

LITERATURE.

THE CANADAS IN 1841: By SIR RICHARD BONNYCASTLE, Lieutenant-Colonel, Royal Engineers, and Lieutenant-Colonel in the Militia of Upper Canada.

They were now approaching the St. Lawrence, when they saw a phenomenon which it would have been well worth the voyage and all its perils to see. "About two in the morning, the mate suddenly roused all the sleepers in their hammocks, by calling loudly for the master to come on deck, as he observed a most unusual appearance on the lee-bow. The weather had been cold, but there was a clear starry firmament, when in a moment the heavens became overcast to the southward, and an instantaneous and intensely brilliant light, resembling a fiery aurora, shot out of the sea, and readed every thing minutely discernible, even to the masthead. The mate and his watch immediately put the helm down, calling up the whole crew, and awakened the captain; but before this was accomplished, the light had spread more vividly than ever over the whole sea, and the waves, hitherto tranquil, became much agitated, while thick dark clouds from the land seemed to threaten dreadful weather. The spectacle continued to increase in beauty. The whole sea, as far as could be seen, was at length one entire sheet of an awfully brilliant flame, above which shone along the base of the high, frowning, and dark land abreast of them, a long and magnificent line of fire.

"The fish, plentiful in these latitudes and of a large size, seemed alarmed; long, tortuous, darting lines of light, in a contrary direction to the sea, showed immense numbers of large fish, flying about as if they were lost. The wind, which had increased a little, had a peculiar hollow sound; and, after a length of time passed in contemplating this splendid and extraordinary scene, the day broke slowly, the sun rising very fiery and gloomily.

"To sail on a sea of fire," the writer observes, "is the only similitude I can fancy to this really awful scene. I have frequently seen the waters of the ocean on fire, as it is vulgarly termed; but seen only in small masses, and no more to be compared to what we there witnessed, than a November day when the sun passes murky through the fog of England, is to the bright and glorious appearance of that luminary on a fine day in the tropics. The oldest sailor in our vessel had never witnessed anything bearing even a distant resemblance to it, except the master, who asserted that he had once seen something very like it somewhere in the Trades. The brilliancy of the light may be conceived, when I say, that the spritsail-yard and mizen-boom were lit by the reflection as if they had gas lights suspended to them; and before the day broke, at four o'clock, I could see the most minute objects on the face of my watch. This appearance came first from the north-west, and there had been a slight aurora about eleven o'clock."

We envy the writer of such an exhibition.—Its beauty must have been of the most surprising order. But we wish that he had examined his philosophical instruments during its continuance; we should like to know especially what effect it had upon any magnetic apparatus, or if he had nothing of the kind in his possession—which we can scarcely suppose in the provision of an engineer officer sent out to inspect public works at the present time. The phenomenon was probably magnetic, in fact, an aurora making its theatre of the ocean, instead of dazzling us from the skies.

At length came the pilot, and all was security and eagerness for shore. But another fine display was still in reserve for them. The northern latitudes certainly seem rich in brilliant developments of the upper regions. They had a sunset which excited the attention of all on board. First, there was a double sun by reflection, each equally distinct. Afterwards, when the orb descended a certain depth, a solid body of light, equal in breadth with the sun, but of great length from the shore, shot down on the sea, and remained like a broad golden column, or bar, until the black high land hid the luminary itself. This occurred near Cape Demon. On the opposite shore all was dull, the clouds being half-way down the lower mountains of the coast.

They had now got into the St. Lawrence, and were able to enjoy life free from the terrors of the voyage, the noblest expanse of the finest river in North America, and scenery of remarkable diversity and grandeur. In the spirit of good humour with everything round him, the Colonel pays a debt of gratitude to his dinner. "At our first anchorage," says he "our dinner consisted of preserved turkey, preserved soup and bouilli, and new potatoes which had been kept in earth. These vegetables we had every day, as well as preserved milk for tea and breakfast, and our Thames water had always proved good."

