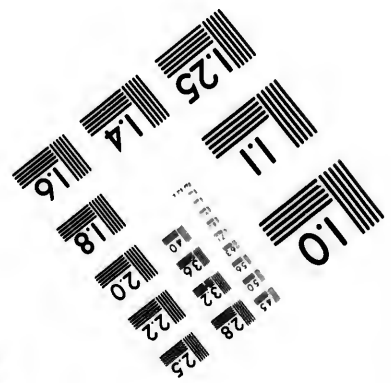
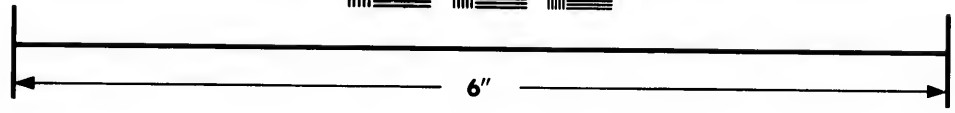
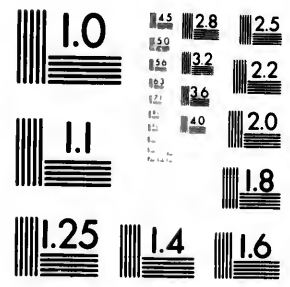


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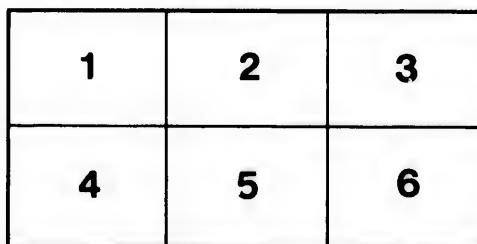
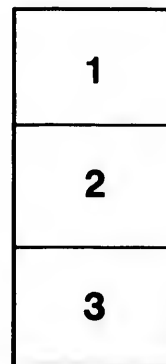
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No. 1

NEW DOMINION MONTHLY.

APRIL, 1871.

CANADIAN MATERIALS FOR HISTORY, POETRY, AND ROMANCE.

BY J. G. HOURINOT, AUTHOR OF "GENTLEMEN ADVENTURERS IN ACADIA," "WHAT HAPPENED AT BEAUVOIR ONE CHRISTMAS EVE," &c.

INTRODUCTION.

It is not necessary to go beyond our own country to find dramatic incidents which may give light and brilliancy to the pages of history, or evoke the genius of poetry and romance. Our history does not extend above two hundred years, and must, therefore, be wanting in many of those elements of absorbing interest which necessarily exist in the history of the communities of the Old World, where every foot of ground has its memorable associations—its record of human heroism and human suffering, to point many a moral and adorn many a tale. Where can we walk among the communities of ancient civilization without passing over the ruins of cities and fanes,—the innumerable relics of ages, of which historians and poets can never cease to speak, and the world will never weary to hear? Every ruined castle that rises by the Rhine recalls the mediæval times when every baron had his horde of retainers, and the masses groaned beneath a weight of oppression that was hard to bear. Those grand old cathedrals, like that which towers above quaint, ill-fated Strasbourg, which arose in those days when freedom, as we understand the term, was little known, testify to that spirit of devotion which was the sole redeeming trait of the middle ages. Wandering among the historic places of England, we come at last to a narrow strip of meadow on the banks of the Thames—apparently a tame, unpic-

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turesque spot; and yet this is Runnymede, where was won the first great charter of England's liberties, and the first step was taken towards that free, parliamentary system which is the exemplar of the most stable government that men have devised. Every valley, every mountain, every ruin, has its tale of legendary lore. Nowhere can we walk but we recall memories of a remarkable past.

One half the soil has walked the rest
In poets, heroes, martyrs, sages.

In comparison with such a history, that of Canada must be necessarily tame. The waving pines, the mountains towering into the sky until they are lost in the purple of distance, the wide expanse of lakes as large as the greatest countries of Europe, the foaming rapids and mighty falls that bar the progress of the river to the sea,—all the sublime features of Canadian scenery may charm the eye and elevate the thoughts; but, after all, it is in the record of heroic endeavor and suffering, of the struggle between antagonistic principles and systems, of human passion, frailty, and virtue, that the essence of history, romance, and poetry really exists.

SOME SALIENT FEATURES OF CANADIAN HISTORY.

It is in the early part of our history—during that era when the memorable struggle between the French and English for the dominion in America was carried on—that we find features of the most dramatic

character. The historian can contrast the essentially different principles that obtained in the early government of the French and British Colonies on this continent, and show the radical strength or weakness of each. In the New England settlements, we see men brought together in the first instance by the absorbing desire to enjoy religious freedom separate and apart from the Old World despotism. It is true that these men did not always yield to those dictates of Christian charity and liberality which their own bitter experience should have taught them to practise. No sadder record can be found than the history of the persecutions of the Quakers; but, nevertheless, stern and unyielding though they were, the pioneers carried with them across the ocean a knowledge of government and a desire for popular freedom, which, combined with their adherence to the principles of Christianity, gave them strength and vitality, and well-fitted them to be the founders of empires. The humblest dweller in a New England community, provided he was industrious and a member of the Church, had a share in the administration of local affairs, and never failed to claim his privilege. Men thus educated in the principles of self-government, were not likely to submit tamely to any vexatious regulations or imposts which might be passed by a government across the ocean, which, unhappily for the empire, had not in those days a wise appreciation of the value of colonies, or a correct knowledge of the best mode of administering their affairs. Therefore it is, the history of New England is a history of remonstrance against the arbitrary dictation of the Mother Country, and of constant reversal of all regulations which they had power to set aside.

