

A Lay Sermon.

THE PAST—ITS WRECKS AND RUINS.

Text: *And the signs of their greatness are sunk in decay.*

Ah! dark are the halls where our ancestors revelled,
And mute is the harp that enlivened the day;
The towers that they dwell in are awfully levelled,
And the signs of their greatness are sunk in decay.

My Hearer—it gives a melancholy shade to the brow of Retrospection for her to wander amid the ruins of the past. She there sees how human greatness has become levelled with the dust—how pride, glory, and earthly pomp, have had their fall never more to rise—how oxygenised has become the anchor of hope, and how worthless are the dry tones of Ambition's once mettled steed. The halls where our ancestors once revelled in mirth, gaiety and joy are now as dark as the tomb—as dreary as the valley of death—as deserted as a hornet's nest in winter, and as silent as the catacombs of Egypt. The mansions in which they dwell are buried, like those of Herculaneum and Pompeii, in the ashes and lava of oblivion; and, as the once beautiful cities of Tyre, Sidon and Babylon became suddenly overspread with the wild weeds of desolation so the dark wing of oblivion in an instant, as it were, over shadowed the sunny landscape of life and left them to sleep in the midnight gloom of forgetfulness. Of the links that compose our ancestral chain memory can count but one or two at the farthest; all beyond which is a more matter of history, tradition, or speculation.

My friends—when with the scythe of meditation we attempt to mow in the broad meadow of the past, and find how Time has tangled up the grass with his long legs, and trodden down lovely blossoms beneath his extensive bog trotters, we grow sick of the idea, and instinctively turn our attention to the flowery fields of the present. It hangs icicles upon the heart to wander among the tombs of our fathers, and think how the worms have held banquets in their bosoms till nought but a dish of dry dust remains. Can this be all, we ask, that is left of man when the electric principle of life has ceased to operate on his moral machinery? Echo answers—"All!" Yes, my friends, the most beautiful and refined lumps of mortality, when tried in the crucible of Death, turn out to be nothing more nor less than mere dross. How little do we suspect that we are guilty of cannibalism while partaking of the vegetable productions of the earth! With our daily food we eat the flesh of our kindred; the dust of the dead affords nourishment for the living; and the best of plum pudding is but a mixture composed of pulverized bugs, reptiles, worms, brutes, and mortals! The spade of the grave digger covers man with the ashes of his ancestors, and the time is yet to come when the dust of our now animated bodies will be sprinkled in particles upon the coffins of our great great great great grand children.

My dear friends—the halls where our ancestors revelled are dark indeed. We feel sad and lonely in visiting them, but can hardly realize that their old inmates are gone to return no more; that their joys are ended; the music of their voices has ceased for ever; and that the monuments of their greatness, now fast falling to decay, must soon lie broken and buried in the oblivious dust. We seek for them, but they are not to be found; we call, but they answer not; for the reason that they are sleeping the sleep that knows no waking on their cold sepulchral beds, where neither bugs molest nor mosquitoes trouble. They have given their bodies to the earth; their soul back into the hands of their Creator, and left the record of their good deeds for prosperity to praise and protect by word, but abuse and mutilate by action.

My hearers—in the lapse of a few years you will have drawn the brittle thread of life to so fine a texture that old age and infirmity will suddenly snap it asunder. Then your children's grand children may enter your deserted mansions, and find them dark and desolate. They may go and knock at the door of your tombs till your lists are sore, but you will hear them not. It will require something more than mortal rap to arouse you from your everlasting slumbers. You will sleep sweetly on, undisturbed by the earthquakes and thunder of a jarring world, till the day of general rising; when, like caterpillars, suddenly changed to butterflies, you will come forth in a new and beautiful garb, and soar upon spiritual pinions to the realms of immortality. Though your sublimary dwellings become dreary, and the feet of after generations tread carelessly upon your graves, still if you have done your whole duty to your fellow man, and the women especially, you will certainly be remembered by Him, who protecteth the sparrow and listeneth to the young raven's cry.

