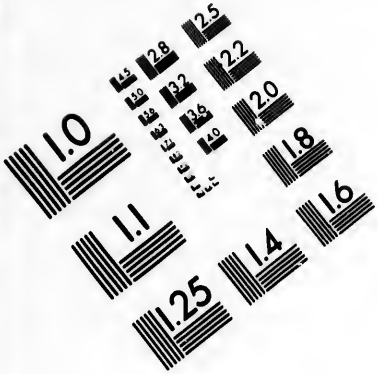

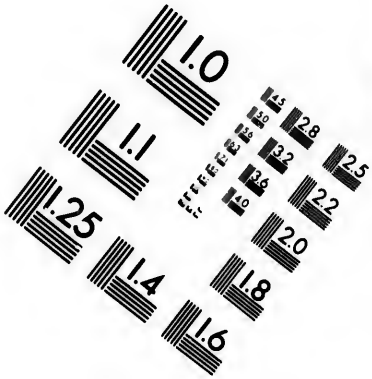

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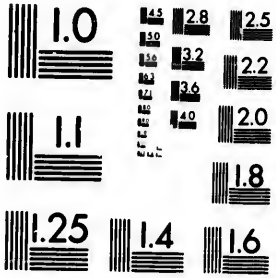

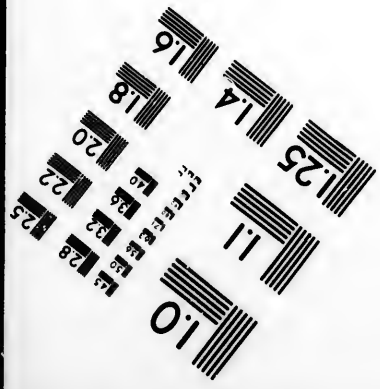

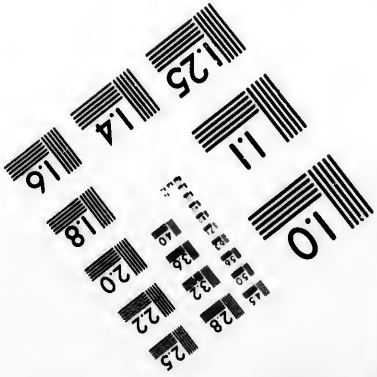

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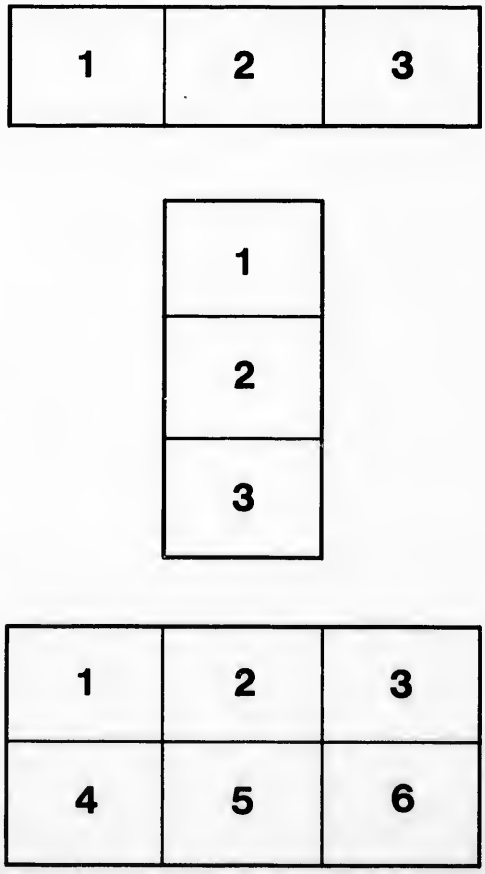

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VIVIAN:

A TALE OF

CHATEAU RICHER.

BY JAMES JOSEPH GAHAN.

TORONTO:
PATRICK BOYLE, PRINTER, 16 FRANCIS STREET.
1880.

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VIVIAN:

A TALE OF

CHATEAU RICHER.

C. Massiah, Esq;
from his friend
J. J. Gahan
Quebec June 13/81

BY JAMES JOSEPH GAHAN.

