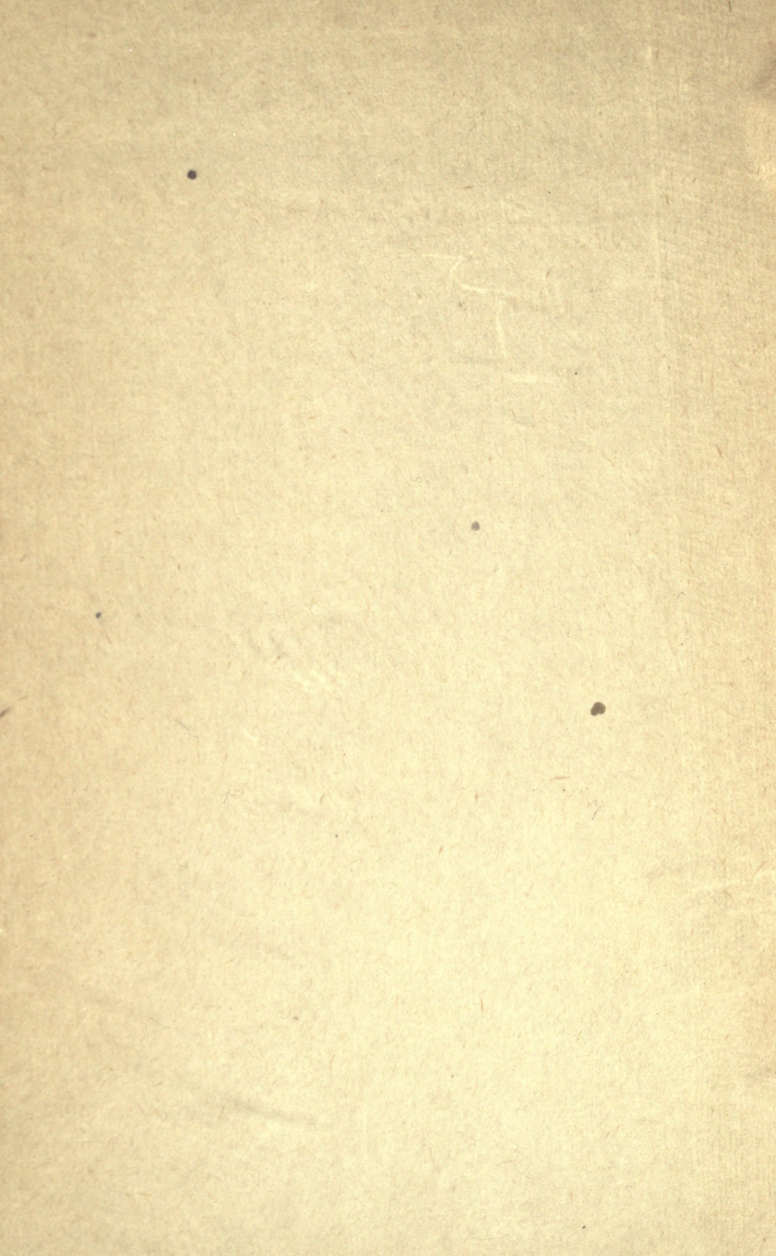


IN THE HEART OF  
OLD CANADA  
WILLIAM WOOD



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Waxley

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IN THE HEART OF OLD CANADA





IN THE HEART OF  
OLD CANADA

BY  
WILLIAM WOOD



WILLIAM BRIGGS  
TORONTO

1913

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IN THE HEART OF  
OLD CANADA

WILLIAM WOOD

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WILLIAM WOOD  
TORONTO  
1913



TO  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
THE EARL GREY

G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF CANADA FOR SEVEN YEARS

AND FRIEND FOR LIFE

THE EARLY YEARS

THE EARLY YEARS OF THE

THE EARLY YEARS OF THE

## PREFACE

A COUNTRY, like a man, is a triunion of body, soul and spirit.

Everyone knows Canada as a giant body for all the world to wonder at. But how many know her as the home of an infinitely greater soul and spirit, the inspiration of all who heed her best appeal?

This is her age of exploitation; and most ears are deafened to everything else by the ceaseless roar of her clamorous statistics. The higher call is only heard at large during some rare interlude between the acts of the drama of dollars and cents. And yet this higher call is the one essential element that can make any human drama really live.

“Business is business” is an excellent definition of a most excellent thing. And, using the word “business” to cover every form of honest money-making, the definition becomes still better by reason of its implications. We can no more exist without business than we can without food. Business is always and everywhere indispensable for every people and, to a greater or less extent, for every individual man, woman and child in the world. Moreover, it supplies the necessary material basis for all higher things. So I have nothing whatever to say against business here, although I



look at the life of our country from quite a different point of view. On the contrary, I am always ready to cry "business is business" with the best of them. But I do this because I believe that business is really business, pure and simple—the root of existence, not the flower of life.

The flower of life is Service—the service of God in Religion, and the service of Man in Statesmanship, War and the Intellectual Life. Service is greater than business, immeasurably greater; for it is the soul and spirit of life, not the mere body of existence. But it is mainly done on behalf of business people, who naturally form the bulk of mankind. It is sometimes done by them; and then they deserve greater credit, other things being equal, than people habitually engaged in service, because they must first rise above their business, while service itself exalts its devotees. Besides, there are kinds of applied business which rise into service by virtue of their application. So it is quite plain that service and business are as intimately correlated in human affairs as mind and body are in the individual man.

This may seem an absurdly trite and obvious point to argue in a preface; little more than a formal way of saying that it takes all sorts to make a world. But the point is worth some elaboration, since devotion to any kind of service, and especially to the intellectual life, is thought a poor "business proposition" in a generation so materialized as to think one sort alone—and that a purely commercial sort—will make any world worth having. Our people are apt to forget what they owe to the sword and the cross, and what they may still owe to

the pen and the brush. And they are equally apt to be heedless of the fact, and resent it when brought to their notice, that the service of genius is the only thing that ever has or ever can make any people great.

Most of them think a whole nation can live on business alone and that it can buy service like any other "goods." But every people forms a body corporate of all the human faculties; and the health of this body depends on the due exercise of all its vital organs. There is evolution by atrophy downwards as well as upwards. And disuse of our higher organs will assuredly bring the Nemesis of reversion to a lower type. Business is the food and stomach, service the head and heart. We cannot exist without the one, nor live without the other. If Canada was to be lost to-morrow, what inspiring memory of her would remain the day after? Not her material wealth, natural and acquired: material wealth is nothing, except in so far as it forms part of things above and beyond itself. Not her millionaires: only two names are known for their mere riches—Cræsus, who, like some other men to-day, thinking that victory could be bought, was defeated and slain; and Midas, who turned everything he touched to gold, and was the King of Asses too. Not even the most wonderful inventors of commercially applied science would remain: they never do and never can: the original and creative works of pure science alone remain: one Darwin, one Newton will outlive a world of Edisons. But the heroes, saints and statesmen would most certainly remain: Jacques Cartier and Champlain; Laval and La Mère Marie

de l'Incarnation ; Frontenac, Montcalm, Wolfe, Carleton and Brock ; the Fathers of Confederation ; the South African Contingents ; and the one great national work of art we have as yet achieved—the Tercentenary of Quebec.

Body, soul and spirit—we ought to have all three to glory in. But perhaps there never was a country so tempted as Canada is now to pamper the body of life and starve its soul and spirit. For a hundred years we have been protected from the international struggle for existence by an armed and guardian Mother Land. And the sheltered life has never yet been good for any grown-up child. We are revelling in peace and plenty to-day ; and we are exploiting our natural resources more eagerly than ever. But the heroic age of pioneers is almost over. And in an age of mere “development” a people is apt both to become materialized and to find self-satisfaction in becoming so. Nothing but a “divine discontent” can better us. The true intellectual life can only grow out of a national yearning for it. It can not be bought : if it could the United States and Argentina might have an intellectual productiveness bearing some slight proportion to their trade returns. But it can be stunted, deformed and starved to death in stony places. Imagine Shakespeare in Chicago ! Yet, imagining this, remember also that Canada is not the most fertile spot in this intellectually sterile New World. I know the phrase, “this intellectually sterile New World,” would be thought mere nonsense unless it was duly qualified by proper definition. So I hasten to define the essence of the Intellectual Life as being the production of original



and creative work in pure science and the five great branches of art—music, literature, architecture, sculpture and painting.

But while we can only look forward with hope to the day when Canada will yearn to express her soul and spirit by means of the Intellectual Life, we can look back with pride on the days when many a glory was won for her in those other three great forms of Service—Religion, Statesmanship and War. These glories are the jewels of her history. How gladly would I set them in her diadem to-day! But, since the power lags too far behind the will, I merely try to make this book a thread on which some few of them may be strung together, until the time when abler hands than mine, working in a happier future, may set them in her crown of life.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*THE Landmarks of Canada, A Quebec Chronology* and *The Quebec Battlefields* were first published as appeals at the time of the Champlain Tercentenary in 1908. *Wolfe and Gray's Elegy* was written for the "Boston Transcript" in 1909, the year of the third jubilee of the Battle of the Plains. *The Second American Invasion* is taken from an introduction to a collection of original documents on the siege of Quebec in 1775 which was published by 'The Literary and Historical Society of Quebec' in 1905, at the time that the Dominion commemorated Carleton's defence by the erection of the bronze tablets for which the author composed the inscriptions. *The Fortress City* and *The First Five-Nation War* now appear for the first time; though free use is made of a work to which the author contributed and of which only seventy-four copies were printed—Dr. Doughty's *Fortress of Quebec*. *Tercentennial Quebec* is a lecture delivered before Bishop's College, Lennoxville, in 1909. It formed the basis of the author's contribution to "The King's Book of Quebec." *An Ursuline Epic* and *French-Canadian Folksong* are monographs published in very limited editions by the Royal Society of Canada and now out of print. *The Habitant* is reprinted from "The Guardian" for the 25th of June, 1902, and *A French-Canadian Poet* from "The University Magazine" for April, 1910.

The author hereby gratefully acknowledges the kindness of all those by whose permission he is now able to reprint the various contributions mentioned above.

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	vii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS . . . . .	xii
<b>CHAPTER</b>	
I. THE LANDMARKS OF CANADA . . . . .	I
II. A QUEBEC CHRONOLOGY . . . . .	4
III. THE QUEBEC BATTLEFIELDS . . . . .	19
IV. WOLFE AND GRAY'S ELEGY . . . . .	30
V. THE SECOND AMERICAN INVASION . . . . .	37
VI. THE FORTRESS CITY . . . . .	47
VII. THE FIRST FIVE-NATION WAR . . . . .	58
VIII. TERCENTENNIAL QUEBEC . . . . .	65
IX. AN URSULINE EPIC . . . . .	111
X. THE HABITANT . . . . .	209
XI. FRENCH-CANADIAN FOLKSONG . . . . .	222
XII. A FRENCH-CANADIAN POET . . . . .	293
LIST OF WORKS BY THE AUTHOR . . . . .	311





IN THE HEART OF OLD CANADA





# IN THE HEART OF OLD CANADA

## CHAPTER I

### THE LANDMARKS OF CANADA

CANADA to-day, exultant over a heritage of lands outstretching any other in our world-wide Empire, exultant over their illimitable riches, above ground and below ; exultant, too, and with better cause, over the abounding vigour of her home-grown breed of pioneers, and over her native strength of dike and channel, to turn the intrushing human tide into many fructifying streams before it floods her waiting wilderness—this Canada, even to-day, can only draw the full depth of inspiration for her future from the glories of that past which is the very source of all her being.

And what a past is ours ! Measured by mere lapse of time it is the longest in the experience of any of the self-governing dominions oversea ; measured by its years of crowded life the most intensely interesting ; and by its moving incidents the most romantic of them all. Through both *régimes* fortune has led us to be always first : in discovery, in settlement, in mighty wars, in parliaments, and in confederation. We are no new-

## 2 IN THE HEART OF OLD CANADA

transplanted stock ; but scions of deep-rooted generations, each working out its own well-wrought career, yet all of them inevitably tending to unite free parts within a nation, and, in its turn, this, with other free and equal nations, within a free and guardian Empire.

And, wherever we go, some landmark reminds us who preceded or begat us. Norseman and Basque ; Indian of mountain, wood or plain ; French of the old *régime* ; French-Canadian as *coureur de bois* and *voyageur*, *seigneur* or simple *habitant* ; British Islander of every kin, United Empire Loyalist, and Anglo-Canadian born and bred ; explorer, trader, missionary, priest ; soldier and sailor ; statesman and orator ; and the first promise of author, artist and the man of science—each has left landmarks to tell his story to all who listen understandingly.