The traveller may well congratulate himself on the ingenuity of modern invention, which thus supplies him with fresh provisions in traversing the ocean. A voyage from China may now be made with a dinner supplied every day which would not disgrace the London tavern. As the vessel advanced up the river, the features of the Canadian shore loomed out to greater advantage. Passing the Falls of Montmorency, one of the most beautiful of cascades, though not one of the grandest in a country which boasts of Niagara, they reached the great basin of the St. Lawrence, "a road capable of containing any navy that ever swam." Here they were surrounded with the picturesque. The lofty promontory of Cape Diamond rose before them, the rich and large island of Orleans lay astern, the bold mountains of Canada were on the right, and Point Levi on the left. As they pressed towards the shore of Point Levi, they saw a group which reminded them that they had reached the new world of the West. An Indian encampment was seen in the woods near the beach, their night fires were expiring, and a man and woman were pacing about before their canoes, evidently watching them. The writer here drops in a little sentimentality, at which we are surprised in a man of his sense. He tells us that to the poor creatures seem to have been pushed back into the lonely cove of the woods, by the arrogant intruders on their soil. But, without venturing to defend the conduct of the Yankees, whose principles and practice seem to be generally regulated by his purse, we have dwelt away, the work is their own. It is disease and intemperance that have thinned the Indian numbers. Wherever the British Government could reconcile them to a life of peace and industry, they have been protected and provided for; their original life was a life of bloodshed and famine, and the happiest of all changes for savagery is civilization—but there are wretched beggars in all countries, and the wretched Indian who sells everything for rum, must make up his mind to dwell in the cove of the woods, or where he can.

From the anchorage at the King's Wharf, the city of Quebec opens on the view, and the whole scene was singularly imposing. Towering over the mast-head rose Cape Diamond, three hundred and twenty feet above the river, its summit crowned and its brow surrounded with powerful fortifications. Further to the right, along the water's edge, extends the Lower city, surmounted by the Upper. The style of building, as well as the situation, renders Quebec a picturesque object. The assemblage of numerous spires, coated with tin, glittering like silver in the sun; the strong stone dwellings, mixed with painted wooden houses, hanging, as it were, on the face of a precipice; the military works, which look impregnable; the lofty watch-tower, from which signals were continually making; the workmen busy on bastions, high above the mast-head, gave a land view strikingly combined with that afforded by the bright bosom of the mighty river. There lay a sixty-four gun ship, bearing the Admiral's flag, the long line of merchantmen, steamboats darting in all directions, boats of every kind sailing or rowing, and to complete the picture by a characteristic of the country, the birch canoe of the Indian paddling along. But there is another species of boat used here, which might be well adopted in England wherever the heavy expense of the steamer was a consideration. This is a team-boat with paddle wheels, moved by four horses, treading in a circle in the centre of the waist. It appears to answer the helm perfectly well, and to be a popular mode of conveyance—the passengers are probably glad to find a vessel in which they can neither be blown up, nor burnt; but its powers are limited—it wants the mighty strength that makes the steam-boat a floating palace marching the rapids and the ocean.

Quebec in the Lower town, shows its French origin at first sight. High stone houses, with long folding windows, of a substantial but an unfinished appearance; narrow streets, very far from clean; but little display of shop windows, and no great outward signs of business, mark this portion of the city. Several steep flights of steps, which must be very awkward and dangerous in the winter, lead to the Upper town, where wider streets, kept in rather better order, a better style of building and more apparent comfort prevail.

At the distance of about half a mile from the city is a spot hallowed to English recollections—the field on which the gallant General Wolfe conquered Canada—the heights of Abraham. It is a sort of plain, much broken, covering the centre of a jagged ridge. The cove where, under the face of an apparently impassable series of rocks, piled above each other, he effected his landing before day-break on the 13th of September, 1759, is an object of great interest to the traveller; but there is some difficulty in finding it without a guide. The Colonel, in the true spirit of one who honours the memory of a hero, suggests that the ground should be made public property, and that a monument should be raised to the memory of the conqueror and his brave companions. He tells us that even the stone which was put to mark the spot where Wolfe fell, has been removed by the owner of the ground; and that the reason of this miserable act was, "to prevent the curious from intruding on his premises." No doubt the Joe Hume breed is to be found among the pedlars of Canada, as well as, unhappily, among ourselves; and its patriotic parsimony would raise an outcry against any honour to talent and bravery which threatened to cost its pocket half a farthing. Still ones, and we fully hope that the British Government will adopt the suggestion. "This hallowed earth," says the spirited writer, "should never have passed into private hands. The public of a land where freedom is not a name, claim it for their own. There should have been reared the 'starry-pointing pyramid,' which, by the hand of Lord Dalhousie, has been placed at the Chateau gate."