TORONTO:
PATRICK BOYLE, PRINTER, 16 FRANCIS STREET.
1880.

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QUEB

DEDICATION.

TO

CHARLES S. PARNELL, M. P., IRELAND;

PATRICK BOYLE, ESQ., Toronto; and JOHN C. FLEMING, ESQ., Montreal,

A TRINITY

OF IRISH PATRIOTS, SPRINGING FROM THE STEM OF

MY MOTHERLAND,

THE FOLLOWING LINES ARE DEDICATED.

I cannot claim for my work a high order of merit. Written to relieve the tedium of studious hours—at intervals when I sought to forget Justinian, Blackstone and Pothier, this composition is necessarily crude and unfinished. But such as it is I now give it to the public with the sole understanding that all the proceeds resulting from the sale thereof, shall be handed to the

FUND FOR IRELAND!

JAMES JOSEPH GAHAN,
Student-at-Law,
Laval University.

QUEBEC, 31*st March*, 1880.

VIVIAN: A TALE OF CHATEAU RICHER.

I.

Through Chateau Richer's fragrant vale
  The Summer breeze was sighing,
O'er mountain tall, and bosky dale
  The Summer sun was dying;
The broad St. Lawrence wended on,
  In proud, majestic sweeping,
The glory of the day was gone—
  The shades of eve were creeping!

II.

It was, in truth, a lovely spot
  Enrobed in nature's splendor,
And there, within a mossy grot
  The scene was sweetly tender,
When Vivian breathed the story old,
  First whispered soft in Eden,
Ere sinful shadows darkly rolled
  To cloud the face of Heaven!

III.

Rich gloaming fell upon the stream,
  And on the bubbling fountain,
And thro' the wreathing clouds, the beam
  Of Luna tipped the mountain,
And fell upon the eager youth
  And on the maid reclining—
The reflex fair of spotless truth
  Forever brightly shining!

IV.

His nut-brown curls were graceful twined;
His eyes with love were gleaming,
And from the fountain of his mind
Love's essences were streaming:
He spoke of love which dieth not
In tones of sweet emotion—
Ah! sacred was that mossy grot,
And his young soul's devotion.

V.

"I love thee, dearest maid," he cried;
"And by the stars above me,
"I swear thou art my spirit's bride—
"I love thee—yes, I love thee!
"And I would give the sweetest gift,
"Were't mine, to mortals given,
"If thou my life from darkness lift
"To thee, to light and heaven!

VI.

"My destiny hath led me far—
"Far from my father's towers—
"My love, the sole and guiding star
"To these Canadian bowers;
"For often prophet voices told
"The seas I would cross over,
"To win a dearer prize than gold
"And near thee e'er to hover.

VII.

"And while I sought the glowing West
"With buoyant hopes unmeasured,
"I longed to fold thee to my breast,
"And tell thee, thou wert treasured;

"That peaceful there you might recline
"From tempests guarded surely,
"For, ah! my worship at thy shrine
"Was ever offered purely!

VIII.

"I saw thee in my waking dreams
"When softly sunk the even—
"I saw thee in the tinted beams
"Which deck the face of heaven!
"I saw thee in each jasmine-bower,
"And in the star-streak glancing—
"I saw thee in each fragrant flower,
"And in the streamlet dancing!

IX.

"And now, behold! I see thee, fair,
"My fancies ripe excelling!
"With thousand graces richly rare
"Within thy bosom dwelling;
"And as I gaze upon the charms
"Which fling their spells above me,
"I clasp thee in my raptured arms,
"And whisper that I love thee!"

X.

The maiden listened with delight,
While in her bosom swaying
Was planted by Love's airy sprite
A feeling undecaying:
And trysting in that mossy bower,
They pledged love's holy token,
And blessed the sacred, solemn hour
Which linked their souls unbroken!

XI.

O, magic, beauteous power of Love,
To fear and guilt a stranger!
Thou comest from the spheres above,
Unknowing strife or danger!
Thou art the casket of the soul
In which Life's gems are shining,
Wherein is read the mystic scroll
Within each spirit twining!

XII.