What is a landmark ? *A landmark is anything preservable which is essentially connected with great acts or persons that once stirred our life and still stir our memory.* It may be a monument set up by pious hands ; a building, a ruin, or a site ; a battlefield or fort ; a rostrum or a poet's walk ; any natural object ; any handiwork of man ; or even the mere local habitation of a legend or a name. But, whatever the form, its spirit makes every true landmark a talismanic heirloom, only to be lost to our peril and our shame.

And now, as we begin our work, in this tercentennial year of Canada's foundation, we find our first opportunity in the proposed dedication of the greatest of all our landmarks, that world-famous one where form and spirit, heirloom and talisman,

are blent, in complete perfection, on the fields of battle at Quebec. Here stood seven undauntable champions: Champlain, Frontenac, Montcalm, Wolfe, Murray, Lévis, Carleton. Here—unique in universal history—lies the one scene of so many mighty conflicts, which changed the destinies of empires, but ever maintained the honour of all who met in arms. Here Americans shared the triumph of one victory, British-born of two, French of three, and French-Canadians of no less than four. And here and now is the time and place for “Landmarkers,” all over the Dominion, to unite in spreading knowledge, arousing enthusiasm, concentrating interest, and increasing the Battlefields Fund started by our Visitor, the Governor-General, supported by our Honorary President, the Prime Minister, and approved by His Majesty the King.

On the third day of this July we enter the fourth century of Canadian life. Most have the overmastering desire to make our country rich: and rightly—just so far as riches make strength. But remember that our business depends on energy inherited and transformed; that warriors, statesmen and divines made Canada Canadian; that all nations decay who fail in arms and art; and that we are now particularly apt to mistake comfort for civilization. We want no dead hand's constricting grip, no landmark's bar to real progress—for landmarks themselves are signs of progress. But our Canada does need the exalting touch of every landmark that bears a living message, and that she can keep either in substance or in souvenir; lest, seeking the whole mere world of riches, she lose her own soul.



## CHAPTER II

### A QUEBEC CHRONOLOGY

IN THE

XVI<sup>TH</sup>—XVII<sup>TH</sup>—XVIII<sup>TH</sup>—XIX<sup>TH</sup>—XX<sup>TH</sup>  
CENTURIES

- 1535.—JACQUES CARTIER enters the St. Charles River on the 14th of September and winters beside the Indian village of *Stadacona*, the site of which is now included in the city of Quebec.
- 1540.—FRANCIS I makes ROBERVAL his Viceroy in New France.
- 1541.—CARTIER, sent out by ROBERVAL, builds a fort at Cap Rouge, a few miles above Quebec, and winters there.
- 1542.—ROBERVAL arrives and winters at Cartier's fort.
- 1543–1607.—Basque and French fishermen frequent the Lower St. Lawrence, and a few small trading-posts are established in different parts of the country; but no town settlement of any kind has had a continuous life from that time to this.
- 1608.—CHAMPLAIN founds CANADA by building his *Abitacion* at Quebec. Champlain was soldier, sailor, statesman and pioneer, equally at home in an Indian wigwam or at the court

of HENRY IV of France; and his staunch and pious character is worthy of a Father of his country.

1620.—First *Fort St. Louis* begun.

1625.—FRENCH MISSIONARIES arrive. Many suffer death by torture, but others always take their place.

1629.—The KIRKES take Quebec in the name of CHARLES I of England, who holds it three years in pledge for the dowry of his Queen, Henrietta Maria of France, and who grants his friend, Sir William Alexander, Earl of Stirling, "*The County and Lordship of Canada*"!

1632.—Quebec restored to the Crown of France.

1635.—CHAMPLAIN dies on Christmas day, just a century after the landing of Jacques Cartier. Quebec contains hardly a hundred souls, and only three small public buildings: the store belonging to the trading company of the *Cent Associés*, *Fort St. Louis*, on the site of the present Château Frontenac Hotel, and the parish church of *Notre-Dame de la Recouvrance*, on the site of the present Basilica. Champlain caused the Angelus to be rung three times a day, a custom still observed in Quebec.

1639.—Arrival of the *Ursulines* and *Hospitalières*.

1646.—On New Year's Eve the first play ever performed in Quebec, Corneille's *Le Cid*, was given before the Governor and the Jesuit Fathers in a store-room belonging to the *Cent Associés* in Ste Anne Street.

## 6 IN THE HEART OF OLD CANADA

- 1647.—First *Château St. Louis*. Last one burnt 1834. This was the residence of both French and British Governors, and stood near the present Terrace.
- 1648.—The Governor in Council appoints Jacques Boisdon (bibulous cognomen!) first and sole innkeeper of Quebec, on condition "that the said Jacques Boisdon settles in the square in front of the church, so that the people may go there to warm themselves; and that he keeps nobody in his house during High Mass, sermons, the catechism or Vespers."
- 1656.—GREAT IROQUOIS RAID and *massacre* of the *Hurons* in sight of Quebec.
- 1659-1706.—Great episcopate of the first Bishop of Quebec, François de MONTMORENCY-LAVAL.
- 1660-3.—CANADA threatened with *extermination* by *Indians*, by *famine*, by the complete *downfall* of the whole Colony, and by the most terrible *earthquakes* in her history. LAVAL, the first *Bishop*, and LA MÈRE MARIE DE L'INCARNATION, first Superior of the *Ursuline* nuns, persuade Canadians that their country is at the beginning of a great career and not at the end of a dismal failure. Laval founded his Seminary during the seven months of continual earthquakes. The present Ursuline convent went through four sieges in eighty-five years, and never lacked nuns to risk their lives in trying to safeguard it under fire, or to join the *Hospitalières* in nursing the sick and wounded of both sides.



- 1663.—The Chartered Company of the *Cent Associés* lapses, and QUEBEC is declared the CAPITAL of the ROYAL PROVINCE OF NEW FRANCE. The population of Quebec is still only 500, of which 150 belong to Religious Communities.
- 1665.—The new Royal Governor arrives ; also the Great Intendant, JEAN TALON, 212 persons of title or fortune, 12 companies of French Regulars, and many settlers, who became known as *habitants*. DE TRACY, the King's personal VICEROY, arrives and makes war on the Iroquois.
- 1670.—In this year there are 700 births in the little colony, representing a birth-rate three times as high as the average of civilized peoples to-day.
- 1672-82 and 1689-98.—Governorships of FRON-TENAC, who built the first walls, defeated the Indians, repulsed the first American Invasion, and upheld his authority against all rivals.
- 1688.—LAVAL, the first Canadian Bishop, founds a church, called *Notre-Dame des Victoires* after the saving of Quebec in 1690 and 1711. Taschereau, the first Canadian Cardinal, celebrated the bi-centenary in 1888. This church is nearly on the same site as Champlain's *Abitacion*. It has a relic of the True Cross, and one of Ste. Geneviève, on whose *fête* the Chaplain blesses unleavened bread for women who dread the pains of childbirth.

## 8 IN THE HEART OF OLD CANADA

1690.—FRONTENAC repulses PHIPS and THE FIRST AMERICAN INVASION OF CANADA.

1692.—FRONTENAC builds *the first walls* round Quebec.

1711.—Sir Hovenden Walker wrecked on his way to attack Quebec.

1755-60.—Complete *inefficiency* under the Governor-General, VAUDREUIL, and *corruption* under the Intendant, BIGOT.

1756-59.—French forces commanded by MONTCALM, the greatest Frenchman of the whole New World, one of the most tragically heroic figures of all time, and a most consummate master of the art of war.

1759.—SIEGE OF QUEBEC and BATTLE of the PLAINS OF ABRAHAM.

Inscription over Wolfe's death-place :

HERE DIED WOLFE VICTORIOUS.

Inscription over grave of Montcalm :

HONNEUR A MONTCALM

LE DESTIN

EN LUI DÉROBANT LA VICTOIRE

L'A RÉCOMPENSÉ

PAR UNE MORT GLORIEUSE.

Inscription on Monument to Wolfe and Montcalm together :

MORTEM VIRTUS COMMUNEM

FAMAM HISTORIA

MONUMENTUM POSTERITAS

DEDIT.

*Montcalm* was buried in the *Ursuline* Chapel, where an *Anglican* service was held a few days later in memory of *Wolfe*. The *Highland* Chaplain conducted the *Presbyterian* memorial service in the *Jesuit* Barracks.

1760.—LEVIS defeats MURRAY in the *second battle of the Plains*. In 1860 a monument was erected AUX BRAVES who redressed the balance of victory in favour of FRANCE.

1763.—Just 100 years after declaring Canada the Royal Province of New France the FRENCH CROWN *cedes the sovereignty* to GEORGE III.

1759-74.—Canada under the generous *military rule* of MURRAY and CARLETON at Quebec.

1774.—THE QUEBEC ACT passed by the *Imperial Parliament*.

1775-6.—FRENCH- and ENGLISH-speaking British subjects, under CARLETON, defeat THE SECOND AMERICAN INVASION OF CANADA.

Inscription where Arnold was repulsed :

HERE STOOD  
HER OLD AND NEW DEFENDERS  
UNITING, GUARDING, SAVING  
CANADA  
DEFEATING ARNOLD  
AT THE SAULT-AU-MATELOT BARRICADE  
ON THE LAST DAY OF  
1775  
GUY CARLETON  
COMMANDING AT  
QUEBEC.



Inscription where Montgomery was repulsed :

HERE STOOD  
 THE UNDAUNTED FIFTY  
 SAFEGUARDING  
 CANADA  
 DEFEATING MONTGOMERY  
 AT THE PRÈS-DE-VILLE BARRICADE  
 ON THE LAST DAY OF  
 1775  
 GUY CARLETON  
 COMMANDING AT  
 QUEBEC.

1775-90.—Coming of the UNITED EMPIRE LOYALISTS, some of whom settled in Quebec and have descendants there at the present day.

1782.—NELSON at Quebec in H.M.S. *Albemarle*. He frequented the house on the site of the present No. 15, Ramparts, which belonged to a U.E. Loyalist, a Mr. Woolsey. And it was from *Bandon Lodge*, on the site of a house bearing the same name and numbered 55 Grande Allée, that he was decoyed away by a Quebecer and one of his own officers, lest he should marry pretty Mary Simpson, daughter of Wolfe's old Provost Marshal.

1783.—The *first British fortification* of Quebec. The remains of those parts of this fortification which occupied Cape Diamond are still

pointed out as "Old French Works." As a matter of fact, there are no old French works remaining anywhere.

1787.—His Majesty, KING WILLIAM IV, then a Naval Officer in H.M.S. *Pegasus*, is the FIRST MEMBER OF THE ROYAL FAMILY to visit Quebec. He paid a visit to the Ursulines, who entered in their diary that they were charmed with him and that they found him *so polite, although he is a sailor!* It is said that this visit to Quebec might have changed the history of England, as, by some unaccountable mistake, the contractor made the Royal stand, to view the fireworks, over a powder magazine! A Royal Review was held on the site of Wolfe's great victory.

1791-4.—His Royal Highness the DUKE OF KENT, father of QUEEN VICTORIA, spends three years in Quebec with his regiment, the 7th Royal Fusiliers. A State Ball was given at the Château St. Louis in honour of his twenty-fourth birthday. He is said to have been the keenest dancer present, keeping the party up till five o'clock in the morning. The elections for the first Canadian Parliament resulted in some lively scenes; and it is said that the Duke, driving *incognito* to Charlesbourg, a village near Quebec, and seeing a friend of his attacked by two men and knocked down, doubled his royal fists and himself knocked down, with a single right and left, both his friend's assailants. From Quebec the Duke went to the West Indies, where

he greatly distinguished himself in action at Martinique, a name ever afterwards dear to Queen Victoria, who was justly proud of being a soldier's daughter.

1792. — THE FIRST PARLIAMENT IN GREATER BRITAIN, *under the direct authority of a Governor General*, opens at Quebec. It was opened by General Clarke, representing Carleton. It was held on a most historic site; where the Bishops of the old *régime* always had their Palace, where King Edward VII stayed during his visit in 1860, where the Fathers of Confederation began their sessions in 1864, and where the Dominion of Canada was proclaimed in 1867.

1793.—The Anglican see of Quebec established. The Bishop is cordially welcomed by the French-Canadian Bishop.

1799.—MONSEIGNEUR PLESSIS, *Vicar-General of the French-Canadian Roman Catholic* diocese of Quebec, preaches a sermon in the Basilica to celebrate NELSON'S victory at the Nile; and the *Bishop's Mandement* ordains a *General Thanksgiving* for the blessings insured to Canada by the just laws and protecting arms of the BRITISH CROWN.