As an engineer, the Colonel's opinion on the fortifications has a peculiar value; and we are gratified at hearing that when the city, in addition to the works which had already made it famous among the fortresses of the second order, shall have those which are contemplated, it will be one of the strongest places of the kind in the world; and that, on the whole, "it presents an excellent study of an irregular fortress to the military eye." Those we regard as good tidings; for we know that, within even the last ten years, serious apprehensions were entertained by military men of its insecurity, in case an unexpected rush were made in force from the American side. Forty or fifty thousand men, headed by a good officer, and conducted by any of those clever French artificers and engineers who were then flocking to America, might formidably try the strength of the fortress by a coup-de-main. That no American force could take Quebec, if prepared for a siege, we fully believe; but its importance is incalculable; and we shall be glad to feel assured that it is made strong enough to resist, at any notice, both the disaffection which radicalism has sowed within Lower Canada, and the rancorous and unprincipled hostility which the perpetual craving of the United States for every thing that belongs to others nurtures beyond the frontier. The garrison at present is strong—it usually consists of two Regiments of the Line, two Companies of Artillery, and two of Sappers and Miners. Besides these, there are at all times immediately available, a fine corps of Militia Cavalry, and two Battalions of Infantry, with a proportion of Artillery; so that the place is now never inadequately garrisoned.—The fixed population of the city is about 18,000. The latitude is 46 deg. 50 sec.

EDINBURGH REVIEW—AUTHORSHIP OF THE LETTERS OF JUNIUS.

The last number of this celebrated periodical contains an admirable article, extended to nearly one hundred pages, on a work recently published by the Rev. Mr. Gleig, entitled "Memoirs of the life of Warren Hastings, first Governor General of Bengal." At the very outset, the reviewer pounces on the biographer in the following terms, and throughout lashes him very severely for glossing over acts highly equivocal, if not immoral, which a reverend should have been the last man to wink at:—"This book seems to have been manufactured in pursuance of a contract, by which the representatives of Warren Hastings, on the one part, bound themselves to furnish papers, and Mr. Gleig, on the other hand, bound himself to furnish praise. It is but just to say, that the covenants on both sides have been most faithfully kept; and the result is before us in three big bad volumes, full of undigested correspondence and undiscerning panegyric."

For years previous to his mission to India, our sagacious critic, whom we take to be no other than Mr. Macaulay, one of the representatives of the city of Edinburgh, contributed many splendid articles to the Edinburgh Review. Some of these, as we well remember—such as the splendid essay on the Genius of Milton—were characterized by very high eloquence, while the style or ge-

neral structure of the sentences was by far too ornate, if not meretricious. Of this the author seems to be himself aware, and now labours after what some would call greater simplicity of diction, and others the maximum of matter in the minimum of space. Any one who compares Johnson's Rambler or Rasselas with the Lives of the Poets; or Campbell's Pleasures of Hope with Gertrude of Wyoming, cannot fail to be struck, as far as style goes, with the change that had come over the dream of the authors. The florid occasionally enters into composition as well as Gothic architecture; and into the most authors of the right sort, as they advance in experience, acquire a marked fondness for Grecian simplicity. The triads which were so much quizzed in the Rambler, stately and noble as the prosody is, found no place in the Lives of Savage, Dryden and Pope; and hence, perhaps, the remark of Moore:—"It is a curious illustration of the labour which simplicity requires, that the Rambler, Johnson, elaborate as they appear, were written with ease, and seldom required revision; while the simple language of Rousseau, which appears to come flowing from the heart, was the slow production of painful labour, pausing on every word and balancing every sentence."

In introducing the name of Philip Francis, as the ablest of the Indian Commissioners, whose appointment exercised such influence over the fortunes of Warren Hastings, Mr. Macaulay gives the following reasons for believing him to be the real Simon Pure, touching the most celebrated letters that were perhaps ever penned:—"It is scarcely possible to mention this eminent man without adverting for a moment to the question which his name suggests at once to every mind. Was he the author of the Letters of Junius? Our own firm belief is, that he was.—The external evidence is, we think, as follows:—The external evidence is, in a crucial case as would support a verdict in a civil, nay, in a criminal proceeding. The handwriting of Junius is the very peculiar handwriting of Francis, slightly disguised. As to the position, pursuits, and connexions of Junius, the following are the most important facts which can be considered as clearly proved: first, that he was acquainted with the technical forms of the secretary of state's office; secondly, that he was intimately acquainted with the business of the war-office; thirdly, that he, during the year 1770, attended debates in the House of Lords, and took notes of speeches of Lord Chatham;—

fourthly, that he bitterly resented the appointment of Mr. Chamier to the place of deputy secretary at war; fifthly, that he was bound by some strong tie to the Lord Holland. Now, Francis passed some years in the secretary of state's office. He was subsequently chief clerk of the war-office. He repeatedly mentioned that he had himself, in 1770, heard speeches of Lord Chatham: and some of those speeches were actually printed from his notes. He resigned his clerkship at the war-office from resentment at the appointment of Mr. Chamier. It was by Lord Holland that he was introduced into the public service. Now, here are five marks, all of which ought to be found in Junius. They are all five found in Francis. We do not believe that more than two of them can be found in any other person whatever. If this arrangement does not settle the question, there is an end of all reasoning on circumstantial evidence.