But in the history of New France, we see a very different state of things. Commerce and religion first went hand in hand to reclaim the wilderness on the coast of the Atlantic, or on the banks of the St. Lawrence. By and by the French Government awoke to the importance of the vast domain which they claimed by virtue of the discoveries of Verrazani, Cartier and Champlain. French statesmen, long indifferent to the region of frost and ice

beyond the seas, then dreamed of establishing a mighty empire, which would dwarf all the kingdoms of the Old World; and, in pursuance of this idea, they formed a chain of forts at different points—on the Atlantic coast, by the St. Lawrence and the rivers of the far West, as well as on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico—which were intended to overawe the British Colonies, and assist the French in their project of gathering under the folds of the *feur de lis* the whole of this vast continent. The men who were to carry out this ambitious design were of undoubted courage and rare energy; and, if they failed at last in even preserving their country from the then hereditary foe of France, it was because they had to work against tremendous odds. The country, under such circumstances, was necessarily kept in a chronic condition of warfare, and had little opportunity for gathering strength. It was governed by the noninices of the French Government, which assisted or neglected it according to the whim or necessity of the hour; whilst the masses, unlike those of the British Colonies, had no share whatever in the administration of public affairs, though they were called on to give up their lives at the summons of the military chiefs of the colony. The result of such a system was necessarily a want of that unity and vitality that could alone give strength and stability to the political fabric in times of national difficulty. Yet, if the system of government was defective in many essentials, it gave birth to men whose zeal and courage, exhibited in the broader arena of European life, would have won for them a wider and more enduring fame than it was possible for them to attain amid the forests of America.

HISTORIC PLACES.

We, too, like the older communities of Europe, have our classic ground, on which the student may stand and recall a past rich in historic recollections. On the eastern shores of the Dominion, within sight of the Atlantic, we see the ruins of the American Dragoon, which, for many years, formed so important a part of the grand scheme of British domination in America. Grass now grows in the ruined ramparts

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which were levelled at the dictates of British policy; and the foundations of the massive churches and official residences of Louisbourg, are overgrown with weeds and wild flowers, while a few casemates stand out—grim objects in the expanse of green that conceals the site of the old town. When I last stood on this historic spot, not a sound disturbed the stillness that brooded over land and sea, except the cry of the sea-gull, and the only signs of active life were the fishing-boats, which were merrily dancing over the bosom of the noble harbor that spread out before my feet. Only a few grass-grown mounds now remained to tell of the ambitious projects of France, and of the days when the French soldier had talked with his comrade

“Of sallies and retiring, of trenches, tents,
Of palisades, frontiers, parapets;
Of basilisks, of cannon, culverin,
Of prisoners, ransoms, of soldiers slain,
And all the currents of heady fight.”

Then, at the mention of the name of Quebec, what a troop of illustrious men come before us!—each memorable for the part he played in the history of this continent. Of some, the ashes lie beneath Canadian soil; of others, in Westminster Abbey, or in some quiet graveyard in old France. Time has touched the ancient town but lightly. Its quaint churches, its walls and gates, the picturesque aspect of its surroundings, render it unique among American cities. It has none of that newness so characteristic of towns on this side of the ocean. It looks like some fortified city which has played its part in the old world's history, and been suddenly transferred to that grand promontory overlooking the St. Lawrence. Here Cartier fraternized with Donnacona—the first of Europeans who had ever seen that grand panorama of land and river; here Champlain laid the foundations of the Chateau St. Louis, and of that town which so long held the fortunes of New France; here Frontenac beat off Phipps with his powerful fleet, and presided over the destinies of Canada with a force and energy which few administrators ever exhibited before or after; here Bigot and his creatures gambled and dissipated the wealth which they had amassed by corruption and peculation, while the poor *habi-*

tans and dwellers in the towns were actually famishing for bread; here Montcalm and Wolfe met in the last struggle which ended the career of France in America, where her hopes and aspirations once ran so high.

Or leave Quebec and visit the Lake which bears the name of the illustrious founder of Quebec. Here are the ruins of Ticonderoga or Carillon—so named from the music of the rapids in the vicinity—which, like the ruins of Louisbourg, are overgrown with weeds and grass, though less than a hundred years ago this was the site of one of the strongest fortresses in America. Here, too, we recall a list of illustrious men,—Abercrombie, Amherst, and Montcalm. Here floated in turn the *fleur de lis* of France, the Red Cross of England, and the flag of the Continental Congress. In Quebec we still see all the evidences of a warlike era in the massive walls and gates, and the citadel frowning down on the waters of the St. Lawrence; but at Ticonderoga we see only a green acclivity and some grass-covered mounds, in place of the ramparts and bastions, and a few curious tourists, instead of the soldiers who once manned the fortress.