1799–1804.—H.M. KING GEORGE III takes great interest in the building of the *Anglican Cathedral*, as H.M. KING LOUIS XIV had done in the welfare of the *Basilica*. Each King gave plate or vestments and other objects for religious service to his respective church in Quebec. There has always been a Royal pew



in the Anglican cathedral, and it has often been occupied by Royalty. The old colours of the 69th Regiment, over the stalls, were replaced by new ones presented on the Esplanade by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, then a lieutenant, and now (1911), forty years after, the first Royal Governor-General. The Archbishop of Canterbury preached the Centenary sermon here in 1904. The Duke of Richmond, who was buried here in 1819, was Governor-General at the time of his death. He was nephew to the previous Duke of Richmond, who was an officer in Wolfe's old regiment, whose guardians tried to get Wolfe to become his tutor in 1754, and who actually did become the pupil of Carleton, who was himself a Governor-General of Canada!

1812.—QUEBEC sends her full quota to repel THE THIRD AMERICAN INVASION OF CANADA. The *French* and *English* heroes on the British side at *Châteauguay* and *Queenston Heights* were both quartered at Quebec at different times. The street across which *Montcalm's* and *Wolfe's* men fired into each others' faces is called after *de Salaberry*, and *Brock* lived in the third house from the top of *Fabrique Street*.

1823.—The present CITADEL and WALLS built after a plan approved by WELLINGTON and completed in 1832 at a cost of \$35,000,000.00, paid by the Imperial Government. This was only one item of the more than a *hundred millions sterling*, or \$500,000,000.00, spent by the *Mother Country* on the actual work of fortifica-

*tions alone, apart from troops, etc. And much of this wise and generous expense helped to keep Canada both British and Canadian.*

- 1824.—The LITERARY and HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF QUEBEC established by a *Royal Charter* granted by H.M. KING WILLIAM IV. This is the *senior learned society in Greater Britain*; and has had successive Governors-General for its Patron since its foundation. Among its curios are a piece of the ship from which Wolfe directed the attack on Montmorency, part of the first Canadian printing-press, the last Canadian pillory and the model of the *Royal William*.
- 1833.—In August the *ROYAL WILLIAM*, built in and sailing from QUEBEC, makes the *first of all Transatlantic voyages entirely under steam*. Under her new name, *Isabella Segunda*, she was the *first steamer in the world to fire a shot in action*, on the 5th of May, 1836, in the Bay of San Sebastian, when helping Sir de Lacy Evans's British Legion against the Carlists. She was built by James Goudie, whose father built the British men-of-war for service on the Great Lakes in the war of 1812.
- 1837.—Differences of opinion on national house-keeping cause a Canadian Rebellion. Many loyal Volunteers raised in Quebec.
- 1838.—LORD DURHAM's administration.
- 1839.—*The Durham Report*.
- 1840.—The Union Act and RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

- 1852.—The *first French-Canadian University* founded, and called after *Laval*.
- 1854.—*Seigniorial Tenure* abolished.
- 1858.—Raising of the 100th Regiment, the *Royal Canadians*.
- 1860.—H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, since His Majesty KING EDWARD VII, lands at Quebec from H.M.S. *Hero* on the 18th of August.
- 1861.—H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh at Quebec.
- 1864.—“THE FATHERS OF CONFEDERATION” meet at Quebec.
- 1866.—The First Fenian Raid. Quebec under arms.
- 1867.—The DOMINION OF CANADA proclaimed at Quebec. The original draft proposed the title as “*The Kingdom of Canada*.”
- 1869.—H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught at Quebec with his Regiment.
- 1870.—Second Fenian Raid—Quebec again under arms. H.R.H. the *Duke of Connaught* wears the *Canadian General Service Medal* for his presence at the front *in defence of Canada* on this occasion.
- 1870.—The *Red River Expedition* under Colonel, now Field-Marshal Viscount, *Wolseley* has a contingent from Quebec.
- 1870.—A good many French-Canadians leave for Rome to join the Papal Zouaves in defence of the Pope.



1871.—The *Royal Canadian Artillery*, the first Regulars under the Canadian Government, has its first parade at Quebec.

1872-8.—LORD DUFFERIN plans many improvements to commemorate Canadian history at Quebec. He would have preferred for his new title, The Marquess of Dufferin and Quebec.

1875.—Celebration of the 100th anniversary of the *Saving of Canada by Carleton* at Quebec.

1878-83.—H.R.H. the PRINCESS LOUISE often visits Quebec with H.E. the *Marquess of Lorne*.

1879.—H.M. QUEEN VICTORIA takes great interest in, and contributes to the cost of building, *Kent Gate*, as a memorial of her father's stay at Quebec, 1791-4.

1880.—H.R.H. the Duke of Albany visits Quebec.

1883.—H.R.H. Prince GEORGE OF WALES, now King George V, visits Quebec for the first time. He revisits it in 1890.

1884.—*Canadian Voyageurs* for the Nile Expedition rendezvous at Quebec.

1885.—The *Royal Canadian Artillery* and 9th Regiment *Voltigeurs de Québec* leave for the front during the *North-West Rebellion*.

1889.—The *Ursulines* and *Hospitalières* celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their foundation in Quebec.

1890.—T.R.H. the Duke and Duchess of Connaught visit Quebec.

1897.—Lord Aberdeen unveils the *statue of the Queen* in Victoria Park in honour of her

*Diamond Jubilee*, and the representative *Canadian contingent* sent to England for this occasion parades on the Esplanade.

- 1899.—THE FIRST CANADIAN CONTINGENT for the *South African War* embarks at Quebec.
- 1901.—T.R.H. the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, now their Majesties King George V and Queen Mary, visit Quebec on their *Imperial Tour*.
- 1902.—The *First Canadian Coronation Contingent* parades to embark at Quebec. (France sends the *Montcalm* to the *Coronation Naval Review* in England.)
- 1905.—H.E. LORD GREY unveils the statue to those Quebecers who died in South Africa

FOR EMPIRE, CANADA, QUEBEC.

NOT BY THE POWER OF COMMERCE, ART, OR PEN  
SHALL OUR GREAT EMPIRE STAND ; NOR HAS IT STOOD ;  
BUT BY THE NOBLE DEEDS OF NOBLE MEN,  
HEROIC LIVES, AND HEROES' OUTPOURED BLOOD.

- 1906.—H.R.H. PRINCE ARTHUR OF CONNAUGHT, returning from *King Edward's Garter Mission* to H.I.M. the Emperor of Japan, is the eleventh member of the Royal Family to visit Quebec.
- 1908.—TERCENTENARY of the foundation of Canada by Champlain at Quebec. *Fêtes* presided over by H.M. KING GEORGE V.
- 1908.—*The national foundation of* THE QUEBEC BATTLEFIELDS PARK by KING GEORGE V.

1911.—H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT arrives as the *first Royal Governor-General of Canada*. H.E. EARL GREY leaves, after the most unusually long term of seven years, amid universal regret. Quebec presents him with a silver model of the Wolfe-Montcalm monument.

The personal inscription is :

QUEBEC

CONDITOR—CHAMPLAIN

CONSERVATOIRES—FRONTENAC . CARLETON

COMMEMORATOR—GREY



## CHAPTER III

### THE QUEBEC BATTLEFIELDS :<sup>1</sup>

*An Appeal issued in French and English under the authority of the Headquarters of the Quebec Battlefields Association, Quebec, Saturday, 11th April, 1908.*

#### PREFACE

THE CANADIAN PRESS patriotically gave the "Appeal to History" a circulation of 3,000,000, by reprinting it *verbatim* from the King's Printer's advance edition of 1000 copies in each language, published on Montcalm's birthday, the 29th of February. During March all the questions, misunderstandings and suggestions which came to light in any part of the French- or English-speaking world were carefully considered; and the Headquarters Committee now submit the General Appeal to the public in its revised, enlarged and final form.

The Committee can re-assure the Public on a most important point. The additions to the political and military sources of original information on the Seven Years' War, and the introduction of complete naval documents for the first time, have naturally invalidated every account of Wolfe's Siege of Quebec written before the present century.

<sup>1</sup> The quotations are from the author's own work, *The Fight for Canada*.

But, most fortunately, the effect of all this original research is to heighten the glory of the four military chiefs—Montcalm, Lévis, Wolfe and Murray—even though the overwhelming influence of Sea-Power on the issue of the war in general is now brought home to the Quebec campaigns in particular. And, as the collection of all the original evidence is now practically complete, it is safe to say that the good name of the soldiers and sailors engaged, and of the different peoples they represented to such advantage, is secure for ever, and that, no matter what probing question may be raised, the answer of history will always be—*there is nothing to fear from the truth.*

THE QUEBEC BATTLEFIELDS, 1690-1775  
AN APPEAL TO HISTORY

I

THE Plains of Abraham stand alone among the world's immortal battlefields, as the place where an empire was lost and won in the *first* clash of arms, the balance of victory was redressed in the *second*, and the honour of each army was heightened in *both*.

Famous as they are, however, the Plains are not the only battlefield at Quebec, nor even the only one that is a source of pride to the French- and English-speaking peoples. In less than a century Americans, British, French and French-Canadians took part in four sieges and five battles. There were decisive actions; but the losing side was

never disgraced, and the winning side was always composed of allied forces who shared the triumph among them. American Rangers accompanied Wolfe, and French-Canadians helped Carleton to save the future Dominion; while French and French-Canadians together won the day under Frontenac, under Montcalm at Montmorency, and under Lévis at Ste. Foy.

There is no record known—nor even any legend in tradition—of so many momentous feats of arms performed, on land and water, by fleets and armies of so many different peoples, with so much alternate victory and such honour in defeat—and all within a single scene. And so it is no exaggeration of this commemorative hour, but the lasting, well-authenticated truth to say, that, take them for all in all, the fields of battle at Quebec are quite unique in universal history.

And is not to-day also unique as an opportunity of taking occasion by the hand, to set this priceless ground apart from the catalogue of common things, and preserve it as an Anglo-French heirloom for all time to come? An appeal to history would be most appropriate to any year within the final decade of the Hundred Years' Peace between the once-contending powers of France, the British Empire, and the United States. But 1908 is by far the best year among the ten; for it marks the 300th birthday of that Canada which has become the senior of all the oversea self-governing dominions of King Edward VII—and under what king could we more fitly celebrate this imperishable *entente cordiale d'honneur*?



## II

The secret instructions sent out from France in 1759 were the death warrant of Montcalm: *La guerre est le tombeau des Montcalm* ". . . it is indispensable to keep a foothold. . . . The King counts upon your zeal, courage and tenacity." Montcalm replied: ". . . I shall do everything to save this unhappy colony, or die." And he kept his word. He had already done splendid service in a losing cause; stemming the enemy's advance by three desperate rear-guard victories in three successive years. Now he stood at bay for the last time. The country was starving. The corrupt Intendant and his myrmidons were still preying on all that was left of its resources. The army had numbers enough, and French and Canadian gallantry to spare. But the Governor added spiteful interference to the other distractions of a divided command. The mail that brought the final orders was the first for eight months; and Old France and New were completely separated by a thousand leagues of hostile sea, in whose invisible, constricting grasp Quebec had long been held.

In June Admiral Saunders led up the St. Lawrence the greatest fleet in any part of the world. Saunders was a star of the service even among the galaxy then renowned at sea. With him were the future Lord St. Vincent, the future Captain Cook, who made the first British chart of the River, and several more who rose to high distinction. His fleet comprised a quarter of the whole Royal Navy;

and, with its convoy, numbered 277 sail of every kind. Splendidly navigated by twice as many seamen as Wolfe's 9000 soldiers, the fleet and convoy made the besiegers an amphibious force at Quebec, while also holding the River eastward against all comers.

Wolfe, worn out, half despairing, twice repulsed, at last saw his chance, the only one he might ever have. He knew that disease was wasting him away, and that he was about to stake his whole reputation on a most daring venture. And he must have felt the full poignancy of the now famous line, "The paths of glory lead but to the grave," when he repeated Gray's *Elegy* to the officers in his reconnoitring boat off Sillery Point the day before the battle. But he was a profoundly apt master of the art of war; and his undauntable spirit soared with the hope of death in victory. Planning and acting entirely on his own initiative he crowned three nights and days of finely combined manœuvres, on land and water, over a front of thirty miles, by the consummate stratagem which placed *the first of all two-deep thin red lines* across the Plains of Abraham exactly at the favourable moment. And who that knows battle and battlefield knows of another scene and setting like this one on that 13th morning of September?

"All Nature contains no scene more fit for mighty deeds than the stupendous amphitheatre in the midst of which Wolfe was waiting to play the hero's part. For the top of the promontory made a giant stage, where his army now stood between the stronghold of New France and the whole

dominion of the West. Immediately before him lay his chosen battlefield; beyond that, Quebec. To his left lay the northern theatre, gradually rising and widening, throughout all its magnificent expanse, until the far-ranging Laurentians closed in the view with their rampart-like blue semi-circle of eighty miles. To his right, the southern theatre; where league upon league of undulating upland rolled outward to a still farther-off horizon, whose wider semi-circle, curving in to overlap its northern counterpart, made the vast mountain-ring complete. While, east and west, across the arena where he was about to contend for the prize of half a continent, the majestic River, full-charged with the right-hand force of Britain, ebbcd and flowed, through gates of empire, on its uniting course between Earth's greatest Lakes and greatest Ocean. And here, too, at these Narrows of Quebec, lay the fit meeting place of the Old World with the New. For the westward river gate led on to the labyrinthine waterways of all America, while the eastward stood more open still—flung wide to all the Seven Seas."