When in the mighty, wondrous Past,
Sun, moon and stars were bidden,
To fling upon Creation vast,
The radiance so long hidden,
It seemed as if each planet bent
Beneath the blaze of glory
Which o'er the rushing waters blent,
And o'er each mountain hoary—

XIII.

It seemed as if the Awful Hand
Which carved the vales and mountains,
Which fashioned out the ocean's strand,
And gave to life the fountains!
Whose messages in lightnings flashed
Upon each rolling river—
Whose Voice in deep'ning thunders crashed
Through endless spaces ever—

XIV.

Had filled the purpose of the Plan,
Eternally begotten—
That all was o'er, and creature, Man,
Had been by Him forgotten—

But, no ! that purpose firmly kept
  To its completion, human,
And while earth's new-made master slept,
  Received its queen in Woman !

XV.

O, lucent flame of woman's love,
  By angel-hands ignited,
Full oft a beacon dost thou prove
  To lonely man benighted !
As mother, maid, or cherished wife,
  As sister, dear and tender,
They shed fresh beauty on our life,
  And light our burthens render !

XVI.

Beside the fevered bed they move,
  And e'en where cannon rattle,
The deathless power of love they prove
  Amid the glare of battle !
And whether near the couch of pain,
  Or by the cradle lowly,
Or on the bloody battle-plain,
  Their love is pure and holy !

XVII.

Through Chateau Richer's wooded vale,
  The matin hymns were ringing,
And spirit-voices on the gale,
  Their mystic chants were singing :
The streamlets leaped in summer glee,
  Between the scented meadows,
And on St. Lawrence, rolling free,
  The hills flung length'ning shadows !

XVIII.

'Tis sweet to linger on the lawn,
Or roam mid sylvan splendor,
To watch the freshness of the dawn,
With poet-fancies tender;
'Tis sweet to breathe the balmy air,
While musing 'neath the willow,
Or gaze upon the spangles fair,
Which float upon the billow!

XIX.

And Vivian lingered in that vale,
His thoughts like music flowing,
His fancies telling e'er the tale,
Of gladness in him glowing;
His soul was all unworldly still,
His heart was true, unswerving,
He shuddered at the merest ill,
His life from sin preserving!

XX.

Again they met—his tinted words
Were clothed in rhythmic measure—
He struck the vivid, breathing chords
Which thrilled her soul with pleasure;
And while the streamlet's silver beam,
Shone brightly in the morning,
He told once more the 'passioned dream
Of love, his life's adorning!

XXI.

"O, come, and be my bonny bride,
"Thou wilt be cherished ever—
"O, come, let not the fates divide
"Us, or our future sever;

"'Tis true, I am not rich in lands,
"And have not wealth of treasure,
"But better, I have willing hands
"Whose aim will be thy pleasure!

XXII.

"The limpid love-light in thine eye
"Shall guide my path in duty,
"Nor sorrowed tear, nor anguished sigh
"Shall dim thy lustrous beauty;
"A golden shadow in the day—
"A silvery beam at even—
"Thy smiling presence is the ray
"To lead my steps to heaven."

XXIII.

He said, and eager turned him then
To gaze upon the maiden—
The brilliance of that fragrant glen,
With girlish graces laden—
The breezes fanned her golden hair,
And in that maple-alley,
She seemed the Spirit of the Fair—
The fairy of the valley!

XXIV.

"And dost thou love?" she murmured low,
"Or is it but illusion,
"Which, as the marsh-lights, quickly go
"To lead thee to confusion;
"Or art thou like the careless bee,
"In every bower ranging,
"Or is the troth you give to me
"Like Heaven's faith, unchanging?"

XXV.

Her dulcet tones rang in his ears,
And o'er his pulses stealing,
The liquid whisper of her fears
Awoke each tender feeling;
And drinking in her beauty bright,
He pledged his faith forever,
And in a tremor of delight,
Swore Fate should part them never!

XXVI.

And thus the summer glided on,
Their hearts in hopes united,
Nor dreamt they that a summer's sun
Would yet behold them blighted;
Nor dreamt they that a day should come
To separate them ever,
When he afar from her would roam,
And she from him would sever!

XXVII.