CHARACTERISTIC MEN.

Among the elements of the population of New France, we find not a few striking types of character. Adventurous explorers, brave soldiers, *preux chevaliers*, would stand out prominent figures in that historic picture which would represent the principal actors in the first era of Canada and Acadia. The very nature of the system of government was calculated to bring out striking traits of character among the residents of the country. Under the feudal system, even “Commerce wore the sword, decked itself with badges of nobility, aspired to forest seigniories and hordes of savage retainers.” In the most trying period of their country's history, these seigneurs exhibited an amount of manly fortitude and heroic daring that must attract the admiration of all who study the early annals of New France. In the long and hotly-contested conflict for the supremacy in America, the Canadian militia

displayed the most conspicuous bravery, which even won the encomiums of Montcalm and other officers of the regular troops, who were for some time by no means too favorably prepossessed in their favor. The trials and sufferings which the *habitans* so uncomplainingly endured during that trying crisis of their history, are on record; and we cannot but admire their constancy and fidelity to a government which never administered their affairs with too sagacious or loving a hand.

As we look down the vista of the past, we see one figure ever standing prominently in view. At the council board of his compatriots, at the camp-fire of the Indian, struggling through the depths of American forests where white men never passed before, daring in some frail canoe the perils of unknown waters, ready to encounter even death itself for the sake of his religion—we see the figure of the black-robed priest. The same indomitable spirit of religious enthusiasm that carried him with Cortez and Pizarro to Mexico and Peru, took him into the forests of North America, to become the friend and teacher of their savage denizens. Bancroft truly says that "religious enthusiasm not only colonized New England, but founded Montreal, made a conquest of the wilderness on the upper lakes, and explored the Mississippi. The influence of Calvin can be traced in every New England village; in Canada, the monuments of feudalism and the Catholic religion stand side by side; and the names of Montmorenci and Bourbon, of Levi and Condé, are mingled with memorials of St. Athanasius and Augustine, of St. Francis of Assisi, and Ignatius Loyola." History can tell of no more brilliant achievement than that performed by Marquette, who, in company with Joliet and some others, ventured into the depths of the illimitable West, and finally embarked on the Mississippi, which they traced to regions unvisited by white men since the days when De Soto, the Spaniard, had found a grave in the waters of the great river. A little stream still bears the name of that intrepid priest, for by its side he gently passed away, and a rude cross long marked the spot where the *voyageurs* made his grave.

Then what life more active, more adventurous than that of the *coueurs de bois* of the days of which I am speaking. At one time acting as war-scouts of the Indians; at another, trading for peltry through the valley of the Saskatchewan, or on the banks of the dark, mysterious Saguenay. Even yet, in the great West, on the confines of civilization, we see the descendants of these adventurous, reckless spirits—a light-hearted cheery class. Still we can see them paddling their canoes on the waters of the Rainy Lake, or the Red River of the West, and merrily keeping time to the measure of those old tunes which, centuries ago, awoke the echoes of the woody banks of the St. Lawrence and Ottawa's tide.

THE CANADIAN INDIANS.

Nor can the story of the misfortunes of the Indian tribes of Canada fail to excite our liveliest sympathies, despite the many cruelties and enormities which they were too ready to commit in their long contests with the whites. It is inexpressibly mournful to read of the gradual decay and ruin of a proud race which reigned supreme in their forest fastnesses till the European came. The tribes that inhabited the banks of the St. Lawrence appear to have possessed many qualities that ought to have reserved them for a happier fate than that which has befallen them. When Cartier visited the site of the present city of Montreal, he found there an Indian village of a more pretentious character than was generally seen among the Indian tribes of the North. Hochelaga consisted of about fifty wooden buildings, each divided into several rooms, and all of them surrounded by palisades made of trunks of trees set in a triple row. Within were galleries for the defenders, ladders to mount them, and magazines of stones to throw down on the heads of their assailants. In the centre of the village was a large square, where public demonstrations were usually made. The wars waged by Champlain and his successors proved the Indians to be possessed of considerable strategy and capacity for continuous warfare. The lives of Le Rat, Pontiac, Brandt, and Tecumseth, prove them to have possessed qualities which make successful generals and diplomatists

The great Huron chief, Le Rat, was called the "Demosthenes of the Woods," the "Machiavel of the Wilderness." "Never," says Garneau, "did any denizen of the American wilds evince greater genius, more valor, greater prudence, or a deeper knowledge of the human heart, than he did during his eventful career, in which his successes were constant, from the right adaptation of his means to effect any given end, and the inexhaustible resources of his mind in seasons of difficulty." The conflicts of the whites with this remarkable race—a race whose origin seems entirely lost in a cloudland of tradition and fable—form very exciting episodes in our early history, and afford abundant materials for romance.

GENTLEMEN ADVENTURERS.

