; for without power in the Government, freedom too often becomes licentiousness; but because she is the representative head of a form of Government that our forefathers have struggled and bled for. Slowly and laboriously the work has been going on, sometimes helped by the nobles, sometimes by the Church; sometimes the people gaining, sometimes losing; sometimes our loyalty tried by the wickedness of the rulers, sometimes by the madness of the people; but at last we see the topstone raised in the person of our gracious Queen; and so satisfied are all classes, and so universal the spread of loyalty, that even the call for reform of the British constitution finds no support from the people, and the occupation of the demagogue seems gone forever.

Prince Edward Island has, of late years, lost much by the gold discoveries of Australia, inducing a number of her young men to give up their farms and to carry to other countries the energies and physical wealth that this Island herself so much requires. Indeed, within the last 12 years, the once stationary P. E. Islander may be found in Australia, California and Columbia. Some have returned with less gold than they took away, and some in their restlessness have joined the hosts now fighting in Virginia. On this account our Island, which might well employ the energies of ten times its present population, has not at the last census increased so much as was expected. Our present position is that of an important food growing country for Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and the United States. It is the transit of our produce and passengers that makes the profit of the Shediac line of rail, and that

adds to the importance of Pictou. Without mines, without a sufficiency of hard stone to make our own roads, there is in our soil a capability of richly repaying labor and capital properly expended, superior to the other colonies. But at present, as I have already said, our farming is at a low ebb, the people need instruction, and, on this one point, are needlessly conservative.

The great subject of the Intercolonial railroad is now absorbing the attention of our fellow-colonists, and I am sorry to see its success imperilled by an attempt to make the road follow rather a military line than a commercial one. The commercial one would naturally follow the valley of the St. John and take the present rail from Shediac to Sussex Vale. But the military line is intended to pass round the head of the Bay Chaleur, and I believe up the valley of the Metapediac. This has little direct interest for us, nor are we called to bear any part of the burden. But if it be decided upon, the great influx of workmen will open a new market nearly at our doors for our produce. And so with respect to the Gold diggings in Nova Scotia, indirectly we may partake of the yield of those gold mines, by our nearness allowing us to supply their market.

Thus in the present, there is every encouragement to our people, to stick to the Island, and give their diligence to raise more food and to keep more stock. There is distress abroad, but there need be none here; the prices are good and will be better for all kind of produce. It is our vices only that keep us poor. If our country people when they come to town would give up grog drinking, and if our working artizans and shopmen would also give up those excesses that often make

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our streets noisy till past midnight, and where they have families practise a due economy, how different would soon be the face of our country and the appearance of our people. Our rents would not then press hard upon us and we might lift up our heads amongst our fellow-men as those who owed no man anything.

But it is true as it is strange, that economy is just least practised, where it is most needed. As I pass our small shopwindows, I often see these excellent words "cleanliness and economy combined." Yes they are qualities that may be combined most usefully in the furtherance of man's enjoyment of life. And with our abundance of water they may exist in the poorest of our dwellings. But it is not an easy virtue with the poor as with the rich; if we think of the water icy cold, the insufficient clothing, the scanty fare and the cold open floors, we shall feel increased respect for our tidy and cleanly poor—and be ready with kindly sympathy for those who want it. I cannot think, that man even in his savage state, uncombed, unwashed as he is in some countries from the cradle to the grave, can be said truly to like dirt,—he may live in it because his fathers have lived in it before him and because he knows no better, but let him once taste the positive enjoyment derived from cleanliness and pure water, I should suppose even the savage could hardly fall back to his old habits.—With such an audience it is at all events not necessary to descant any longer upon its virtues, and yet I think even you will acknowledge that a people who will allow their roads, streets and side walks to continue as they now are, must be, to some extent, if not a dirt loving—a dirt enduring people.