But let them dream, beside the stream,
Their hearts in rapture blending,
And let them dream, the holy beam,
Of love shall have no ending:
The future swiftly chills the hope
Which was life's primal blessing,
And ere its darksome portals ope,
Love is the soul's caressing!

XXVIII.

Full often gloomy shadows fall
Upon the trusting bosom,
And in their funereal pall
Enwrap life's promised blossom;

And still, the dreams of early prime
  Can never wholly perish,
But, clinging to the slopes of time,
  The loves of youth we cherish!

XXIX.

We march upon the track of years
  With solemn steps descending,
And in life's chalice, smiles and tears
  A mingled draught are blending;
And while the mundane cup we drain,
  We seek to grasp the vision
Which through the misty shades of pain,
  Flings shafts of light, elysian!

XXX.

O'er Chateau Richer's scented vale
  The harvest moon is beaming,
And sparkling through the wooded dale
  The fire-fly's lamp is gleaming!
The peasants gather at the hearth
  With simple song and story,
Within, the scene is Gallic mirth—
  Without, 'tis Lunar glory!

XXXI.

But far from that beloved vale
  Young Vivian now is hieing,
And intermingling with the gale,
  Is heard his spirit's sighing;
For cruel hands have smote his name,
  And cruel tongues have spoken,
And of the Past, he can but claim
  Sad Recollection's token!

XXXII.

No more within those fragrant bowers
His cadent fancies wingeth;
No more upon the happy hours
A gladsome light he flingeth,
For, Falsehood's cloud is on the scene,
And all his hopes have faded,
And where his spirit's trust had been
Is now by Treason shaded!

VIVIAN'S FIDELITY.

[SCENE: In camp, outside Quebec—Vivian muses of the past.]

XXXIII.

In the Winter gloaming, musing, star-streaks mingling in his hair,
Stands the lion-hearted Vivian, dreaming of his love so fair!

XXXIV.

Every shadow is a picture, quivering in the ruddy ray
Where the camp-fires fitful flicker in the dying Wintry day!

XXXV.

Hosts of earnest men are with him, men who hang upon his breath—
Strong to do and dare in honor—brave to follow him to death!

XXXVI.

But he dreams of naught save Anna: Anna false, but richly fair—
Anna of the love-lit glances: Anna of the golden hair!

XXXVII.

"Once she loved me," low he murmurs; O, how happy was I then,
"When my peerless one was near me, I was proudest amongst men!

XXXVIII.

"And when driven from my fairest"—'darling, must we, must we part,'
"Said she as I closer held her to my wounded, aching heart!

XXXIX.

"And you won't forget your Anna, and you'll truly faithful be,
"For I love you, dearest Vivian, and your love is life to me!'

XL.

"Then I kissed her lips of coral, then caressed her marble brow,
"And before the heavens I pledged her, all my truth with knightly vow!

XLI.

"Fateful moments since have speeded—fateful times of weary strife,
"And they tell me, she has left me, she, I loved more than my life!

XLII.

"Ah! 'tis bitter to one faithful, thus to see each bright hope die;
"All the future one great sorrow—all my trust a living lie!

XLIII.

"How I loved her, she can never know until that wondrous time,
"When we'll stand before the Judgment, in the mystic, Scriptured Clime!

XLIV.

"She will see the name I cherished, though it were no longer true,
"Gleaming on the heart I gave her—carved in forms of crimson hue—

XLV.

"Graven in my very live-blood—frosted o'er with manly tears,
"And will see her trust, 'be faithful,' well was kept throughout the years!"

XLVI.

Thus he muses, knightly Vivian, while the stars shine radiant down
On his nut-brown curls clustering, crowning love with truth's own crown!

XLVII.

In that Winter gloaming, musing, dreaming of his love so fair,
Decking e'er his soul's Ideal, with love's pearlets, rich and rare!

XLVIII.

False she may be—still he loves her, with affection's wealth untold,
Ah! the angels love the beauties of such spirits to unfold!

XLIX.

In the brightness of life's morning, all his truth he nobly vowed,
In the shadow of desertion, still his knightly truth he proved!

L.

In that Wintry gloaming, weeping, stood the Angel sad and lone,
He, who changed for fleeting human love, the glories of his throne!

LI.