But it is in the career of those "gentlemen adventurers" who sought fame and fortune in this then unknown world, that we find the elements of the most absorbing interest; and among these pioneers of civilization in Canada and the Great West, no name appears more conspicuous than that of Robert Cavalier, *Sieur de la Salle*. Of a noble family, thoroughly educated, possessed of great firmness of character, imbued with deep enthusiasm, and yet, withal, of a practical cast of mind, *La Salle* was a type of the best class of "gentlemen adventurers," to whom Canada owes so much. The tourist who stood on the shores of *Lachine* in September last, when so many thousands assembled to witness the memorable aquatic struggle between the oarsmen of the *Old World* and of the *New*, must have recalled the very different scene that was presented just two hundred years ago, when that part of *Lake St. Louis* obtained the name by which it is now best known. Here, in his forest seigniory, by the shores of that lovely *Lake*—so calm and still in comparison with the furious rapids that fret and fume below—*La Salle* matured his plan for unravelling the secret of the great river of which his Indian visitors so often told him. Like all the explorers of those times, when geographical science was only in course of development, he had his dream of finding a shorter route to the riches of the Chinese seas;

and, when he heard of this mysterious river flowing through an unknown wilderness, his sanguine mind immediately conceived the idea that he was at last on the point of making a discovery which would give him enduring fame. He lost no time in venturing into these strange Western regions, and braved innumerable perils that his might be the glory of solving the problem which was perplexing the master minds of his age; but if he did not succeed in achieving the great object of his adventurous voyages—a shorter route to China and Japan—he performed a work which places him among the foremost explorers of the world, and justly entitles him to be called "The Father of Colonization in the Great Central Valley of the West." After years of countless privations and difficulties, which must ever beset the path of the explorer, and which were vastly increased in those times when science could do little to assist the adventurer in comparison with what it can in this age of progress, he came to, that great river of which the Indians had told him so vaguely—

"Past the Ohio shore, and past the mouth of the
Wabash,
Into the golden stream of the broad and swift
Mississippi.
* * * * *
Day after day they glided down the turbulent river;
Night after night, by their blazing fires, encamped
on its borders;
Now through rushing chutes, among green islands,
where plume-like
Cotton trees nodded their shadowy crests, they
swept with the current,
Then emerged into broad lagoons, where silvery
sand-bars
Lay in the stream; and along the wimpling waves of
the margin,
Shining with snow-white plumes, large flocks of
pelicans waddcd."

What a memorable day was that in the history of this continent when *La Salle* added a vast domain to the realms of France! With what awe must they have looked on that wide expanse of water, which stretched as far as the eye could see, and looked so still and lonely, in the misty, dreamy atmosphere of the tropics! There stood that little band of pioneers—the advance guard of that mighty army of civilization which, in later times, was to reclaim that wide wilderness of swamp, and sand, and waving grass. Not a sail

whitened the Gulf; their only companions were the Indians, who stood in quiet contemplation of the strange proceedings of these white invaders of their forest homes, who shouting, *Vive le Roi*, and singing the grand hymns of their Liturgy, raised crosses and columns in token of the sovereignty of the Grand Monarch at Versailles. Of all that vast domain, stretching from the Alleghanies to the Rocky Mountains, from the Rio Grande to the remotest springs of Missouri, France no longer retains a single rood; the only evidences of her former supremacy are seen in the name of Louisiana, and in the remnant of people who, like the Acadian French, still cling to their language, their religion, and many of their old customs. From this momentous discovery, La Salle himself reaped no benefit; but in this respect he fared no worse than other explorers, even greater than he was,—for history has minutely described how he fell at the hands of the assassin amid the rank grass that covers the banks of the great river whose mysterious course he had unravelled. Among the many notable adventurers of whose exploits history tells us, no one surpasses him in courage and practical action. The story of his life, as it is told in the eloquent pages of the historian Parkman, surpasses in all the elements of interest the best conceived romance. “Never”—I quote from that historian—“under the impenetrable heart of paladin or crusader, beat a heart of more intrepid metal than within the stoic panoply that armed the breast of La Salle. To estimate aright the marvels of his patient fortitude, one must follow him on his track through the vast scene of his interminable journeyings, those thousands of weary miles of forest, marsh, and river, where, again and again, in the bitterness of baffled striving, the untiring pilgrim pushed onwards towards the goal which he was never to attain. America owes him an enduring memory; in this masculine figure cast in iron, she sees the heroic pioneer who guided her to the possession of her richest heritage.”

Or review the career of Henri de Tonty of the Iron Hand, and what material exists for a romance as attractive as Quentin

Durward! In his early youth he became a soldier, and won for himself a high reputation in the Sicilian wars; next, we find him the associate of La Salle in his perilous adventures among the forests and rivers of the West, until he reached the Gulf of Mexico; entrusted with the defence of Fort St. Louis, perched above the Illinois like a feudal keep above the Rhine, he faithfully fulfilled his duty; and even when he learned the news of the death of the man he had loved so well and served so truly, he would have perfected the work which that astute and courageous master mind had planned; and if he failed to relieve the little colony which La Salle had left on the dreary shores of that lonely Texan Bay, or to form new settlements by the mouth of the Mississippi, it was not through a want of capacity or courageous resolution, but because there seemed to be an adverse destiny opposed to the plans of all the bold men who had been the associates of the illustrious discoverer of Louisiana.