But of economy I would fain speak more at length, and perhaps to a better purpose. I know that many of

my hearers practise it right well, and can save in a way that I would never dream of, and that some of our housekeepers are models of thrift and carefulness. But the very notability these have acquired, show that the virtue of economy is still rare amongst us. Economy is a principle that at the outset excludes idleness, and many other kindred vices; demands sobriety and moderation, it abhors waste, of time, of power, of material. The same great master, who said "gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost," says also, by his servant Paul, "redeem the time, work while it is day."

In nature there is no waste, nothing is lost. That dirty, polluted water spilt upon the ground, gently percolating through the earth, or rising in vapor to form the clouds, will again sparkle purely in the purling stream or flowing spring. Man's truest wisdom is to follow at a humble distance such teaching. Economy means that watchful care over our use of material things which we are urged to exercise as to spiritual things. It may be attained and practised without a spark of true religion, but it is a shame to call that religion which can exist long without it.

Economy is distinct from stinginess, for it is the economical that can afford to give, and is prepared from his savings to be generous. It need not make money an idol, but it finds it a useful agent. Without economy a people cannot be long free, for they cannot be independent. The practise of economy raises man in the social scale, and when workmen by frugality and economy have secured their own independence, they will cease to view with envy others that are more rich. It behoves us all to practise it, for none can leave it alone without doing a wrong to his neighbor and him-

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self. Let it be urged from our pulpits, taught in our schools, and exemplified in our homes, and if taken up heartily by our people, we shall soon see a new era for our island.

At the present time, slovenly waste is seen on all sides, in town and country, in our houses, especially farm houses, where the stove has hardly replaced the large open fireplace—there is waste of fuel, of clothing, of food, and of material for manure. In our idle, aimless, lives a waste of power, and in our drinking and smoking a dreadful waste of money, which if saved by temperate habits and properly employed, might give every man a freehold and every township a good road.

I am not likely, in the desultory way now only permitted me from want of leisure, to do more than glance at the duties that wait our fulfilment. But I have often thought, we do not consider enough, the duty of not only providing employment but amusement and recreation for our young people.

As we see the very exuberance of life shows itself among the young of the lower animals in the graceful frolic of the kitten and the gambols of the kid, so I believe our Gracious Father in heaven would have us not rule our children in strait-laced formality, but encourage in them genuine fun, hearty laughter, and healthy pastime. The wise man tells us there is a time for those things, and if so, it must be when we are young. For my part, I should sooner have supposed it contrary to godliness to fight, than to dance. If the former, which is a sad departure from that precept, "Love one another" can be commended as just and necessary at times, the latter which is an expression of enjoyment can hardly be condemned. I can state with a more comfortable feeling of truth, one may dance

without sin, than that one may fight without sin, although I acknowledge that it is my duty to fight at the call of my country.

I feel, therefore, it is also a duty in us elder ones, to encourage in the young all those exercises and innocent amusements that develop the physical powers and strengthen the animal frame. I think our long winters require more facilities for such exercises, than are at present available. On this account, I am glad to hear of the meetings for drill, and I like to see our young men have their cricket and football, their skating, their hockey, and their gymnasium; and I think some exercises assimilating in character to the graceful movements of the dance, are useful and appropriate for the amusement and recreation of our young females. I am no stoick;—years ago, one of my greatest treats was to assist my worthy friend, Mr Hubbard, in giving a Christmas romp to the Infant School, and an occasion for rather a noisy demonstration for the children of the Sunday School. I know one great element of happiness with children is permission to make a noise, but our singing and our noise was too much for the nice moral taste of some of our friends, so at last after a struggle of a few years, I was obliged to yield to wiser counsels—and a decorous dulness has replaced our innocent, but sometimes called vain displays of gaudy colors, pretty songs and vociferous hurrahs. But is my opinion changed? No, stronger still seems to come this voice from the Eternal—“Let others preach, but do you still labor to lift off a while the load of care and sorrow, that ever presses too heavily upon the children of the poor.”