Meanwhile, Montcalm had done all he could against false friends and open enemies. He had repulsed Wolfe's assault at Montmorency and checkmated every move he could divine through the impenetrable screen of the British fleet. A week before the battle he had sent a regiment to guard the Heights of Abraham; and, on the very eve of it, had ordered back the same regiment to watch the path up which Wolfe came next morning. But the Governor again counter-ordered! *There they are where they have no right to be!*—said



Montcalm, as he spurred on to reconnoitre the red wall that had so suddenly sprung up across the Plains. He had no choice but instant action. “. . . he rode down the front of his line of battle, stopping to say a few stirring words to each regiment as he passed. Whenever he asked the men if they were tired, they said they were never tired before a battle ; and all ranks showed as much eagerness to come to close quarters as the British did themselves. . . . Montcalm towered aloft and alone—the last great Frenchman of the Western World . . . he never stood higher in all manly minds than on that fatal day. And, as he rode before his men there, his presence seemed to call them on like a *drapeau vivant* of France herself.” He fought like a general and died like a hero.

Never were stauncher champions than those two leaders and their six brigadiers. “Let us remember how, on the victorious side, the young commander was killed in the forefront of the fight ; how his successor was wounded at the head of his brigade ; and how the command-in-chief passed from hand to hand, with bewildering rapidity, till each of the four British Generals had held it in turn during the space of one short half-hour : then, how the devotion of the four Generals on the other side was even more conspicuous, since every single one of these brave men laid down his life to save the day for France : and, above all, let us remember how lasting the twin renown of Wolfe and Montcalm themselves should be, when the one was so consummate in his victory, and the other so truly glorious in defeat.”

The next year saw the second battle of the

Plains, when Lévis marched down from Montreal, over the almost impassable spring roads, and beat back Murray within the walls, after a most desperate and bloody fight. At the propitious moment Lévis rode along his line, with his hat on the point of his sword as the signal for a general charge, in which the French-Canadians greatly distinguished themselves. He quickly invested the town and drove the siege home to the utmost. "At nine o'clock on the night of the 15th of May three men-of-war came in together. The officer commanding at Beauport immediately sent Lévis a dispatch to say the French ships had just arrived. But the messenger was stopped by Murray's outposts. Lévis himself was meanwhile preparing to advance on Quebec in force; when a prisoner, who had just been taken, told him these vessels were the vanguard of the *British* fleet!" Of course, he raised the siege at once. But he retired unconquered; and Vauquelin covered his line of retreat by water as gallantly as he had made his own advance by land. Thus France left Quebec with all the honours of war.

### III

There's the call of the blood—of the best of our living, pulsing, quickening blood to-day—a call to every French and English ear—from this one ground alone:—and therefore an irresistible appeal from all the Battlefields together. The cause of strife is long since outworn and cast aside: only its chivalry remains. The meaner passions,

jealousies and schemes arose and flourished most in courts, and parliaments, and mobs, of different countries, far asunder. But the finer essence of the fatherlands was in the men who actually met in arms. And here, now and forever, are the field, the memory and the inspiration of all that is most heroic in the contending races.

From Champlain to Carleton, in many troublous times during 167 years, Quebec was the scene of fateful action for Iroquois and Huron ; for French of every quarter, from Normandy and Brittany to Languedoc and Roussillon ; for French-Canadians of the whole long waterway from the Lakes and Mississippi to the St. Lawrence and Atlantic ; for Americans from their thirteen colonies ; for all the kindred of the British Isles—English, Irish, Scotch and Welsh, Channel Islanders and Orcadians ; and for Newfoundlanders, the first Anglo-Canadians, and the forerunners of the United Empire Loyalists.

Champlain, in 1608, first built his *Abitacion* against the menace of the wilderness. In 1629 the Kirkes sailed up and took his Fort St. Louis in the name of Charles I, who granted the unconsidered trifle of "The Lordship and County of Canada" to his good friend, Sir William Alexander, Baronet of Nova Scotia ! But in 1690 the summons of Sir William Phips was victoriously answered by Frontenac—*from the mouth of my cannon*. In 1759 Montcalm won his fourth victory by repulsing Wolfe at Montmorency : then both died on the Plains, where Lévis and Murray fought again next year. Finally, on the last day of 1775, French and English first stood together as the British



defence of Canada, under Carleton, against the Americans under Montgomery and Arnold. This is our true wonder-tale of war ; *and we have nothing to fear from the truth.*

Is it to be thought of that we should fail to dedicate what our forefathers have so consecrated as the one field of glory common to us all ? There is no question of barring modern progress—the energy for which we inherit from these very ancestors ; and no town should ever be made a mere “show place,” devoted to the pettier kinds of touristry and dilettante antiquarian delights. But Quebec has room to set aside the most typical spots for commemoration ; and this on the sound business principle of putting every site to its most efficient use. So there remains nothing beyond the time and trouble and expense of making what will become *The Quebec Battlefields Park*. This will include the best of the Plains of Abraham, and the best of every other centre of action that can be preserved in whole, or part, or only in souvenir by means of a tablet. Appropriate places within these limits could be chosen to commemorate the names of eleven historic characters : Champlain, who founded Canada ; Montcalm, Wolfe, Lévis, Murray, Saunders and Vauquelin, who fought for her ; Cook and Bougainville, the circumnavigators, who did her yeoman service ; and Frontenac and Carleton, who saved her, in different ways, to the same end, and from the common enemy.

But no historic sites will be obscured, much less obliterated ; and no incongruous features of a park will mar the appeal which the battlefields make to

the historic imagination. One distinctive name is required to include the Plains and every other great war-landmark round Quebec. Wolfe's quarters were seven miles below the Plains, the point where Vauquelin made his last stand is twenty miles above. What other single name could cover all three except *The Quebec Battlefields*, which is both self-explaining and unique? The word *Park* is a mere official designation of an administrative entity: it will never live in history or literature or everyday talk. And *The Plains of Abraham* will no more lose their name and identity in a Battlefields Park than Quebec has lost either name or identity in the Dominion of Canada. Instead, their identity will regain its full extent, which will be an open book for all who come to read the story of their hero-making fights. And, as for their own familiar name—that, being immortal, can never suffer change.

High above all, on a calm central summit of this field of double victory and fourfold glory, the Angel of Peace will stand in benediction of the scene. In her blest presence we heirs of a fame told round the world in French and English speech can dwell upon a bounteous view that has long forgotten the strange, grim face of war. But remember! . . . the statue will rest upon a field of battle; and our own peace rests on ancestral prowess. The very ground reminds us of supreme ordeals. And though, in mere size, it is no more, to the whole vast bulk of Canada, than the flag is to a man-of-war, yet, like the flag, it is the sign and symbol of a people's soul.

## CHAPTER IV

### WOLFE AND GRAY'S *ELEGY*

**M**ANY good people resent any review of the facts about a picturesque incident as a wanton attempt to lay sacrilegious hands on what they secretly fear is almost too good to be true. And I am well aware that, in this very matter of Wolfe and Gray's *Elegy*, I have been repeatedly held up to fond believers, on both sides of the water and the line, as a particularly cold, crafty and altogether heartless iconoclast. But if these believers will only read the present article they will see that I have really been fighting on their own side all along, and doing my best to find some solid facts for them to base their faith on. Indeed, I go farther than most of them; for I think such incidents, when authentic, are very important from the strictly historical point of view. War is an art as well as a science, and every battle is a drama in the making. Personality is of the utmost consequence at critical moments; and every personal touch adds to our knowledge of its influence. So there are the most cogently scientific reasons for trying to find out the true version of what is a most characteristic episode in the great story of the whole Battle of the Plains.

Hundreds of writers have told millions of readers



how Wolfe turned to Midshipman Robinson, who was steering the first boat down to the final attack on Quebec, and asked him how old he was. "Seventeen, Sir!" Then follows whatever remark is supposed to be most appropriate to the occasion and to the respective positions of a midshipman and major-general. After this there is generally some local and temporary colour, with the inevitable purple patch duly worked in. And then Wolfe recites more or less of the *Elegy*, lays the strongest emphasis on the line—"The paths of glory lead but to the grave," and ends by assuring his audience, "I would rather have written those words than take Quebec to-morrow." There are plenty of minor variants of this current version. But the above contains the gist of them all.

Now, is it likely that any general would recite poetry at such a time? In surprise attacks by night soldiers must keep silence, on pain of death. Would Wolfe, the strict disciplinarian, who always set his men the best example, be the first to break the rule? He was sitting beside men who knew they were going on some desperate venture, and whom he naturally wished to encourage. Would he choose this opportunity for telling them that their own path of glory was sure to lead them to the grave? And is it likely that he would distract the attention of the man on whose handling of the principal boat so much depended—especially after giving distinct orders that no one was to interfere with the naval officers in the execution of their duty? Besides, would he use the word "to-morrow" when he knew he was going to fight on that very day, and within a very few hours of

the time at which this recitation is supposed to have taken place ?

But, apart from all questions of mere likelihood, there is abundance of actual evidence against this theatrical perversion. "Midshipman Robinson" was not a midshipman. He was not even a naval officer. His name was not Robinson. He was not seventeen. And he was not in Wolfe's boat at all. There is no confusion of identity, as all accounts, false and true, agree upon the same individual as the original authority for the story. Yet this man never said he was a midshipman, or a naval officer of any kind, or seventeen years of age ; nor did he ever say he steered Wolfe's boat down to the attack, or heard Wolfe recite the *Elegy* in it ; nor did he ever claim to have been in any of the boats on that occasion. This evidence is fully substantiated by the original documents quoted by Professor E. E. Morris in *The English Historical Review* for January, 1900, by those given as references in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (vol. xlix, p. 57—John Robison, 1739-1805), and by those I am about to quote here.

It is not hard to see how the popular perversion arose and has flourished to the present day. The tale was a strikingly fine one in itself. The feat of arms which its hero performed has made his name immortal. What more natural than that the public, which never knew the facts, should presently blend both tale and feat of arms together ; for all myths have a tendency towards unifying time and place in relation to any crisis in their hero's life. Wolfe's case, however, involves no quarrel between history and literature, fact and imagination. On

the contrary, it reconciles them; for anyone can see now that the common version is bad history, and, in the light of the true version, equally bad art—the offspring of mere theatrical fancy and not of dramatic insight.

The true story is this. The author of it is John Robison. The Rev. Morison Bryce, of Baldernock Manse, Milngavie, Glasgow, and minister of the parish in which Robison was born, says that the family name is pronounced with the *i* long, Robison. Now Robison, like his son, Sir John, who died in 1843, was a well-known Scottish worthy of high distinction. He was born in 1739, graduated at Glasgow in 1756, and came out to Quebec in 1759 as tutor to the young son of Admiral Knowles. Everyone has to be accounted for on board ship, either by holding actual or relative rank, and Robison was “rated as a midshipman”—a very different thing from being one. Thirteen years later he held the relative rank of colonel in Russia, while employed as professor of mathematics in the Sea Cadet Corps of St. Petersburg. But this no more implies the command of a Russian regiment than his local and temporary rating at Quebec implies the command of a British boat. He was a civilian, pure and simple, and no one familiar with the original facts ever mistook him for anything else. He was again employed at sea in 1762, when the Board of Longitude put him in charge of Harrison's chronometer for the voyage to Jamaica; but this no more made him a naval officer than his previous service afloat had done. For almost the whole of the latter half of his life he was professor of natural philosophy in the University of Edin-



burgh. He was an intimate friend of the famous James Watt and many other men of science. But the most important point for us to know is that he was always recognized, in every relation of life, as a man of unblemished veracity. Therefore, we may presume that he would neither alter facts nor invent fictions about the most dramatic incident which ever befell him.