The internal evidence seems to us to point the same way. The style of Francis bears a strong resemblance to that of Junius; nor are we disposed to admit, what is generally taken for granted, that the acknowledged communications of Francis are very decidedly inferior to the anonymous letters. The argument from style, at all events, is one which may be urged with at least equal force against every claimant that has ever been mentioned, with the single exception of Burke, who certainly was not Junius. And what conclusion, after all, can be drawn from mere inferiority? Every writer must produce his best work; and the interval between his best work and his second best work may be very wide indeed. Nobody will say that the best letters of Junius are more decidedly superior to the acknowledged works of Francis, than three or four of Corneille's tragedies to the rest; than three or four of Ben Jonson's comedies to the rest; than the Pilgrim's Progress to the other works of Bunyan; than Don Quixote to the other works of Cervantes. Nay, it is certain that the man in the mask, whoever he may have been, was a most unequal writer. To go no further than the letters which bear the signature of Junius;—the letter to the king, and the letters to Horne Tooke, have little in common except the asperity; and asperity was an ingredient seldom wanting either in the writings or in the speeches of Francis.

Indeed, one of the strongest reasons for believing that Francis was Junius, is the moral resemblance between the two men. It is not difficult, from the letters which, under various signatures, are known to have been written by Junius, and from his dealings with Woodfall and others, to form a tolerably correct notion of his character. He was clearly a man not destitute of real patriotism and magnanimity—a man whose vices were not of a sordid kind. But he must also have been a man in the highest degree arrogant and insolent, a man prone to malevolence, and prone to the error of mistaking his malevolence for public virtue. "Doest thou well to be angry?" was the question asked of old of the Hebrew prophet. And he answered, "I do well." This was evidently the temper of Junius; and to this cause we attribute the savage cruelty which disgraces several of his letters. No man is so merciless as he, who, under a strong self delusion, confounds his antipathies with his duties. It may be added, that Junius, though allied with the democratic party by common enemies, was the very opposite of a democratic politician. While attacking individuals with a ferocity which perpetually violated all the laws of literary warfare, he regarded the most defective parts of old institutions with a respect amounting to pedantry; pleaded the cause of Old Sarum with fervour, and contemptuously told the capitalists of Manchester and Leeds, that, if they wanted votes, they might buy land and become freeholders of Lancashire and Yorkshire. All this, we believe, might stand, with scarcely any change, for a character of Philip Francis.

It is not strange that the great anonymous writer should have been willing at that time to leave the country which had been so powerfully stirred by his eloquence. Every thing had gone against him. That party which he clearly preferred to every other, the party of George Grenville, had been scattered by the death of its chief; and Lord Suffolk had led the greater portion of it over to the ministerial benches. The ferment produced by the Middlesex election had gone down. Every faction must have been alike an object of aversion to Junius. His opinion of domestic affairs separated him from the ministry; his opinions on colonial affairs from the opposition. Under such circumstances he had thrown down his pen in misanthropic despair. His farewell letter to Woodfall bears date the 19th January, 1773. In that letter, he declared that he must be an idiot to

write again: that he had meant well by the cause and the public; that both were given up; that there was not a man who would act steadily together on any question. But it is all 'alike,' he added, 'vile and contemptible. You have never flinched that I know of; and I shall always rejoice to hear of your prosperity.' These were the last words of Junius. In a year from that time, Philip Francis was on his voyage to Bengal."

In a review of Allison's History of Europe, in Blackwood's Magazine for November, the writer, after alluding to the enormous military establishments kept up by the several powers of Europe, holds the following strong language on the subject of the great debts accumulating, to crush the industrious classes. The following are the remarks to which we have alluded:

"So enormous an amount of non-productive force, wholly employed in expenditure, and, unlike the merchant or the labourer, returning nothing to the country, must press heavily on all productive strength. Thus, every country of Europe is accumulating debt, every one is anticipating its means, and the result must be convulsion, sooner or later, but inevitable. In foreign countries, the unprincipled nature of their transactions, the unprincipled nature of their bankruptcies, and the ruin of all kinds will make bankruptcy a refuge. But bankruptcy is ruin so far as it goes—it is the ruin of individuals, and its repetition will spread the ruin to the state. England has unquestionably sustained a weight of debt astonishing to all who were ignorant of the resources hidden in freedom."