And he whispered to the dreamer—"Is your trust upspringing yet,
"Go, go bathe in Lethe's waters: go, go, victim and forget!"

LII.

"Never! Never, while the stars shine—never while the planets roll
"Shall I dim the lustrous beauty of the mistress of my soul!"

LIII.

"Away tempter, to the changeling: know my love is firmly pure,
"E'en in cataracts of sorrow, know 'tis fated to endure!"

LIV.

In that Wintry gloaming, smiling, stood the Angel of his youth,
And he whispered—"Knightly Vivian! keep thus bright your spotless truth!"

LV.

Then a glory fell around him, like the fringes of the West,
When the blushing eve reposes on bright Phœbus' faithful breast!"

AT CARILLON.

[SCENE: Battle between the British and Franco-Irish troops—victory of the latter.]

LVI.

Six moons have shown upon the scene,
The winter suns have vanished,
The fields are clad in cloth of green,
The winter blasts are banished;

The purple violets have died,
  The streamlets, free, are singing,
And through the maples, branching wide,
  The summer birds are winging!

LVII.

The skies are blue—Canadian skies—
  Flushed in their summer splendor,
And in the vales the anthems rise
  Which summer's voices render;
And where the hillsides wept in spring
  The verdure fresh is growing,
And while the swollen rivers sing
  The summer sun is glowing!

LVIII.

Meet scene for peace—but foreign hands
  Athirst for conquest's glory,
Have come in eager, serried bands
  To plant their banner gory—
To plant the Red-Cross standard where
  The Lily-flag is streaming,
And through Canadian valleys, fair,
  Their spears are brightly gleaming!

LVIX.

'Tis June, as Abercrombie's gaze
  Falls on the Gallic hosting—
With patriot-fires their hearts ablaze,
  They know nor fear nor boasting—
And mid the liegemen brave who stand
  Beside the mighty river,
Is seen the crest of him whose hand
  In battle failed him never!

LX.

No longer musing darkly sad,
  Nor dreaming love-dreams tender,
But with the light of battle glad,
  He hails the battle's splendor!
The lines are drest in front and flank,
  And strong in self-reliance,
The hero, Vivian, leads the rank,
  Which bids the foe, defiance!

LXI.

On Carillon, with flashing brand,
  He lightly laughs at danger;
For Canada, his chosen land,
  He fights the English stranger!
He rides upon the battle-cloud,
  His brow with valor bright'ning,
And where the cannon rages loud,
  He sweeps, like sweep of lightning!

LXII.

The contest wanes! The flag of France
  In triumph still is streaming;
Exultant is De Gaspe's glance,
  And Montcalm's eye is beaming;
But in that victor-moment falls
  The bravest in the battle,
Yet—"On for Canada," he calls,
  High o'er the cannon's rattle!

LXIII.

They bore him from the gory field—
  And gentle was their tending—
Their tears upon his knightly shield
  With his life's current blending;

They sought the vale wherein she lived,
Who prized him as none other,
Deep was their grief—but, ah, she grieved—
His loved, adopted mother!

LXIV.

To her he came in early youth,
Far from his father's towers,
And in her heart, his knightly truth
Had built affection's bowers!
And now his knightly truth he proved
Upon the field of glory,
And in the land he earnest loved
His name shall live in story.

VIVIAN'S DEATH.

[SCENE: Vivian dying—speaks his last wishes and farewell to his adopted mother.]

LXV.

"And it is coming—Mother dear! good night!
"The hand of fate doth speed—a solemn hush
"Steals o'er my parting moments, while the light
"Of endless morning in life's sky doth blush!

LXVI.

"You have been very good and kind to me—
"My purest pleasure was to give you joy—
"Your praise to win—your matron smile to see—
"My chiefest pride to know you loved your boy.

LXVII.

"I have been wayward, and mayhap been wild,
"But wanton sin was ever strange to me—
"So, Mother, weep not o'er a guilty child—
"Beyond the azure skies I shall be free!

LXVIII.

"The sun is setting now, and with the sun
"My tides of earthly life shall ebb away—
"'Tis growing dark! good night! my work is done—
"Soon, soon, my soul will mirror heaven's ray!

LXIX.