Among the early inhabitants of Acadia was one very extraordinary specimen of the class of which we are speaking. One of the captains of the celebrated De Carignan Regiment—distinguished for its services in Hungary in the war with the Turks—which came to New France during 1665, was the Baron de St. Castin, a Bernese by birth. When the regiment was disbanded and its men received favorable terms to induce them to settle in Canada, he established himself on the Richelieu; but he soon tired of his inactive life, and leaving his Canadian home settled at Pentagoët (Penobscot) amid the forests. Here he fraternized with the Abenakis and led the life of a robber chieftain, and his name was long a terror to the New England colonists. He married the daughter of an Indian chief, and so influential was he that, at his summons, all the tribes on the frontier between Acadia and New England would lift the hatchet and proceed on the war-path. His life at Pentagoët, for years, was very active and adventurous, as the annals of New England show. In 1781, happily for the British Colonists, he succeeded to a fortune in France, and thenceforth disappeared from American history. His son

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by his Abenaki baroness, then took command of his fort and savage retainers; in ferocity he far exceeded his father, and, after years of fierce contest with the New England colonists he was taken prisoner; but he escaped and returned to Europe, where he was just in time to succeed to his father's estate, the elder plate having at last ended his eventful life. Young St. Castin did not long remain content in Europe, but sought once more the Acadia land, where he vanishes, sword in hand, out of history. What prolific materials for the novelist exist in the lives of the gentleman adventurers of Acadia!

DISTINGUISHED FRENCH-CANADIANS.

In that era of which I am speaking—an era so full of dramatic interest—Canada gave birth to men whose names are memorable in the history of their country. Among the most famous was Lemoine d'Iberville, who was one of seven brothers, all of whom were men of note in their day. He belonged to the house of Longueuil—one of the oldest and most celebrated Canadian families—descended originally from a Count of Salagne en Biscaye and Margaret de Tremouille, daughter of the Count des Guines, who was also Grand Chambellan of France, and one of the noblest families in the kingdom. The services of Lemoine d'Iberville are eloquently summarized by Bancroft in these words:—

“Present, as a volunteer, in the midnight attack upon Schenectady, where he was chiefly remembered for an act of clemency; at Port Nelson, calm amidst the crash of icebergs, in which his vessels had become involved, and though exceedingly moved by the loss of his young brother in a skirmish with the English, yet, with marvellous firmness, preserving his countenance without a sign of disquiet—putting his whole trust in God—and, with tranquil daring, making a conquest of the fort which controls the vast Indian commerce of the wide regions of Nelson River; the captor of Pemaquid; the successful invader of the English possessions in Newfoundland; and again in 1697, in spite of icebergs and a shipwreck, victorious in naval contests on the gloomy waters of Hudson Bay, and recognized as the most skilful naval officer in the service of France.”

But Americans best remember him as the colonizer of that Louisiana which La Salle handed over to France. New Orleans was

founded by his brother, the Sieur de Bienville. Milwaukee and Galveston were both founded by Canadians. The first who crossed the continent was Franchère, a French-Canadian, and the founder of Astoria. Viscount de Lery, who was born at Quebec in the middle of the eighteenth century, was one of the most eminent military engineers of the day, and aided the first Napoleon most materially.

But the genius of Pitt at last prevailed, and the fall of Louisbourg, followed by that of Quebec, led to the acquisition of Canada by the British. Now a century and more has passed since the French of Canada came under the dominion of England, and time has removed national asperities, and intimately bound the Anglo-Saxon and Gallic elements together by ties of mutual interest and fraternal feeling. Englishmen cannot forget how largely the Norman-French element enters into the composition of their race. Perhaps it will be with us in the course of time, as it has been with England—

“As the varying tints unite
They'll form in heaven's light
One arch of peace.”

SINCE THE CONQUEST OF CANADA.

The war of 1812 brought out conspicuously the patriotic sentiments of the inhabitants of Canada, and it is not too much to say that had it not been for the energetic efforts of the Canadians in assisting the British troops to resist the approach of the invading army of the great republic on those borders, this country could never have been saved to England. Full justice has never yet been done to Canada for her loyalty and devotion during that trying crisis. The history of that war has as yet to be written from the Canadian point of view, and when that duty has been performed by some faithful hand, the record will be one of which not only the British speaking population will be proud, but the French-Canadians as well, for theirs is the memory of the memorable day at Chateauguay when De Salaberry and his compatriots gave an unequivocal response to those Americans who had been aspersing their loyalty. Since that time our history has been wanting in the elements

of dramatic interest; it has had no episodes of stirring import, except the fruitless rebellion from 1836-7 which after all was little more than a faction fight in some Irish county. Our history for the past half century has been the record of material progress: the forest has echoed to the axe, and where the tall dark-green pine and spruce stood less than fifty years ago, now towns and cities arise and speak more eloquently than mere words of the achievements of the people. The lives of the owners of this noble domain, so lately reclaimed from the forest, may be less adventurous than those of the pioneers and explorers of whose exploits I have told you, but the results are of no insignificant character, as we may see when we look over the face of this Dominion and recognize all the evidences of its wealth and prosperity, as well as intellectual progress. Of the material condition of Canada, it is beyond the purpose of this paper to speak; but here I may now consider what we have done in the way of availing ourselves of the materials we possess for the creation of a Canadian literature.