There are dark deep stains of guilt in the long past of my checkered life; but in early childhood, the dance

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in the old barn, hung with holly, ivy, and the mistletoe with our happy villagers, and the music of our one-legged fiddler, on New Year's evening—the old fashioned country-dance, in which the squire danced with the prettiest of our villagers, is still a bright spot in the far off memories, and I neither then saw, nor now see anything wrong in it. But fashionable modern balls I have not attended for a quarter of a century, nor could I now for a moment think of taking my children there. A frolic, or even a romp for the young, I am prepared to encourage; but without condemning those that do attend balls and assemblies, I cannot approve of parties that turn night into day—that encourage dissipation and display, and that extend the frivolity of youth into an age when we should reasonably look for gravity and wisdom. In fact, our balls do seem to me completely at variance with simplicity, good taste, and good sense.

Having, therefore, examined our present position and character as a people, it only remains for me to point out what I consider our prominent present duty in this period of our history. And to urge upon our people the acquisition of those principles, and the formation of that character that will best conduce to that end.

Well! *here* is our Island, in which there is a near approximation in numbers of Roman Catholics and Protestants. At present, the Protestants hold the reins of Government, and although some attempts have been made to break down or neutralize the absolutely Roman Catholic character of the Opposition, it has not been successful. And we are doomed to witness, and perhaps partake in the strife, of two parties within the limited area of this little Island. And, therefore, to



submit to the indefinite postponement of every enlarged measure for the good of the people. Now, I say our duty is to break down this party spirit, if we truly wish the prosperity of our Island. How can our right hand do anything great, when withheld by the left.— There must be *combination* of effort. I need not point out to you how constantly philosophy and history teach this lesson, and yet which man is always unlearning. See the bitter consequences flowing from party strife in Athens, Sparta, Rome, and, to come nearer home, in the great neighboring Republic. Men sometimes speak of the uses of an opposition, such as we see in the British Parliament. It is not now a serious danger to England, for the difference of opinion is trifling; but when great questions have been at issue, the strife of parties has threatened her very existence, and their struggles have seriously interfered with her progress and prosperity. The One, holy and wise, has long ago sealed the truth of the Jewish proverb—“that a house divided against itself can never stand.” And if we open our eyes and ears to the teaching of the past, we shall see its truth in many a page of history; and even now, as we look around us, its melancholy fruit in our Island.

But I must hasten to conclude; and in summing up, it is a pleasure for me to testify that there are duties which this Island has well performed. Its system of education for the people, in which it spends a larger proportion of revenue than any country in the world; its rule, that the Bible be permitted in the Common Schools; its earnest endeavor by the appointment of arbitrators, able and impartial, to do away with the unhappy political agitation so long existing against landed proprietors; and its change of the constitution

of the Legislative Council,—these show, on the part of our statesmen, a just appreciation of their position and their duty; and doubtless more, far more would be done if the two parties into which our representatives are divided, could be persuaded to lay aside for a brief space, the strife for power, and give their joint attention and support to measures for their country's good. I have incidentally mentioned some matters that are patent enough to all as requiring legislation, and which our honorable members of Legislature know best how to deal with; but I must remind you that the most carefully prepared laws will have little effect in improving our morals or in diminishing our evils.

Drunkenness, obscenity, impurity, impiety, and every other vice may exist in the face of every law on the statute book. These can only be put down by the influence of a rightly directed and enlightened public opinion. But it is the character of the people which inspires public opinion, and upon that character depends the future of our Colony. If you agree with me that there is much need for improvement, you also know that much of that improvement is in your own power.

Don't let us then shirk the task, or try to place the burden of work upon other shoulders. Charlottetown has its duties, and naturally wields an influence for good or evil over the whole Island. If the heart beats true, we need not fear for the health of the extremities. And so, to conclude, if Charlottetown cleanses its ways, observes the Sabbath, frowns down drunkenness, abates religious strife, respects the laws, and cheerfully submits to taxation for public improvement, it will have done well, and may meet the future, with confident hope for brighter times, enlarged resources, and increased prosperity of our common country, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