What was his own version of the story? There can be little doubt; as we have three independent and credible witnesses, who all agree, and whose evidence is admirably marshalled by his own great-grandson, Father John Gerard, S.J., in the *Scotsman* for the 29th of June and the *Athenæum* for the 9th of July, both in 1904. The first is Sir Walter Scott, whose letter to Southey on the 22nd of September, 1830, was quoted from the original manuscript by Mr. Birrell in *The Times Literary Supplement* for the 27th of May, 1904. Scott says he heard the tale "at very first hand," Robison telling him that Wolfe, after reciting the *Elegy*, declared he would sooner have written those lines than win the battle "we are to fight to-morrow morning." The second is Professor Playfair, Robison's successor at Edinburgh University. Playfair's sketch of Robison is to be found at page 495, in Volume VII of the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh* for the 20th of February, 1815. He refers to the story as one that Robison "used to tell" about Wolfe's saying he would rather have written the *Elegy* than "have the glory of beating the French to-morrow." The third is William Wallace Currie, who gives his own version in a letter of the 10th of February, 1804, which is printed on page 248, Volume II,

of his life of his father, James Currie. He says he heard Robison tell the story himself only the week before. There is a slight variant here, as Currie understood that Robison was in another boat alongside Wolfe's. But the rest is practically the same as in the accounts of Scott and Playfair. "Mr. Robison heard him (Wolfe) say, 'I would rather be the author of that piece than beat the French to-morrow'; and from his remark he (Robison) guessed that the attack was to be made the next day."

Such is the direct evidence on the subject. The circumstantial evidence points the same way. Young Knowles would not get much actual coaching while the siege was in progress. Robison, who was a good mathematician, was more often employed as an expert surveyor. In this capacity he would naturally be told off to map work, and so would have been a likely man to have accompanied Wolfe on the final reconnoissance of the 12th of September, the day before the battle. Now, we know that Wolfe reconnoitred from a boat, we know that he was a great reader and fond of poetry, we know that a strain of melancholy ran through his character even as a younger man, we know that disease left him little hope of a long life, we know that the story of the *Elegy* became current at once and remained so throughout the lives of those present at Quebec who could best judge of its truth, we know that Robison's own version was never contradicted, we know his reputation for veracity, we know that he was not with the boats that took Wolfe's army down to the Foulon on the morning of the 13th of September, and we know that all

authentic accounts of his version agree that Wolfe was in a boat when he recited the *Elegy*, and that he said he would sooner have written the poem than beat the enemy "to-morrow." The only possible conclusion is that Wolfe recited the *Elegy* when he was in a boat, reconnoitring the north shore of the St. Lawrence, above Quebec, on the 12th of September, the day before the Battle of the Plains. And this conclusion seems to be as near a moral certainty as any fact based upon the testimony of any single witness can ever be.

I wish we could go on to point out the exact spot. But there is little chance of finding such precise information. I am inclined to think the most likely place would be a few cables above Sillery Point and rather more than half channel over. In any case, the visitor to the Quebec battle-fields who looks upstream can be almost sure that his eye is resting on the very reach of the river where this famous incident really occurred. And what a satisfaction it is to know that, while the popular perversion is as weak and theatrical as it is unproved and improbable, the true version, on the other hand, is a strong, dramatic and altogether worthy episode in one of the world's great epic tales of war!



## CHAPTER V

### THE SECOND AMERICAN INVASION

[The first being the one under Phips, an American commander who acted entirely on American initiative and whose success would probably have prevented Canada from being either British or Canadian to-day.]

*An Account of the Erection of the Tablets to commemorate the repulse of Montgomery and Arnold at Quebec on the 31st of December, 1775.*

ALL true Canadians will be glad to learn that a great and long-standing national reproach has now been fittingly removed. During no less than one hundred and twenty-seven years—from 1775 to 1902—nothing had been done to mark the spot where Canada stood at bay against the combined assault of Montgomery and Arnold on Quebec. Yet this assault was the turning point in the most momentous crisis which our country has ever been called upon to face. The American invaders had overrun the whole colony. They had taken every post along the frontier. Montreal, Sorel, Three Rivers and the long line of the St. Lawrence were all at their mercy. Quebec alone was left—the last hope of British arms, the last stronghold of British power in those troublous times, and the one sure promise of any British Dominion remaining in the Western World. On Quebec hung the fate of half

a continent, as well as the distinctively Canadian name and fame of many million people in the future. One false move by Carleton, one successful act of treachery in the beleaguered town, one moment of weakness among the little garrison, one battle lost against Montgomery, and all would have been over. But Quebec stood fast, and Canada was saved.

Four generations after this field of honour had been fought and won the first practical proposal was made to commemorate our victorious defenders. At a meeting of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, on the 19th of March, 1902, it was resolved : "That the time has come for the erection of historic tablets at Près-de-Ville and the Sault-au-Matelot, in the Lower Town of Quebec, relating to the events of the 31st December, 1775, which were so important to the destiny of Canada."

As such memorials would be battlefield monuments the Dominion Government was petitioned by the Society for means to erect suitable historic tablets at these places. The request was generously answered, and acceptable memorials in statuary bronze have been erected, one on the rock where Montgomery was defeated and killed, and the other on the St. James Street end of the Molsons' Bank, as near as possible to the site of the Sault-au-Matelot barricade, where Arnold was defeated and over 400 of his men made prisoners. Both tablets were placed in position on the 29th of December, 1904, just two days before the 129th anniversary of the assault.

In the present connection all that is necessary is such a brief general sketch of the operations at Quebec as will give the reader some idea of the

reasons for the erection of the tablets and for the special wording of the two inscriptions.

When the American Congress had decided on an invasion of Canada Montgomery was sent by Lake Champlain to attack Montreal. Meanwhile Arnold marched from Cambridge in Massachusetts by the *Voyageur* trail, up the Kennebec river and across the height of land, to the head waters of the Chaudière. He then went along the Chaudière to Ste. Marie. From there he followed the road to Levis, where he arrived in full view of Quebec on the 8th of November, after his long and arduous march. Having crossed the St. Lawrence in whatever canoes could be found he appeared on the present Cove Fields on the 14th, was fired on, and at once retired up to Pointe aux Trembles, where the arrival of Montgomery from Montreal was awaited. The Kennebec route was not an unknown one; for in 1760 Captain Montrésor passed over it with dispatches from Murray to Amherst, and made a good map, of which Arnold obtained a copy fifteen years later.

Montgomery carried all before him, taking Sorel, Montreal and Three Rivers. Carleton, who was in Montreal, knowing the importance of Quebec, and that for divers reasons Montreal could not then be defended, destroyed the Government stores and started with several schooners to descend the St. Lawrence. Being held up by head winds he took a boat, and, being paddled past the enemy's batteries at Sorel in the dead of night, arrived on the 19th November at Quebec, where Colonel MacLean, who had preceded him, was actively preparing for defence.

He at once issued orders that—"the suspected and all who are unwilling to take up arms in its



defence must leave the town within four days." This cleared the place of foreigners and traitors. On the 30th of November there were only 127 British regulars in garrison. But these—together with the crews of two small men-of-war, the *Lizard* and *Hunter*, and of several merchantmen that happened to be in port, as well as 230 "Royal Emigrants" and the loyal inhabitants, who willingly enrolled themselves—raised the force at his disposal to 1800 men. The Quebec merchants, to their lasting honour, were the first to volunteer; and no one did better service among the citizen soldiery. The defences were strengthened and barricades erected and armed in the Lower Town in Sault-au-Matelot Street and the present Sous-le-Cap; also at Près-de-Ville, just beneath the centre of the Citadel cliff.

Montgomery arrived on the 1st of December with his army, which raised the attacking force to 2000 men. The enemy then proceeded to take possession of St. Roch's, and erected batteries on the high ground commanding St. John's and St. Louis' Gates. The town was well provisioned for the winter; so Carleton, profiting by Murray's experience, would run no risk. The siege began with a considerable amount of daily bombardment and shooting at our sentries. But Montgomery, finding his guns did little harm, resolved to storm the town by night. This decision was reported to Carleton by a prisoner who escaped from the besiegers, so the garrison kept continually on the alert for the expected attack.

To frighten the inhabitants, but without avail, Montgomery's general orders of the 15th of

December were sent into the town. A copy is now to be found in the Dominion Archives at Ottawa (Q. 12, page 30) :—

HEADQUARTERS, HOLLAND HOUSE,  
Near Quebec.

15th December, 1775.

*Parole*—Connecticut.      *Countersign*—Adams.

The General having in vain offered the most favourable terms of accommodation to the Governor and having taken every possible step to prevail on the inhabitants to desist from seconding him in his wild scheme of defence, nothing remains but to pursue vigorous measures for the speedy reduction of the only hold possessed by the Ministerial troops in the Province. The troops, flushed with continual success, confident of the justice of their cause, and relying on that Providence which has uniformly protected them, will advance to the attack of works incapable of being defended by the wretched garrison posted behind them, consisting of sailors unacquainted with the use of arms, of citizens incapable of the soldier's duty, and a few miserable emigrants. The General is confident a vigorous and spirited attack must be attended with success. The troops shall have the effects of the Governor, garrison, and of such as have been acting in misleading the inhabitants and distressing the friends of liberty, to be equally divided among them, each to have the one hundredth share out of the whole, which shall be at the disposal of the General and given to such soldiers as distinguished themselves by their activity and bravery, and sold at public auction. The whole to be conducted as

soon as the city is in our hands and the inhabitants disarmed.

The General at Headquarters,

FERD. WEISENFELS,

*Major of Brigade.*

The detachment, about 600 strong, which was to attack Près-de-Ville assembled at 2 o'clock a.m. of the 31st December, at the enemy's headquarters, Holland House, and, headed by Montgomery, marched across the Plains of Abraham, and descended into the beach path, now Champlain Street. Those who were to make the attack by the suburbs of St. Roch's, headed by Arnold, were about 700 strong. Another party, under Livingstone, was sent to make a feint against the walls south of St. John's Gate, and try to force the entrance ; but these soon withdrew. The plan was that Montgomery and Arnold were to meet at the foot of Mountain Hill and storm the Upper Town.

A heavy north-east snowstorm was raging at four o'clock that dark morning when Montgomery descended the cliff and advanced along the narrow ledge which was flanked to the left by the perpendicular crags of Cape Diamond and to the right by the St. Lawrence.

The Près-de-Ville barricade and blockhouse, at the narrowest part of the road, was defended by Captain Chabot, Lieut. Picard, 30 French-Canadian militiamen, Captain Barnesfare and 15 seamen, Sergeant Hugh McQuarters of the Royal Artillery (with several small guns), and Mr. Coffin ; 50 in all. This post was on the alert and saw the head of the column approach and halt some fifty yards



from the barricade. A man then came forward to reconnoitre. On his return the column continued its advance, when it was received by cannon and musketry. The first discharge killed Montgomery, his aides-de-camp, and ten men. Thereupon the rest of his 600 turned and fled, pursued by the bullets of the Canadians till there was nothing more to fire at. The story of carpenters sawing the pickets, which Montgomery then tore down with his own hands, took shape in the imagination of a Major Meigs, who was one of Arnold's party. No one behind the leading sections knew what had happened. The slain, left as they fell, were buried by the drifting snow, whence their frozen bodies were dug out later in the day.

Arnold's column penetrated the barricade across Sous-le-Cap street, situated beneath the Half-Moon battery ; but was stopped by the second barricade, at the end of that narrow lane, quite close to where Molsons' Bank is now. This second barricade was defended by Major Nairne, Dambourges and others, who held the enemy in check until Captain Laws, coming from Palace Gate with a strong party, took them in rear and caused the surrender of 427 in all. This completed the victory of the British arms. Arnold was put out of action early in the fight by a ball from the ramparts near Palace Gate, and was carried to the General Hospital.

General Wooster took command, and the besiegers were reinforced to over their original strength ; but no further assaults were made. Batteries were erected at Levis, but did little damage. A fire-ship was sent against the shipping in the Cul-de-Sac, the site of the Champlain market,

but without effect. The blockade lasted until the arrival of the British man-of-war *Surprise* on the 6th of May, 1776, when the garrison, thus reinforced, at once made a sortie, only to find that the Americans had already decamped in the utmost confusion, leaving their dinners, artillery, ammunition and baggage behind. On the arrival of more vessels and troops Carleton advanced to Three Rivers, beat the enemy there, and then continued his march without a check to Montreal. In a few more days the last of the invaders had been driven off the soil of Canada for good and all.

Both inscriptions were approved by the Society's Patron, the then Governor-General, the Earl of Minto, who took the keenest personal interest in the whole undertaking, from first to last. The tablets, in shield form, are of statuary bronze, with the lettering in relief. The large one, on the rock under Cape Diamond, measures six feet three inches by five feet nine inches, and weighs about 1000 pounds. It is thus inscribed :

HERE STOOD  
THE UNDAUNTED FIFTY  
SAFEGUARDING  
CANADA  
DEFEATING MONTGOMERY  
AT THE PRES-DE-VILLE BARRICADE  
ON THE LAST DAY OF  
1775  
GUY CARLETON  
COMMANDING AT  
QUEBEC

The wording is designed to bring out the notable fact that there were only fifty men on the British side, defending this barricade against Montgomery, who had a force at least ten times as strong. These fifty are described as "undaunted," because, apart from their gallantry in repelling the assault, they had been long exposed to the invaders' threat of treating them with the utmost rigour of war if they persisted in their allegiance. They are also said to have been "safeguarding Canada," because, although they could not have foreknown so great a destiny, they were then a part of the real and the only safeguard of the Dominion we live in now.