My hearers—if you would not be wholly forgotten by posterity, you must love morality more and money less; you must mix more piety with your politics, and more fervency with your prayers. You must try to raise your mortal selves to the skies without pulling angels from off their roosts; and, above all, have an especial regard for truth and integrity. When you have climbed the steep precipice of wealth or fame, extend a willing hand to help others up, instead of a foot to assist them down. Do as well as you know how, but don't try to do any better; and no matter if gloom at last, does fill your earthly residences—your celestial homes will be brilliantly lighted with the gas of glory for ever and ever. So mote it be!

DISTRICT OF GASPE

[We are indebted to the Quebec Gazette for the following interesting and pleasing intelligence from the district of Gaspé, a quarter of the Globe from which but little of what is doing in its locality, finds its way to the public Journals.]

A person of the city, recently from a tour to the Gaspé District, reports that the summer fisheries in the Bay of Gaspé, at Percé, and along the coast to Point Mackarel, at the entrance of Bay des Chaleurs, have been good, but that the fall fisheries for the want of bait, have been a failure. In Bay Chaleurs they are represented to have altogether failed from the outset of the season. The whalers have been tolerably successful, those at least who have fished in the neighbourhood of Gaspé—one or two who had gone to the North and Newfoundland had not yet returned, and their luck there is not yet known. The hay and grain crops are abundant throughout: and potatoes looked well. The people, however, generally complain of the want of Mills to manufacture their grain, now produced in sufficient abundance, especially in Bay Chaleurs, to subsist, it is said, the inhabitants, who generally seem satisfied and thankful to Providence. The country bears every where the appearance of industry and thrift. They who without labouring trust merely on Providence, necessarily must fall behind hard, but those there, who do labour and go a-head faster, it is believed, than in any other part of Canada. The new Judiciary has gone into operation and the Court of Queen's Bench been held at Percé, during the last ten days of August, and at New Carlisle from the 4th to the 13th September inclusively, Mr Justice Bedard presiding, who has given much satisfaction to the inhabitants. The Court wore, it is admitted on all hands, a very different aspect from what it formerly did. Happily, there was little or nothing to do in the Court, but the proceedings before it, few as they were, were conducted with decency and decorum, and nothing of the insolent vociferation, brow beating, and disrespect towards the Court, as displayed under the old regime, manifested—all was calm, decent and respectful this time. The new system is however not yet perfect, but time and experience will contribute to make it more and more so. In the meantime, if the people have little to do in the Court, they are at least satisfied, that, in so far as the Superior Court is concerned the machinery will work "comme il faut,"—honestly. The petty Court (£20 causes), owing to a blunder in the law, is not yet at work, and will remain so until legislative provision is made to set it going. The blunder, may be, all for the better. The people, are represented, as well inclined to the "Gaspé Fishery Company," and in good spirits at the prospect which the Act recently passed in its favor by the Imperial Parliament affords of its going into operation next summer.

The new road from Percé to the Mission at Restigouche, and thence through the Metis on the St. Lawrence (commonly called the Metis or Kempt road) is now done, as far as the sum (£15,000 stg.) voted by the Legislature in 1841 would allow, but the road remains to be extended from Percé to the Basin at Gaspé, the principal sea port in the county, and thence along the North side of Gaspé Bay to its entrance, without which the work will be incomplete. Lord Sydenham (from what motive must have been best known to himself and his tools) purposely omitted from his estimate laid before the Assembly, any provision for the opening of a road (36 miles more or less) connecting Percé and the Basin, and thus left, to punish the people, as it were, for some unknown offence, that part unaided which of the whole District of Gaspé most of all needed legislative aid for the opening up of its communications. This narrow and paltry policy has however since, to a certain extent, been superseded, and measures taken towards opening this important communication, which will most probably soon be realized after the approaching Session—the Board of Works having caused the whole line to be explored with a view to its accomplishment. This, the inhabitants understand, is due to the liberal spirit of the Chairman, Mr Killaly, who on learning the injustice done them promptly took steps to redress it.