"But, while every country of the continent would long since have been crushed into powder by the mere pressure of a tenth part of our national debt, that debt is the great calamity of England; the great source of those perpetual discontents which show the distempered state of the frame; the secret of that strange and desolate poverty which, in one of the most fertile and lovely countries of the world, often places the free peasant of England below the comforts of the foreign slave; the fount of those unquenched subterranean fires which burst up in Chartism and Socialism, and the hundred other wild and ominous threateners of general evil. To what conclusion this formidable future may come, baffles all conjecture. But to diminish the public debt of England should be the grand object of every man who deserves to govern the country, and to suffer its increase should be rewarded with the scaffold. It is substantial high treason to the empire."

SIR WALTER SCOTT'S ADVICE TO HIS SON CHARLES.—"I cannot too much impress upon your mind, that labour is the condition which God has imposed on us in every station in life. There is nothing worth having that can be had without it, from the bread which the peasant wins with the sweat of his brow to the sports by which the rich man must get rid of his ennui. The only difference betwixt them is, that a poor man labours to get a dinner to his appetite, the rich man to get an appetite to his dinner. As for knowledge, it can no more be planted in the human mind without labour, than a field of wheat can be produced without the previous use of the plough. There is, indeed, this great difference, that chance or circumstances may so cause it, that another shall reap what the farmer sows; but no man can be deprived, whether by accident or misfortune, of the fruits of his studies; and the liberal and extended acquisitions of knowledge which he makes are all for his own use. Labour, my dear boy, therefore, and improve your mind. In youth our steps are light, and our minds ductile, and knowledge is easily laid up. But if we neglect our Spring, our Summer will be useless and contemptible, our Harvest will be chaff, and the Winter of old age unrespected and desolate."

LABOUR THE LOT OF ALL.—First of all we behold the husbandman, whose hands are hardened and his back bowed down with holding the plough; in the spring of the year the sun when it rises finds him at his labour, and in the harvest, when the sun is gone down, he is wetted with the dew of heaven. While he is labouring upon the ground, others are condemned to a harder sort of labour underneath it, digging out the bowels of the earth, and exposed to the danger either of its falling in upon them, and burying them in its ruins; or to the deadly effects of poisonous steams and combustible vapours. A considerable part of mankind are employed in works of heat, and their brow is sweating on a double account, from the labour of their craft and the violence of fire. The sea swarms with men who "go down to it in ships, and occupy their business in great waters." When the stormy wind ariseth, they are carried up to heaven, and down again into the deep, while their soul is melting within them because of the trouble. And many thousands more in all nations of the earth expose themselves to the dangers of war, and are driven by a strange necessity to support their lives at the hazard of losing them. Those who are exempt from labours of the body, are exercised in various ways, with other labours of the mind and understanding; and people of the highest stations, who are blessed with affluence and splendour, must bestow some thought and pains in overseeing their affairs, that they may preserve the plenty God has given them, and must sometimes taste of that care and anxiety, too, which is the necessary consequence of providing for a numerous family. And if we look back to the original of their wealth and honour, we come at length to some laborious ancestor whose life was spent in arms, in merchandise, or in some of the learned professions. But supposing, after all, there is no difficulty in acquiring, yet how much is there frequently in using, the bread which God hath so freely bestowed. How many people are troubled all their lives with infirm and critical constitutions, which bring them into a perpetual state of fearfulness and restraint, and who therefore cannot, with any degree of comfort, partake of that plenty which the bountiful hand of Providence hath poured out before them. Thus are all places and all professions witnesses to the trouble and sorrow of man, nor is any station in life altogether exempt from that care and labour which is annexed as a penalty upon his abode in this world; and the necessity of bread to the support of this mortal life, is plainly the cause and source of it all.—Rev. W. Jones, of Nayland.

REJUVENATED ALMANACS.—A correspondent of the Philadelphia Ledger notices, as a matter of interest as well as curiosity, the fact that the almanac for 1842 is like the whole of the almanac for the year 1785; that is to say: the days of the months fall again in the same days of the weeks, also the movable Feasts, &c. &c., so that those who have yet an old one of 1785 need none for 1842, except for the changes of the weather; and as these are not calculated by the same person for the two different years, of course they may not be alike.