The tablet on the Molsons' Bank measures two feet ten inches by two feet six inches and weighs about 200 pounds. Its inscription is as follows :

HERE STOOD  
HER OLD AND NEW DEFENDERS  
UNITING GUARDING SAVING  
CANADA  
DEFEATING ARNOLD  
AT THE SAULT-AU-MATELOT BARRICADE  
ON THE LAST DAY OF  
1775  
GUY CARLETON  
COMMANDING AT  
QUEBEC

The men of the Sault-au-Matelot barricade are called "Her old and new defenders" because the different racial elements of both the old and new



*régimes* were here "uniting" for the first time in history, and thus "guarding" and "saving" the Canada of their own day and of ours. Among them were Frenchmen, French-Canadians, Englishmen, Irishmen, Scotchmen, Welshmen, Channel Islanders, Newfoundlanders, and those "Royal Emigrants" who were the forerunners of the U. E. Loyalists. And on this sacred spot each and all of these widely different ancestors of the present "Canadians" took their dangerous share of empire-building, in the very heart of a crisis which must then have seemed to offer them no other reward than the desperate honour of leading the forlorn hope in a great cause all but lost for ever.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE FORTRESS CITY

**T**HE Indian made a stronghold at Quebec before the white man came. The white man has been building forts there in five different centuries already. And he is still building forts there to-day.

#### 1ST FORTIFICATION. 1535.

Jacques Cartier was the first of the whites in fort-building, as he was first in everything else. His first fort was a mere stockade beside the St. Charles, where he and his men spent the miserable winter of 1535-6. Overlooking this stockade was the Indian town of Stadacona, on the Quebec cliffs of the valley of the St. Charles. Cartier took possession for the Crown of France, sailed home with Donnacona, the Indian Chief, and left a cross standing, to mark the French claims, with the inscription—

FRANCISCUS PRIMUS  
DEI GRATIA FRANCORUM REX  
REGNAT

#### 2ND FORTIFICATION. 1541.

Five years later Jacques Cartier built another fort, this time at Cap Rouge, nine miles above

Quebec. The next year Roberval wintered here, as miserably as Cartier had beside the St. Charles.

### 3RD FORTIFICATION. 1608.

Two generations passed before the French again took possession and began another fort. In 1608 Champlain built his famous *Abitation de Quebecq* on the narrow piece of flat ground under the present Terrace. This tiny fort could hardly hold a hundred men, women and children, even as a tenement house. And it probably never had a fit-for-duty garrison of more than twenty men. But twenty men with muskets and a few small cannon could hold out well against mere bows and arrows. For the *Abitation de Quebecq* had some pretensions to scientific construction. Champlain was a naval officer and knew what he was about. The guns were well placed at the salients, and, as a gallery ran round the upper story, two tiers of fire could be brought to bear.

### 4TH FORTIFICATION. 1620.

In 1620 Champlain began his Fort St. Louis in the Upper Town, on the site of the present Terrace, and overlooking his old *Abitation*. For six years he persisted in making the little Colony work at this fort in order to assure its safety. Like many a leader of far vaster numbers he found plenty of Colonists ready to be content with much less than real safety. In his own account he says : "J'établis cette demeure en une situation très bonne, sur une montagne qui commandait le travers du fleuve Saint-Laurent et qui est un des lieux les plus étroits de la rivière ; et tous nos associés n'avaient



*pu goûter la nécessité d'une place forte pour la conservation du pays et de leur bien.*" After discussing a possible attack from hostile whites as well, he adds significantly, "Il n'est pas toujours à propos de suivre les passions des personnes qui ne veulent régner que pour un temps : il faut porter sa considération plus avant." How very like these "persons" are to some disarmamentarians of a much later day !

In 1621 there was a little hard feeling between the old Company of Rouen and the new Company of Montmorency. Champlain then put an officer and some men into the fort as a garrison. Thus M. du Mai can be justly credited with the honour of being the first Fortress Commandant of Quebec—though he was his own adjutant as well and probably never had a permanent officer's party in barracks, all together ! In 1624 a hurricane "enleva la couverture du bastiment du Fort Saint-Louis plus de trente pas par dessus le rempart, parce qu'elle était trop haulte élevée." The same year Champlain began to replace his old *Abitation* by a sort of "fortified place" occupying the whole of the point of land now traversed by Sous-le-fort Street.

#### 5TH FORTIFICATION. 1626.

On his return in 1626, after an absence of two years, Champlain was disgusted to find his forts exactly as he had left them, except that they were out of repair. He immediately knocked down the fort of 1620 and began a much larger and better one. This new fort was the Fort St. Louis which surrendered to the Kerkes in 1629, which was held

by Charles I in pledge for the dowry of Henrietta Maria, which was restored to the Crown of France in 1632, and which was used by Champlain himself from 1633 till his death there in 1635.

#### 6TH FORTIFICATION. 1636.

In 1636 Montmagny—(whose Latinized patronymic, *Mons Magnus*, translated by the Missionaries, made the Indians call him, and all succeeding French Governors, *Onontbio*)—rebuilt Fort St. Louis in stone. Before that it was only in “fascines, terres, gazons et bois.”

#### 7TH FORTIFICATION. 1647.

In 1647 a fortified residence for the Governors was begun, very much in the same place, and named Château St. Louis. Under this name, and in the same place, stood the Governor's residence, both in the old and new *régimes*, down to 1834. “The Castle of St. Louis” was used as the English equivalent. But the old name persisted locally. In 1694 this first Château was demolished. In 1784 a stone belonging to it, and bearing a Maltese Cross with the date 1647, was dug up and set into “the cheek of the gate now building” for “le château Haldimand.” This stone is now (1911) over the footway main entrance to the Château Frontenac Hotel.

It must be understood that the Château stood within the Fort, and, though forming part of it, was yet a separate building. So that, up to the time of Frontenac, the fortifications of Quebec consisted of a fortified Governor's residence inside of a stone fort, situated about where the Terrace

and its immediate hinter-ground lie to-day, and also of a "strong place" in the Lower Town, beside the St. Lawrence, and occupying the ground on each side of the present Sous-le-fort Street.

#### 8TH FORTIFICATION. 1692.

In 1667 the great Colbert recommended the re-fortification of Quebec. But in vain. In 1681 Frontenac wrote home to say that the Château was in a deplorable state and that the walls round it were literally tumbling down. In 1690 the Quebecers of the day became so alarmed that they proposed building walls on their own account. The authorities in France at once seized the opportunity of overworking the willing horse, with the usual disastrous results. There was no "frowning citadel" and only the worst of walls when Phips came thundering at the gates.

It was only in 1692 that Frontenac's great scheme was put in execution by the dilatory Government at home. Frontenac's walls were the first that ever encircled the Upper Town. They crowned the water front for nearly three-quarters of a mile. They started from the present Frontenac Hotel, along almost the whole length of which they ran. Then they crossed the top of Mountain Hill and followed the present Ramparts to Palace Hill, where they stopped in the westward direction. On the landward side, starting again from the Hotel, they ran westward between Mount Carmel and St. Louis Streets, crossed Haldimand Hill, and then curved into St. Louis Street on reaching the corner of Ste. Ursule Street. Thence, running north-westward, or down, inside the line of Ste.



Ursule Street, and trending slightly in a northerly direction, they ran nearly through the intersections of Ste. Anne and Ste. Angèle Streets, and thence down to the lower end of St. Stanislas Street, whence they curved towards Palace Hill, where they joined the circuit again. The total circuit was about a mile and a half. The area enclosed was about half as much as is enclosed by the present walls, exclusive of the Citadel. The landward faces were weak ; but the seaward ones were fairly strong against the armaments of the time.

Frontenac was a born soldier and leader of men, brave to a fault, yet of consummate skill in action and the necessary preparation for it. He threw himself heartily into the great work. But he was absolutely incorruptible—and the contractors were not. From this time on there is one long tale of growing corruption, which eventually culminated under Bigot and hurried New France to her ruin. The great commanders, Frontenac and Montcalm, and indeed all the leading soldiers and military engineers from France, stand out in honourable contrast to the whole vile brood of jobmasters in the Civil Government. The deviosities of Public Works in Canada can claim a quite respectable antiquity—not quite, perhaps, “from the earliest times,” but certainly down “to the present day.”

#### 9TH FORTIFICATION. 1720

By 1703, when Frontenac's scheme had been finally carried out in a perverted and dishonest way, new walls were beginning to be required. But it was not till 1720 that another scheme was put in operation under the malign influence of bad

engineers and worse Intendants. The works were done badly and bit by bit. They never provided for any real "citadel," but only for a citadel redoubt. And, as already stated elsewhere in this book, they never extended to the up-river face of Cape Diamond. The cliff faces followed the lines of Frontenac's scheme ; naturally so, as there was no other line to follow. The land faces were extended beyond Frontenac's line, and eventually reached, in many places, the extent of the walls that are standing to-day. But not one French stone remains in place. The work was too badly done for that, even if there had never been any wars at all.

#### IOOTH FORTIFICATION. 1752.

Patchwork went on till 1746, when both the French Government and the people of Quebec got tired of expensive works that were of no earthly use, except to the pockets of the contractors, engineers and administrative middlemen. An order came out to discontinue everything. Then the Canadian Government, with its middlemen, contractors and engineers, returned to the charge and contrived to get several estimates passed, which were moderate in amount, but exorbitant with respect to the work which resulted from them. Franquet, a good French army engineer, came out and saw at once that the Canadian engineers were almost as great fools at their work as they were knaves in charging for it. Later on, after the war which ended with the conquest of Canada had been raging for some time, Pontleroy, another excellent French army engineer, came out. But the works

of the Canadian engineers, bad as they were, had taken shape too definitely, even in Franquet's time. And all that he and Pontleroy could do was to put the best finish possible on bad works made with bad material by bad and corrupt engineers, who were on the side of Vaudreuil, the spiteful owl of a Governor, and Bigot, the knavish fox of an Intendant, and who consequently were against Montcalm, the ablest hero that ever drew sword for France across the sea. On the very eve of 1759 Montcalm wrote home in despair :—"Les fortifications sont si ridicules et mauvaises qu'elles seroient prises aussitôt qu'assiégées."

#### 11TH FORTIFICATION. 1759-82.

Murray had no more faith in the French walls than Montcalm had. But the British Home Authorities were almost as dilatory as their rivals were before them. So from 1759 to 1782 Quebec had to stand a French and an American siege with temporary British works thrown up well outside of the old French ones. Lévis in 1760 and Montgomery in 1775 both thought a siege would be an easy affair. And so it would have been, had they not been far more stoutly opposed by flesh and blood than by the rotten walls.

#### 12TH FORTIFICATION. 1783.

After four years' work a British scheme of re-fortification was finished in 1783. But it was by no means complete. The citadel was only a makeshift, and some parts elsewhere could not be thoroughly done for lack of funds. This was the time at which the so-called "old French works" on



the Cove Fields appeared. Their remains are easy to make out to day, following the contours of the up-river face of Cape Diamond. They entirely disappear from the great permanent plan of 1823.

#### 13TH FORTIFICATION. 1790-1803.

After a complete survey in 1790 some more patchwork was done, but nothing of much consequence.

#### 14TH FORTIFICATION. 1804-23.

During this period the Martello Towers were built. Nos. 1 and 3 were not finished till 1810, No. 2 till 1818 and No. 4 till 1823.

#### 15TH AND GREATEST FORTIFICATION. 1823-32.

But meanwhile the Imperial Government were preparing for the immense works which still stand to-day, which were approved by the Duke of Wellington, and which cost over seven millions sterling, or \$35,000,000.00. And it should be remembered that this sum represents only a small fraction of the more than a hundred millions sterling which were spent by the Imperial Government at different times to keep Canada both British and Canadian. Not a shot has ever been fired against the present walls, and they are now quite obsolete. But on at least two occasions they played a principal part as a deterrent in preventing any idea of attacking them from being converted into deeds.

All that is best in Quebec, in Canada, and indeed in the whole Empire, takes pride in these splendid monuments of watch and war. They

have the priceless advantage of making Quebec absolutely unique among the cities of America, where sameness and tameness are only too common. And yet there are people mean-spirited enough to want to throw them down! It may be that if Quebec were to lose all claim to be the one walled city of this New World she would still remain a queen among her sisters. For she was throned here in beauty by Nature, ages long ago. But it was Man who came and crowned her. So it would be a double desecration to discrown her now. Her walls are more than meets the eye. They saw no mighty wars themselves; but they serve to recall great deeds and the great men who did them. And their own mute appeal is more eloquent of living honour than all the vain words that could record them after they had gone for ever.