The road, as now made, affords a free communication perfectly practicable for wheel conveyances, carriages, the whole distance from Percé to Quebec, passing from the former place westward along the Gulf shore, to Bay Chaleurs and following the north shore thereof, about 150 miles more or less from Percé, to the head of the tide, and navigable waters of the Restigouche, whence it turns off to Metis, 96 miles, over an uninhabited country, all susceptible, however, of cultivation, and which will be settled at an early period, if the Government does not prevent it by holding up the lands on the northern section of the Metis road, at a higher rate than on the southern. There still remain, however, to be made, several important bridges between Percé and Restigouche, without which the line of road can never be deemed complete. These are, over the Grande Rivière—Grand Pabos—Port Daniel—Bonaventure—Great Caspédia and Little Caspédia, as well as over the Metis and Rismouriski Rivers. Such bridges as have been made are of very good construction. There will also be between Percé and the Basin, the Matby River and the St. Jean at Douglastown, and one or two considerable streams on the north side of Gaspé Bay. To effect the whole another grant not less than £15,000 will be necessary. This sum it is supposed will suffice to put the whole line of road from Gaspé Basin to Metis, (230 miles) in good order. The

old Road from Percé to Grande Rivière will also require repairing, having been left untouched as originally made by the inhabitants owing to the sum at the disposal of the Board of Works not being sufficient for the necessary repairs to it, which may require £500 or a bout.

The whole work has been done by small contracts, and, owing to the great competition, at such very low rates, that the contractors can scarcely have made wages, and in most cases must have lost considerably but for the judicious arrangements made by Mr A. T. Russell, the Chief Superintendent of the Works, to enable them to procure the necessary supplies and at a moderate rate, by which also a considerable saving in favor of the public has been made.

That part of the road from Grand River to Port Daniel (25 miles more or less) is now excellent and very creditable to Mr William Macdonald, under whose direction it was made. The line from La Nouvelle (Carleton) to the Mission, about the same distance, done under Mr Russell's own direction, is also new and excellently done. The Bridges over the Assamiquan—the big brook—the Cansapscul, and Metapédia are all first rate. The Government ought to encourage settlers at those bridges to look after them, and to prevent accidents from fires, or they will run the risk of being burnt down, and the whole line of road thereby rendered useless. Mr Noble, some years ago [1838], settled at the Cansapscul Fork, the site of the present bridge, in the expectation of an allowance of £25 a year, formerly held out to any settlers who might set themselves down on that and other points of the Kempt road, as granted to Mr Brochu for settling at the head of Lake Metapédia, but has hitherto been disappointed. Mr Noble, like his neighbour Mr Brochu, has on several occasions been of great service to travellers, and in some instances been the means of saving lives which, without his aid, must have perished. In the scrambling for office and official plunder, which of late years has engrossed the attention of the "great men" in Parliament, it is but natural that such poor devils as he, and others like him in the woods, should be overlooked and forgotten. Some of them may however, if by any accident they travel that way, particularly in the winter, be very glad to find a hospitable reception and warm fire, side in the comfortable home he has cut out for himself in the woods. It is to be hoped Mr Noble will yet get £25 a year, and arrears from 1838. He thinks he would, if it could be brought under His Excellency's own notice, but is advised that he cannot rely on Mr Provincial Secretary's promise, being too busy in helping himself while the Treasury is open to him, to think of others.

On the whole, the work done is creditable to the Board of Works, and particularly so to its officers, entrusted with that service, Mr Russell and his assistant Mr Sims, with the latter of whom, in examining and receiving the several jobs off the hands of the Contractors along the line of road from Restigouche to Metis, the reporter of the above, had the advantage of travelling through the whole distance, in a voiture, with two horses, making three easy journeys of it, over a country, three years ago, scarcely passable by the most expert bush ranging Indian, now every inch of it open, for settlement, and all fit for agriculture. Here and in the vast tracts east and west of it is room for thousands—a country fertile in soil, well watered and enjoying a healthful climate. Our informant observes, that without putting the country to any additional expense, the parings of one year only from the overgrown salaries of Messieurs the Secretaries alone, would not only pay off poor Noble's arrears, but afford five or six times £25 a year, to defray the salaries of as many Bridge keepers, and to keep the entire road free of windfalls for 5 or 6 years to come.

European News.

From British Papers to the 19th September, received by the Britannia Steamer.