"Yet friends, dear friends, assure me all is well,
"But anxious looks belie each kindly word;
"Another tale their meaning glances tell—
"They know my heart doth sheathe Death's piercing sword!

LXX.

"The flowers are sleeping now—the stilly night
"Is eloquent with voices from the Throne
"Which sweetly call me to the realms of light—
"What harmony doth linger in their tone?

LXXI.

"Now on my bosom place this tress of hair,
"And these few relics of my cherished girl—
"You knew, dear Mother, that my Anna fair,
"Was prized beyond the emerald or pearl!

LXXII.

"Ah, yes it comes! Perhaps 'tis for the best
"That I should hasten to those wondrous spheres,
"Where broken hearts are healed, and given rest,
"And kindly angels kiss away one's tears.

LXXIII.

"And I will tell her—she, whom nature's grace
"Designed should be to me a mother sweet,
"With what a wealth of love you filled her place—
"When in the shining halls of God we meet!

LXXIV.

"I have been wayward, but forgive me now,
"Death's presence pleads, and surely not in vain,
"Soon will the grasses hide this fevered brow,
"But oh, the rapture, when we meet again!

LXXV.

"I know my work is done! I've climbed the height
"Whereon Ambition plants the flag of Fame,
"And there, among the victors in the fight,
"Though least and humblest, I have carv'd my name

LXXVI.

"Not in the lordly halls, where senseless clods,
"In stupid riot, dull, unthinking, sway—
"Whose Luciferian madness hails them—gods—
"These things of purse-proud, lesser, baser clay!

LXXVII.

"But in the homes where live the patriot pure,
"My memory, I know will ever dwell—
"A beacon-light—it shall for aye endure,
"The patriot-path of honor bright to tell!

LXXVIII.

"On exiled hearts, by sorrows furrowed deep,
"I ever sought to pour a magic balm!
"And they will linger near me in my sleep,
"And o'er my corse entone the pleading psalm!

LXXIX.

"And tell her, when you see her—you know Who,
"I blessed her name with love in latest breath,
"With love immortal, firm, and pure and true—
"Unconquered love, e'en by the conqueror—Death

LXXX.

"'Tis coming fast! 'Tis coming fast! Good Night!
"The hour I long for so—the hour of light!
"E'en now my soul is eager for the flight!
"Kiss me, dear Mother! Now! Good Night! Good Night!"

LXXXI.

In Chateau Richer's icy vale
A *requiem* they're singing,
And louder than the winter gale,
The solemn bells are ringing;
From l'Ange Gardien, and Bonne Ste. Anne,
From Beauport, famed in story,
They gather, as of old, each clan,
Around the bier of glory!

LXXXII.

And from the purple hills he loved,
And from the glens he cherished,
From forest-glades wherein he roved
Before his beauty perished,
The mourners come with dewy eyes
Upon his fate to ponder—
To weep for him who lowly lies,
And of him grow the fonder!

LXXXIII.

To weep beside the early grave
Of him so strangely gifted,
Who, breasting Fortune's rudest wave,
High o'er its billows drifted—
Whose lips were touched by prophet-fire
To preach at Freedom's altar—
To rouse the fainting, and inspire
Them, ne'er to pause or falter!

LXXXIV.

To every noble purpose true,
His was the vision, splendid—
Which Heaven o'er his dreaming threw,
And in his spirit blended—
To gaze upon imagined bliss,
When man to man, a brother,
Should clasp the hand, and give the kiss
Of Peace to one another!

LXXXV.

When feud and faction far should flee,
And strifes of races vanish,
And Truth, triumphant, proud and free,
The ghouls of Hate should banish!
When grand, the glorious light should shine—
A new Transfiguration—
Of Him, whose glances are divine
On our Canadian nation!

LXXXVI.

Rest! Vivian, rest, at length is thine—
Thy fate to me be given,
To muse beneath Canadian pine,
Within the smiles of Heaven!
To walk the stainless path of God,
And gather Virtue's flowers,
Then, sleep beneath Canadian sod,
In Chateau Richer's bowers!

JAMES JOSEPH GAHAN.

QUEBEC, 31*st March*, 1880.

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kiss

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shine—

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GAHAN.