#### 16TH FORTIFICATION. 1865-71.

With the progress of military science it was found necessary to begin building much further away from the central point to be defended. Three large forts were therefore built on the South Shore, facing south and east. They have a magnificent natural *glacis* for many miles; and they were good forts in their day. They were the last legacy of the Imperial Government. When they were finished and paid for Canada undertook her own defence, got them for nothing, and has left them unarmed ever since.

#### 17TH FORTIFICATION. 1911.

Forty years later military science has changed still more. Now, instead of rising above the

ground, the engineer tries to burrow into it. There are excellent new works down at Beaumont, on the South Shore, eight miles below Quebec, and they would, if properly manned and armed, command the South Channel of Orleans in a way which would make it exceedingly hard to pass, even if the enemy was in great force, well handled, and trying to run through at night.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE FIRST FIVE-NATION WAR

1899

QUEBEC has already lived so many hours of glorious life that she can no longer make new history except on old historic ground. But, even in Quebec, there could hardly have been a stranger coincidence than that the first men to represent the Dominion in an all-Imperial war beyond the seas should have sailed from the very spot where their racial ancestors first united to keep Canada within the Empire. The Allan wharf, where the First Canadian Contingent embarked for South Africa in 1899, is close beside the base of the Citadel cliff, where Montgomery fell defeated in 1775, while attacking the Près-de-Ville barricade, which was defended by "the undaunted Fifty" French- and English-speaking British heroes who stood there at bay, "safeguarding Canada."

But the attention of the expectant patriots thronging the Esplanade was wholly centred in the moving present. The one historic fact they thought of was that Canada's first Imperial thousand had mustered, armed and sworn allegiance in the world-famous Citadel, and that no knight of old had ever made his vows at any shrine more sacred

to the God of Battles than their own Quebec. The war had kindled the fire of their new national pride. The start of the First Contingent fanned it into flame. Every part of Canada was represented in arms; and every form of her national life was equally represented by those who had assembled at Quebec to give the Contingent a befitting farewell. Lord Minto, representing the Sovereign, was himself a veteran of the North West Rebellion, the Prime Minister, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and the Minister of Militia, Sir Frederick Borden, had both taken arms in defence of Canada against the Fenian Raids, and the General, Sir Edward Hutton, had served through the previous Boer War. All four addressed the troops in stirring words, and the General rightly reminded them that they were expected to wipe out the shame of the surrender after Majuba.

It was certainly one of the greatest, and perhaps one of the most significant, scenes ever witnessed in Quebec. But, for me, it was, and always will be, little more than the setting of another scene, which holds only the single figure of my greatest chum. Jack Ogilvy had already done well in the Yukon Field Force, which was sent up to keep order in the mining camps during the first great gold-fever in the Klondike. He had returned just in time for the war, and was appointed Assistant-Adjutant, a greater honour than such a very subordinate position would have been under other circumstances. There were more than ten covetous applicants for every vacancy, and at least twenty officers anxious for each appointment; and Jack was only a junior subaltern of twenty-five,

with barely six years' service. There was no mistaking his delight at going on his first campaign; for he was every inch a soldier, through and through his whole six feet of eager youth. When the column marched on to the wharf he laughingly pointed his sword at the *Sardinian* and said, "It's—

‘A *British* ship sailed down the River’

this journey, and it's the *real thing* it's sailing to." This was in allusion to the old song he used to lead off with his splendid baritone at canoeing picnics on the Lower St. Lawrence—

A Yankee ship sailed down the River.  
Way-ho! the rolling River!

How often its resounding chorus had floated in to shore on moonlight evenings, or echoed along the overhanging crags of Cacouna Island!

. . . . .

All Canada remembers Paardeberg, and how well her men upheld her honour there and wherever else they fought till the end of the war. Jack marched on to his first battlefield as Adjutant, his predecessor having been invalided some time before. He did his duties thoroughly, and coolly as any veteran. The Canadians were keen for close action and not easily held in leash. So the men and moment were well mated when the time came for a rush, and Jack sprang to the front with an inspiring "Come on, Canada!" At Israëlspoort he took the Boer General's flag, a Transvaal *vierkleur* four yards long, which hangs beside me as I write these lines. By the end of his first campaign



he had undoubtedly won his honours well. He was one of the first two Canadian officers recommended for the D.S.O., which the King in person presented to him early the following year. And he was the first Canadian in the world to receive a direct commission as Captain into a regiment of the Imperial Army. No touch of distinction was wanting, for the regiment was no other than the famous Gordons; and every Lieutenant in both of its battalions had written to the Colonel to say how pleased they would be to have Jack come into it over their heads.

After spending his leave in England and Canada he went back to the front, this time as a Major in the South African Constabulary. He was now twenty-seven; with both feet on the ladder of promotion and every promise of a successful career. His letters kept showing his anxiety to "do something," so that he might justify the confidence which had been shown in him. But an accident that had nothing to do with the war very nearly cut him off before his opportunity. One wild night his scared riderless horse galloped madly up to his quarters; and his men naturally thought this told the usual tale of a good life stealthily taken by a sniper's bullet. But they presently found him lying dazed, though unwounded, where a stroke of lightning had hurled him from the saddle.

At last his chance came, and he took it with both hands. He found out that a slippery and mischievous little commando was in the neighbourhood; and he immediately set to work to get within sure striking distance and make a complete round-

up. His scheme was carefully planned and skillfully executed. His widely extended line was riding warily through sparse scrub when it began to close in on the Boer position. This, as so often happened, was well concealed and placed considerably in front of where an attacking force would have naturally expected to find it. But the sudden sharp crackling of hidden Mausers did not take him unawares, when it burst out just in front of where he was leading his centre. Some of the Boers began to bolt, others were evidently determined to stand their ground. In the twinkling of an eye Jack chose the only proper course. Rising high in his stirrups he shouted the one word "*Charge!*" His nearest men cheered; and in an instant his whole line quickened responsively to right and left and swept forward at full gallop. He saw the enemy divided in opinion and lost. He felt his charge would carry home, while his wings would certainly outflank and perhaps envelop them. Now he knew he had "*done something.*" This was *his* plan, *his* battle and *his* victory. For one vivid moment his ardent spirit blazed with the joy of triumph. The next, he and his horse crashed prostrate against the little stone sangar, both shot by the same bullet. An old grey-bearded Boer had marked him down as the leader and let him get so close that the bullet went mortally deep into his groin after passing through his horse's neck. The Boer ran for cover as soon as he had fired. But one of Jack's subalterns was too quick for him, riding him down and shooting him straight through the heart.

The doctor shook his head when he saw where

Jack was hit, and at once pronounced the wound fatal. But the heroic heart still beat with the wings of victory. "They got me," he said, "but I got them"; and he laughed. Then his mind turned to her who was giving up a newly-won but assured career as one of the world's great singers to marry him, a junior Captain, as poor as he was gallant. And, with the words of this dying message on his lips, the last spark of his conscious life went out.

None but a very few have ever heard of Klipgat in the Transvaal. It is, indeed, no more to the world at large than any other obscure, outlandish name that appears among other minor items of war news, and is forgotten as soon as read. And, even of those who followed the fortunes of the war at the time, how many remember now what happened there on the 18th of December, 1901? Only a handful of friends know this for the place and date of that far-off little skirmish. But these, who feel, most of all, that their loss was untimely, are yet the very friends who can never regret the manner of it. For this was Jack's own battlefield. And he fell victorious.

. . . . .

At the time of his death Jack held commissions in three different corps, all of which paid his memory such honour as they could. The South African Constabulary escorted him to the Gordon Highlanders, who buried him at Pretoria, in the plot of ground where so many more of their officers were laid to rest with the wail of the pibroch for their requiem. And the Royal Canadian Artillery in Quebec wore mourning for a month.



But he received even greater distinction on the 15th of August, 1905, when the Quebec South African Soldiers' Monument was unveiled by Lord Grey, the Governor-General of Canada, in the presence of Prince Louis of Battenberg and the officers and men of his Cruiser Squadron, of the whole garrison of Quebec, and of a concourse of people as great as that which had bidden the First Contingent farewell on the same spot six years before. Here the last honours were paid to one officer and eleven men, who, in life, would have saluted and waited for the orders of any one of the leaders present—naval, military or civilian; but who, by the transfiguration of heroic death, had now won the unquestioned right of themselves receiving the salute of the greatest in the land.

Jack's friend and mine, Frederick George Scott, wrote the quatrain on one bronze shield:—

Not by the power of commerce, arts or pen  
 Shall this great Empire stand; nor has it stood;  
 But by the noble deeds of noble men,  
 Heroic lives, and heroes' outpoured blood.

And I wrote the four words at the head of the other, which was the roll of honour containing the names of the twelve who died:—

FOR EMPIRE, CANADA, QUEBEC.

## CHAPTER VIII

### TERCENTENNIAL QUEBEC

1908

A CENTURY hence, when Canada will be celebrating her four hundredth birthday, our successors will undoubtedly quote the precedents established at the Quebec Tercentenary, and recognize, better than we can to-day, the profound significance of that unique event. I shall use the word unique several times this evening ; and I beg leave to assure you that I shall use it only in its proper meaning, by confining it strictly to those facts in the story of Quebec which are entirely unparalleled either in Canadian, Imperial or universal history.

To begin with what was unique in Canada. This was the first time that both races and all Provinces free-willingly united to make the history of one place the centre of a Dominion celebration. Next, it is not too much to say that here, for the first time, Canada stood forth in the eye of the world as a nation self-realized, from past to present and from sea to sea. Then, thirdly, the first organized Canadian army that ever gave any promise of preparing for war in time of peace was the one at the Royal Review on the Plains of Abraham. To these

three unique Canadian features we may add two of Imperial extent. The Quebec Tercentenary was the first celebration of its kind in all Greater Britain: it was the coming-of-age of the eldest daughter-nation of the Empire. It was also the first occasion on which the whole Empire joined in commemorating the deeds that shaped the destiny of any one part. The King was the Patron, and took an active personal interest both in the preparation and the execution of this most complex undertaking. The Vice-Patrons were the Heir to the Throne, whose presence emphasized the true greatness of this epoch-marking celebration in the opinion of every British subject, the Duke of Connaught, who wears a medal won in defence of Canada, and his son, Prince Arthur of Connaught, who went over the whole scene very thoroughly two years before. The President, always foremost among the hardest workers, was Lord Grey. And the Vice-Presidents, who were by no means a mere collection of figure-heads to swell the list with conventional prestige, included all our own Provincial Governors and the Prime Ministers and Leaders of the Opposition in every part of the Empire that has a parliament. Among them are names familiar to anyone who ever followed a public question of Imperial interest:—Mr. Asquith and Mr. Balfour, Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Mr. Borden, Mr. Deakin, Sir Joseph Ward, and two more, whose common membership in His Majesty's Privy Council is alone a lesson in British statesmanship—Dr. Jameson and General Botha. We shall hear more of General Botha later on.

Thus we see that there are three Canadian and



two Imperial points in which our national *fête* was quite unique. But even more striking are the two points which are equally unique in universal history. Quebec is the only place in the world where the fleets and armies of three Great Powers have met so often and shared the honour of such alternate victory and such glorious defeat. And Quebec is, again, the only place in the world where the modern representatives of three historic opponents have ever met to unite in honour of their own and one another's prowess.

I venture to assume that a subject which is seven-fold unique is worth a lecture. And I take this so much for granted that I actually dare to divide my lecture into three parts, which is usually a fatal method of procedure, as it arouses mixed memories of long-winded homilies and the opening school-boy stages of Cæsar's *Gallic War*. But I make bold to do this because the mere facts, however badly they may be set before you, cannot fail to be full of the most significant interest to every member of the audience here to-night. The three parts are, I—Preparation; II—The Celebration; and III—The Pageant. This may seem like pretending to give you an epitome of all things tercentennial, from the earliest times to the present day! But my pretensions are really much more modest. The proverbial full, true and particular account will require the co-operation of many authorities; and I can only speak for myself. Besides, I am not nearly so high an authority, nor did I ever wield nearly so deep an influence as the introductory remarks of your over-generous Principal might lead you to suppose. I was only a fly on the wheel; though,

by some peradventure, I did happen to be a fly on the hub of the wheel. And it was from that point of view that I saw then what I shall try to tell you now.

#### I—PREPARATION

What could be stranger than that the true story of the conquest of Canada, which took place in the eighteenth century, should have remained untold till the twentieth! And it is all the stranger because of the deep and world-wide interest excited at the time, and the more than a thousand accounts which have appeared in the hundred and fifty years since. Every one of these accounts written before the present century is inevitably wrong: because history can only be written from an impartial study of all the original evidence, and the original evidence did not approach completion till Dr. Doughty, the Archivist of Canada, began his work in 1900. Even the military documents were not completed till 1903. The naval ones were practically unknown, even to professed students, till quite recently; and the logs of those men-of-war whose sea-power alone made the conquest possible will only appear in print for the first time in the summer of 1909.