Letters from Alexandria of the 30th ult. state that Mehemet Ali had entirely recovered from his late indisposition, and resumed his usual serenity. The Pasha was preparing a new expedition against Abyssinia, and was anxious to avail himself of the rise of the Nile, which had reached twenty cubits, to send troops in that direction. Several detachments of regular and irregular soldiers had already proceeded thither from Cairo. Mehemet Ali had hitherto been deterred from undertaking that expedition by the fear of England, and, on his recent return to Alexandria, when he announced his intention to the European representatives, he said, "I have long contemplated to give a good lesson to the Abyssinians, to punish them for their frequent inroads on the territory of Ateche, but the consuls of England always thwarted my project." Mehemet Ali having shown himself to all the European envoys, and convinced them that he was both sound of body and mind, left on the 30th for the garden of Moharem Bay, and after spending a few days in that residence, he was to set out for the provinces and Cairo.

Triumphal Entry of General Nott into

Carmarthen.—Carmarthen, Sept. 12.—Yesterday being the day appointed for the public entry of Major General Sir William Nott into Carmarthen, the town in which his early years were spent, all was bustle and excitement. The "hum of preparation" was heard on all sides, and the greatest activity was displayed in decorating the fronts of the houses with garlands, hanging garlands and wreaths across the streets, &c. All wore the aspect of a public festival of no common importance. About a quarter past one the general's carriage came in sight, and on its reaching the procession, the Recorder proceeded to read a congratulatory address, to which the gallant general, who was visibly affected, replied briefly. Amid the cheering of all around, the horses were unharnessed from the general's carriage, and about twenty men in their shirt sleeves, decorated with green ribbons, proceeded to draw the carriage towards the town. The general recognized many old friends in the eager crowd, and on one of the soldiers of the 41st Foot calling out "Welcome home, general," Sir William requested him to draw near the carriage, and shook hands with him. Altogether the affair passed off with the greatest eclat. On his arrival at the residence of his brother, George Nott, Esq., the procession left him, and the general retired to quietness and solitude. It is understood that the dinner and grand banquet is to be given in about a week.

Mr Nasmyth versus Captain Warner.—We understand from good authority, that Mr Nasmyth, engineer, of Manchester, has submitted to the consideration of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, the plan of an iron steamer, bomb-proof, which will effectually destroy any ship or squadron. She is propelled by the Archimedian screw, and, when going at the rate of six knots an hour, she will run stem on to a ship, and leave a hole in her many feet wide, below the surface. It is, in fact, the power of two ships coming in collision with each other at the rate of ten knots an hour, placed, by mechanical means, in the hands of not more than three men. We understand that this invention is now under their lordship's consideration, and there can be no doubt but it will place Captain Warner's invention at a discount.

Prohibition of the Exportation of Grain from Poland.—The Emperor Nicholas, according to the Journal du Commerce d'Anvers, has prohibited the exportation of grain from Poland, the motive assigned for the measure being that the late harvest has proved very bad, and that a large proportion of it has been submerged by the inundations of the Vistula. It has occurred in former years, that France and Belgium, in consequence of defective corn crops, have acted upon the same precautionary policy. Both kingdoms have interdicted the exportation of grain, and the period is not very remote when the Russian government not only forbade the exportation of grain from their own ports, but actually authorized the payment of a premium on the quantities imported.

In the late population reports, the number of Church of England clergymen is returned for England at 13,574. A large French steamer, one of Prince Joinville's squadron, ran on shore in a thick fog, somewhere near Larache, and was abandoned by the officers and crew, who first set fire to her, and then made their escape in the boats.

Stock Exchange Gambling at Berlin.—The Universal German Gazette states that gambling on the stock exchange at Berlin had caused so many bankrupts, that the bank has ceased discounting bills entirely, so that the rate of discount has risen to 10 per cent.

A poor workman, of Altona, has recently come into possession of a fortune of £1,500,000, by the death of his brother, who died lately, at Demerara.

A clerk in the Bank of England, and another in the Customs, have obtained a fraudulent transfer of £8,000 consols with which they have absconded.

United States News.

New York Journal of Commerce.

Storm in New York.—The equinoctial storm set in on Saturday morning 28th September. The wind commenced blowing on Saturday night about 6 o'clock from NNE., and continued to blow a gale until 12 o'clock yesterday, when it shifted to NW., the gale increasing in violence. The rain fell continually during the whole time. The wind made sad havoc with trees and awnings. Five large trees were blown down on the Battery; one of the largest in the Bowling Green was snapped off the trunk just above the ground; and in the Park one at