OUR INTELLECTUAL PROGRESS.

So far British America has not produced very many men of great eminence in the pursuit of literature whose reputation has extended beyond the limits of the Dominion itself. In comparatively new countries like the Provinces, the men of action have chiefly been called into requisition. Forests must be cut down, cities must be built, the land and sea must pay their tribute to industry, before men have the leisure or ability to give attention to letters and the arts. Our life is so busy that few of us can give much time and contemplation to subjects of a purely literary character; and then the rewards which men can receive from commercial and industrial pursuits are so great and manifold in a country like this, only yet in the early stage of its development, that the class of professed men of letters, leaving out of the question the conductors of the periodical press, is necessarily very limited, and confined to persons of the learned professions. It is only when communities are rich and prosperous, when they have attained a certain age, that they

can expect to have a literature, in the extended sense of the term. When we look around us, and see the evidences of material and intellectual progress throughout Canada, we cannot but feel encouraged to believe that the time is fast approaching when our people will stimulate the genius of their own country, and we shall have a class of professed men of letters in the Dominion. British Americans have been engaged for the past hundred years in building up their country. They have raised the framework of a noble edifice, and now they should add a column here and a column there, and otherwise complete it, so that it will be pleasing to the eye and creditable to the builders. A man who settles in the midst of the forest is quite content for a while with the hut which he has hastily constructed out of the materials around him; but when years have passed by, and he has amassed wealth, when he has thousands of acres of rich corn-fields to show as the results of his energy and industry, his ambition is stimulated, and he builds a new residence and furnishes it in a style commensurate with his improved circumstances. So it should be with us in British America. We have surmounted our early difficulties, and built up for ourselves a country of whose wealth and vitality we have every reason to be proud; and now the time has come when we should improve our surroundings and cultivate the arts that refine and adorn.

AMERICAN LITERATURE.

A century ago the people of the United States, like ourselves, were without a literature of their own. Then they had as much as they could do to build up houses for themselves and future generations. Years passed by, the United States became a mighty nation; men of wealth and leisure increased in number, and the country gradually had a literature of its own. Cooper devoted his brilliant pen to a description of the struggles and difficulties of the early pioneers in the American wilderness, and gave to the world romances which have been read wherever the English language is spoken. Washington Irving wrote volumes which proved how deeply he had drunk from "the well of English

undefiled," and entitled him to be called the American Addison. Hawthorne unearthed the mysteries of New England life; at his command the stern old Puritans awoke to life and persecuted the Quakers and all who differed from them with infinite zest. Bancroft, Prescott, and Motley stand in the foremost rank of modern historians. Wheaton's work on International Law is a leading authority among all nations, and has even been translated into Chinese. Longfellow has written many exquisite poems, and is preferred by many to Tennyson. Bryant has culled choice flowers of poetry from the forests and the scenery of his native land. Whittier, the Quaker poet, has written poems which are remarkable for their exquisite simplicity. James Russell Lowell and Wendell Holmes are the foremost wits of their day. The names of Power, Hosmer, Church, and Bierstadt, show the love of the people for the highest class of art. So we see, when a people are imbued with national aspirations, when they have achieved national greatness, when they have attained wealth and affluence, they will have a literature of their own.

CANADIAN LITERARY EFFORTS.

I have already, in the previous part of my remarks, shown you that abundant materials exist in the history of the Provinces for the production of history, poetry, and romance. The struggles of the colonial pioneers, their contests with the forest tribes, their indomitable courage amid what seemed at times unsurmountable obstacles, the fierce contests between the French and British for the supremacy in British America, the various steps in the progress of the provinces—all these form fruitful subjects for a vigorous pen. Longfellow has shown us in his "Evangeline" what rich materials there are around us for the man or woman imbued with the poetic and imaginative faculty. Street's poem of "Frontenac" is less widely known; but it is, nevertheless, a purely Canadian poem, replete with a fine poetic flow, redolent of forest life, and showing a perfect appreciation of our rich scenery. Parkman, in his series of histories, from which I have quoted more than

once, shows that a Canadian history need not be a dry collection of facts, or a dreary political treatise. British America, however, has not produced many historians whose works are calculated to attract the general reader, who finds pleasure in the pages of Macaulay, Froude, or Motley. The best history is, undoubtedly, that of the late M. Garneau; but it is wanting in spirit, and does not give that insight into the inner life of the Canadians that we would wish to have in a work of this character. Scattered throughout the poems of Sangster, Reade, Ryan, Sulte and others, are several pieces of undoubted merit; but their works are hardly known beyond Ontario and Quebec. Among our public men, too, many of whom have won high distinction in the press, Mr. Howe has written several poems and delivered several addresses which are of no ordinary merit, and cause us to regret that he has not given more time to literary pursuits.

The late Major Richardson, a native of Ontario, has written several entertaining romances connected with Canadian history, which were very generally read in their day, but are now almost forgotten. "Sam Slick" has given us a series of sketches, which, although at times descending into gross caricature, abound in touches of veritable humor, which even the Yankees and Nova Scotians, against whom it is so often directed, are the first to appreciate. Mr. Heavysse, of Montreal, is the author of a dramatic production entitled "Saul," which has been styled by British critics "one of the most remarkable English poems ever written out of Great Britain." Mr. Heavysse's genius appears more adapted to the drama and poetry than to romance, judging from a novel named "The Advocate," which was published during 1865, and has fallen almost stillborn from the press. Professor de Mille, of Halifax, has published several novels of a decidedly sensational character,—indeed, in the "Cryptogram" and "Cord and Creese," published by Harper Brothers, incident follows incident with such startling rapidity that even that joint stock production of Bourcicault and Reade's, "Foul Play," sinks into insignificance; but Mr. de Mille hardly does himself justice in

throwing off these ephemeral novels; for in his two first works, "Helena's Household—A Tale of Rome in the First Century," and "The Dodge Club in Italy," he gave many fine touches of wit and pathos, which are entirely wanting in his latest productions. M. Lemoine, of Quebec, in his "Maple Leaves," gives us many pleasing illustrations of Canadian scenery and character, and is aptly styled the "Old Mortality" of the section of country where he resides. A great Canadian novel, however, has not yet appeared—that is to say, one which has its readers outside of the Dominion, although no one can doubt that there are abundant materials in the past history, as well as in the social characteristics of the several communities of British America, for romances full of originality and interest. In the department of Biography, Mr. Fennings Taylor has published "Sketches of British Americans," and the "Three Last Bishops Appointed by the Crown in Canada," written in a stately, polished style which has many admirers. Mr. Alpheus Todd has given us a work on Constitutional Government which entitles him to rank only below Hallam and May. Mr. John Foster Kirk, a native of Fredericton, formerly the Secretary of Prescott, is the author of a History of Charles the Bold of Hungary, which, although not equal to the works of his great prototype, shows that he wields a vigorous pen, and is likely to occupy a prominent position among the eminent historians of these times. In the department of science, British America has produced several eminent names; and foremost among these stands Dr. Dawson, a native of Nova Scotia, who has contributed a volume on the Geology of Acadia, besides many treatises on his favorite study, which entitle him to a conspicuous place among the *savans* of the century. Dr. Daniel Wilson, one of the adopted sons of Canada, has written a work on Pre-historic Man, and a Life of Chatterton, which prove him to be a writer of much thought and research. Sir William Logan has contributed much valuable information respecting the geological attributes of Canada. Besides these, there are several others who have contributed to the periodical literature of

the day, and have written works of no mean order of merit; but I pass them by and content myself with referring you to that very interesting compilation by Mr. Morgan, the *Bibliotheca Canadiana*, which will give the reader a very accurate idea of our literary progress. But I must not forget to speak of the highly creditable efforts of the French-speaking portion of our population to create a national literature. In history, poetry, and romance, they make a very fair exhibit, and our English writers would do well to study their literary productions, and imitate their spirit and the love of everything Canadian they show throughout. There is a noble history, and it would be strange, indeed, if they did not avail themselves of the rich materials they possess for a French-Canadian literature.

THE CANADIAN PRESS, AND ITS DUTIES.

Towards the creation of a literary taste in the Dominion, the press can do a great deal. No fact, indeed, gives a better evidence of our intellectual progress than the rapid stride that has been taken of late years by the press in all the essentials of excellence. Many of the most eminent public men of Canada have been connected with the press there, and so it must be necessarily in a country like this, enjoying free representative institutions, where public journals necessarily wield a large influence. It is clear that the press of the Provinces must steadily advance with the material and intellectual progress of the country, and gradually exhibit the characteristics of its best English contemporaries. At present, the newspaper forms the chief reading of our busy people. There are about four hundred public journals published in the Dominion, and of these at least thirty-two appear six times a week. If we look at the Post Office statistics we find that last year, at least (in round numbers) twenty-four millions of newspapers passed through the post-offices of the Provinces, or six papers for every man, woman, and child in the Dominion, and these figures, it will be remembered, do not take into the account the many papers sold in book and periodical stores. Of this large number, we may estimate that about two-thirds are domestic, and

the remainder American and British. These facts show forcibly how important is the influence that the press exercises in the Provinces. The editor has a very responsible work to do in British America, and when he performs it with a full consciousness of the power and responsibility of his calling, he richly merits the thanks of his fellow-citizens.

NECESSITY OF ACCUMULATING LITERARY MATERIAL.

In all the Provinces a great deal of matter connected with their history is scattered about and at present inaccessible to the student, and it is time steps were taken to preserve these valuable materials to posterity. In the United States a great deal has been done to collect and compile all the documents referring to the early history of the different States of the Union. In Canada, something has been attempted in the same direction, but a great deal yet remains to be done in this respect. In Nova Scotia, a commission, some years ago, collected and bound up in volumes a great quantity of valuable archives which were moulding in the cellars of the Provincial Building, and very recently Mr. Akins, the gentleman entrusted with the work, has issued, at the expense of the Province, a volume containing the most important and interesting documents. Windsor College, the oldest collegiate seat of learning in the Dominion, has offered prizes, during some years, for the best history of each county in the Province, and in this way a great many facts within the memory of the oldest inhabitants are collated in a convenient form. A very useful work has also been performed, in the course of years, by the Quebec Literary and Historical Society, who have preserved many important documents from oblivion, and very materially lightened the labor of the writer on Canadian topics.

MENTAL SELF-RELIANCE ONE OF THE CONDITIONS OF POLITICAL UNION.

We are now entering on a new era in the history of British America. The first era ended with the cession of Canada to Great Britain, in the latter part of the eighteenth century; the second with the union of the Provinces, in 1867. Hitherto

in these Provinces there has not been a very strong love of country. It is true their people take a commendable pride in the history of the parent state; they feel that, as citizens of the British Empire, they are associated with the honors which its eminent sons have won for it in the past and are winning for it in the present. British Americans cherish as fondly the achievements of the great men of England—her warriors, her statesmen, her writers—as the people in pleasant Kent or Devon. Whilst it is but right and natural that they should entertain these sentiments with respect to the parent state, yet they should not forget, at the same time, that they have a country of their own with which they are immediately connected, and which has a history of its own. It is a commendable trait of the people of the United States that even in their very educational system—in the text-books of their schools and colleges—all that the pen can do is done to stimulate the patriotism of the youth of the country. In British America, however, little or nothing has yet been done to excite similar feelings for the country with which we are immediately identified. The history of the several countries constituting British America has been very little read by our people. No doubt the isolated state of the different colonies has had a great deal to do with the absence of patriotic feeling; but we must see a change in the course of time when the Dominion is firmly established, and its people have forgotten their sectional prejudices, and commenced to feel that they are citizens of one great community, possessed of a history replete with the evidences of true heroism—with associations of the most romantic and dramatic character. With a free and enlightened press, with colleges and schools of a high order in every section, with a generous, high-spirited, and patriotic people, proud of their origin and confident of their future, British America enters on her new era under most hopeful auspices. None of us, however, must forget that, without a high condition of intellectual culture, no community can ever become truly great. "Regarding the Dominion as an incipient nation," said Mr. McGee, who did so much in his time towards fostering a native litera-

ture, removing sectional animosities and laying the foundations of a new northern empire; "I consider that our mental self-reliance is an essential condition of our political independence. I do not mean a state of public mind puffed up in small things—an exaggerated opinion of ourselves and a barbarian depreciation of foreigners—a controversial state of mind, or a merely imitative, apish civilization. I mean a mental condition, thoughtful and true; national in its preferences, but catholic in its sympathies; gravitating onward, not outward; ready to learn from every other people, on one sole condition—that the lesson when learned has been worth acquiring. In short, we should desire to see our new national character distinguished by a manly modesty as much as by mental independence; by the conscientious exercise of the critical faculties as well as by the zeal of the enquirer."

"Knowledge is power," is an oft-quoted aphorism which cannot be too deeply studied by the young men of the Dominion just starting into vigorous life. True intellect must always rule, and leave its impress upon all ages and peoples. The works of Homer, of Virgil, of Dante, of Milton, of Cervantes, have delighted generations in the past as they must continue to delight the world in the future. A few years ago, the world witnessed a spectacle such as it had never seen before. On the borders of the St. Lawrence and the great Lakes, in the cities of the American Republic, on the

banks of the St. John, on the island continent of Australasia, throughout Great Britain and her vast Empire, wherever the English language is spoken, men assembled to pay the tribute of their homage to a man who, while he lived, was poor and obscure. He had not added an inch of land to his country; he was only a poor Scottish laborer; at times a weak and erring man; but he gave to Scotland some poems of such exquisite pathos and genial humor that the world has always recognized in them the inspirations of true genius. At a later time, and in the same countries, men again held "high festival" in honor of another son of genius, who, like the Scottish ploughman, was of humble origin. In his day he was only a play-actor, but he left, as a heritage to England, some dramas which, for their knowledge of human nature, for their humor and pathos, for their sagacious maxims, for their delineation of passion, have never been equalled by any writer of ancient or modern times. Such is the tribute that the world is certain, sooner or later, to pay to its true benefactors and sons of genius. The great men of whom Shakespeare wrote, nearly three hundred years ago, are best remembered now by the dramas where he portrays their follies, their weaknesses, and their crimes. The kings and chieftains of the native land of Burns are almost forgotten, while deep in the hearts of his countrymen, all the world over, are imprinted the poems of that poor Scottish peasant.

CHARITAS EXCELSIOR!

BY REV. A. STEWART DES BRISAY.

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not clarity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal."—1 Cor. xiii. 1.

Ye glorious powers of human speech,
Whose fame around the earth doth reach;
My lips your mighty magic teach;

And I will sing what poets sung,
When the world's ages yet were young—
The enchantment of the glowing tongue,

The nameless witchery of the hour,
The thrill transfixing the heart's core,
When language doth her treasures pour.

But hark! from yon bright heavenly sphere,
Falling in music on my ear,
Accents more silvery do I hear.

It is the voice of angel song,
Strains which the rapt seraph throng,
Around the throne of God prolong.

And yet, ye wizard tongues of men,
Swift as the ready writer's pen,
A mightier power than you I ken.

And yet, ye angel voices high,
Rolling your music through the sky,
A sweeter note than yours know I.

Without it, all your notes were vain,
It is of Love Divine the strain,
Struck on this sinful earth again!

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