All this may seem to have very little to do with Tercentennial Quebec. But, as a matter of fact, it has everything to do with it. The finding and telling the truth of history is always of profound importance to the national life, because it is sooner or later bound to affect the public point of view, even among masses of people who hardly read anything but the daily paper. Many hard problems of to-day would be simplified, some might even be

removed, by a true appreciation of the great crises in our history. And let us bear in mind that we English-speaking Canadians have as many distorting half-truths to forget and as many new whole-truths to remember as have our French-speaking fellow-countrymen. It is not too much to say that ten years ago it would have been infinitely harder to get light without heat on the subject of the Battlefields. Ten years ago Vaudreuil would have been exalted as a French-Canadian hero and represented among the historic families whose living heads were the guests of the Dominion. Ten years ago Montcalm would not have been the national hero he was one year ago ; and French-Canadians would naturally have exalted Lévis far above him, to the utter violation of historic truth. Ten years ago Wolfe might have been robbed, like Montcalm, of the highest honours as a consummate general ; and who could have given proof positive to gainsay the detraction ? Ten years ago the British Navy would not have been generally recognized as the determining factor in both campaigns. In short, it is doubtful whether there could have been a really great Tercentennial Quebec at all had the anniversary fallen only ten years earlier than it actually did.

The story of the celebration begins with the century. In 1901 there was a prospect that the eighty-eight acres still shown to confiding tourists as the whole Plains of Abraham were to be cut up into building lots. This ground was not the scene of action between Wolfe and Montcalm, and only a portion of it touched the battlefield of Lévis and Murray. But, most fortunately for the success of the present magnificent scheme, the



Dominion bought it, as it is an essential link between the two real fields of honour.

In 1902 an unavailing protest was made against the building of the Ross Rifle Factory on the spot where Montcalm drew up his left and Lévis entrenched his right. The public did not know what was being done, or had been done when the gaol was built beside the spot where Wolfe died, till a flood of light was shed on the whole subject by the publication of Dr. Doughty's documents and plans.

In December, 1904, the Dominion Government gave the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec a grant to erect tablets to mark the spots where Montgomery and Arnold, who led the second American invasion of Canada, were decisively repulsed at the Près-de-Ville and Sault-au-Matelot barricades, on the last day of 1775, by Carleton's French- and English-speaking forces. The inscriptions tell their own tale. At Près-de-Ville the words are *Here stood the undaunted Fifty, safeguarding Canada*, and at Sault-au-Matelot, *Here stood her old and new defenders, uniting, guarding, saving Canada*. This reminds us that it is not one battlefield but all the Quebec battlefields that are to be handed down to posterity, in substance, so far as possible, and in commemorative souvenir where no more can be done. 1775 is, of course, most important, as the crisis which first drew French- and Anglo-Canadians together under one free flag. Lord Minto, who took a lively interest in the wording of the inscriptions, unfortunately left before the tablets were erected. The public does not connect his name with Tercentennial Quebec. But they certainly would if they

knew how clearly he foresaw the importance of the battlefields to our national life, what an able memorandum he wrote about them, and how he urged their preservation by every means in his power.

So far, what public interest there was had been centred entirely in the battlefields. But in the same month that the heroes of 1775 were being permanently honoured for the first time, Mr. Chouinard, the city clerk, was writing for the Christmas number of the "Quebec Daily Telegraph" the first suggestion of a Champlain Tercentenary for the 3rd of July, 1908. Nothing more, however, was done in this direction for the next fifteen months. In the meantime Lord Grey took up the work of preserving the battlefields. He visited Quebec in June, 1905; and, after examining the scene of both battles of the Plains, he paused at Wolfe's monument and said he would never rest until such sacred ground became the heirloom of all Canada. Only three persons heard this. But many millions know to-day how magnificently that purpose has been put in operation.

In 1906 the St. Jean Baptiste Society of Quebec took up Mr. Chouinard's suggestion for a Champlain Tercentenary and proposed that the celebration should be a Dominion one. A subsequent citizens' meeting, called by the mayor, proposed that the rest of the British Empire, as well as France and the United States, should also be invited to participate, and that steps should be taken to secure the patronage of His Majesty the King. In September the mayor appointed a Quebec Landmark Commission of three members, under the chairmanship of the Chief Justice, Sir François

Langelier, to study the best way of permanently marking the celebration. The Commission reported in favour of nationalizing the Quebec Battlefields. They felt that Champlain, as the far-seeing founder of Canada, was pre-eminently a man of the future, that he was the first of a long line of Canadian heroes, and that the Canada he founded was kept Canadian by the French and British who won equal honour, first as opponents and afterwards as the joint defenders of a common country.

In January, 1907, a Quebec deputation waited on the Dominion Government and proposed a Canadian historical museum as a fitting permanent memorial of the coming *fête*. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, however, suggested that the Quebec Battlefields, preserved as an open book for posterity to read, would be better still. You will thus see that a society of French-Canadians were the first to propose making the Champlain Tercentenary a *fête* for the whole Dominion, that a Commission of three, with two French-Canadians on it, reported in favour of keeping the Battlefields to commemorate this *fête* forever, and that another French-Canadian, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, determined the action of the Government in the same direction. This most generous and far-sighted action does infinite honour to French-Canadian statesmanship. While this great scheme was developing, Lord Grey had become an enthusiastic supporter of the Champlain Tercentenary. Then he and Sir Wilfrid Laurier made the masterstroke which united the Battlefields with the Tercentenary and carried both to a triumphant issue before an applauding world.

In April, 1907, it was decided to postpone the



celebration till 1909, and to open the Quebec Bridge in conjunction with it. This attempt to mix two incompatible things was frustrated by the awful accident to the bridge in August. For the rest of the year there was considerable doubt whether the celebration would ever take place on a great scale at all. But in November the appointment of a commission to study the commemorative features of the field of Gettysburg encouraged the hope that the Battlefields, at least, would not be forgotten. And in January, 1908, Lord Grey came to Quebec to see if the Tercentenary could be held that very summer, which was, of course, its proper time. At first, all except a very few declared this to be impossible—but a good many seeming impossibilities were successfully performed before that summer was over. Yet the prospect was undeniably appalling. A day before we thought there would be eighteen months for preparation; and everyone agreed that this was none too long. Now we thought we might at least have eight. The enormous difficulties which had to be surmounted before most of the actual work of preparation began consumed two of these short eight months. And then, in March, we suddenly found that the whole scheme, on a scale far vaster than we ever dreamt of, had to be worked out in only four!

I shall not trouble you with any more dates. But I must state the main elements of the problem which was in the throes of solution this time last year. It was a triple problem. Each part was extremely complex in itself. And all three parts were made more complex still by their interaction on each other.

First, the Battlefields. I cannot remember how many times I was asked, "How are you going to get round the French-Canadians"? and how many times my invariable answer, "Simply by telling the whole truth," was met by a stare of blank amazement. There certainly was some excuse for this astonishment; as the whole truth was very little known. It was very hard at first to get the *s* at the end of *Battlefields* into the public mind. A good many English-speaking people only knew that Wolfe beat Montcalm. They had, apparently, never heard of the second battle of the Plains when Lévis beat Murray in 1760. I doubt whether most French-Canadians felt the full strength of their own history. Montcalm was maligned in his lifetime and has been much misrepresented in Canadian history since. He is not well enough known, even now, as the hero of four desperate victories over the British forces in four successive campaigns. And it is not thoroughly understood that he provided against every possible contingency up to the very day before the first battle of the Plains, when he ordered the regiment of Guime to go and guard the path up which Wolfe came next morning. Nor is it thoroughly understood that he was constantly thwarted and finally undone by the machinations of enemies on his own side. It was Vaudreuil, the spiteful pettifogger, who countermanded, as Governor-General, this and many other wise orders given by the great Montcalm.

Then, there was much confusion of thought about Phips's attack in 1690, which was really the first *American* invasion of Canada. It was not

generally realized that when Frontenac, the Frenchman, repulsed it he was preserving our own Canada as surely as Carleton, the Englishman, was when he repulsed the second American invasion in 1775, or as Brock and de Salaberry, when they repulsed the third American invasion during the war of 1812. And nearly everyone seemed surprised that the French-Canadians shared the triumph of more victories than any other race did in all the battles round Quebec. The Americans, through the presence of two battalions of the Royal Americans, had their part in the glory of the first battle of the Plains. The British enjoyed two victories of their own, Wolfe's and Carleton's. The French had three, Frontenac's, Montcalm's at Montmorency, and Lévis's at Ste. Foy. While the French-Canadians shared these three with the French and Carleton's with their British-born fellow-subjects.

A synopsis of this was embodied in a general appeal on behalf of the Battlefields. You all know the result—how the Dominion voted an initial subscription of \$300,000, how Quebec and Ontario headed the provincial subscriptions with \$100,000 each, how the Mansion House Fund in London realized \$50,000, how far-off New Zealand sent one of the most generous contributions, how individual collecting went on in every part of the French- and English-speaking world, and how the Battlefields were finally dedicated as an heirloom of Canada for ever.

Now that we have arrived at this point in these really great matters I must crave your kind indulgence for a moment to intrude a little personal remark of an exculpatory nature, because it has



some bearing on the amenities which should subsist between lecturer and audience. A friend of mine warned me to be very careful what I said about Frontenac and Carleton, as there might be a good many Americans present, and they wouldn't like to hear about any American defeats. But, as you have just seen, I actually bring in Brock and de Salaberry, our victorious heroes against the third American invasion as well. In justification of this I respectfully beg to offer one trifling personal excuse and four really important reasons. I have the honour of being one-quarter American myself—and of ultra-American, New-England, Puritan stock at that. Having said this, might I venture, without too much offence, to intrude the further item of petty personal information, that I am also one-quarter French by descent and have French-Canadian blood-relations; so that the mere accident of birth, and no merit of my own, naturally pre-disposes me to sympathize with all the four races whose blood I share—British, American, French, and French-Canadian?

But this is a mere trifle, and I apologize for even mentioning it, as a lecturer's personality ought to be of no consequence whatever when he is dealing, as I am here, with facts and not opinions. Of the four reasons the first is that history has nothing to do with anything except historic truth, and the defeat of the three American invasions is certainly true. The second is that any complimentary perversion of historic truth would be a studied insult to intelligent Americans, who, of course, know better. The third is that Americans can bear the record of a few defeats quite as well as the British,

French, or French-Canadians, none of whose own defeats are either hidden or glossed over. And the fourth will surely appeal to all good tourists from beyond the line. What do they come to Quebec for at all? Why, to see what they can't see at home, of course. They say they love Quebec because it is so unique. Then, what could be more assuredly unique, and what more flattering because unique, than the only place in the world where Americans have been twice defeated on the spot, and from which other victors have set out to defeat them twice elsewhere?

The Tercentenary was not open to quite the same misunderstanding as the Battlefields; but it was intricate enough. Two foreign Powers were to be duly represented, France and the United States; also eleven Canadian governing bodies—the Dominion, the Provinces, and the City of Quebec; also the whole of the rest of the self-governing Empire. There were many bi-lingual committees—general, special and executive—which sat continually to deal with a multiplicity of vexed questions. The outcome of their labours speaks volumes for the harmony which prevailed in their councils. Then, there were three fleets of three Great Powers to be provided for, also the first approximation to a complete Canadian army ever brought together in time of peace, also an influx of visitors outnumbering the entire native population, also the representatives of the three historic Empires, of all the great historic families, of the historic places connected with Quebec, of the British Army, of many other interested bodies, and, finally, of the King himself. And everything

to be completed in four short months of intense preparation, where a single mistake might ruin all!

Then, it had been decided to have a Pageant—the first of its kind ever held in the New World and greatest ever held anywhere. It took a full year to prepare the Oxford Pageant. The Quebec one was carried through in these four months. Let anyone who has ever managed amateur theatricals imagine what it meant to raise and train 5000 amateurs for a performance the like of which had never been seen before in Canada. Fortunately, very fortunately, the London Pageant was postponed and Quebec secured the originator and greatest master of the modern Pageant, Mr. Frank Lascelles. He too, in the sense that he gave his services free, was an amateur, as was his secretary, Mr. Ernán Denis. To our discredit as Canadians many persisted for a long time in believing that these two patriotic benefactors were making a small fortune in some surreptitious way. And, to our further discredit, every jobmaster in the proper sphere of influence held out his itching palm for the usual illicit share of the spoils. We Canadians are unhappily forced to acknowledge that some ugly words of American origin and use are quite as applicable to much of our own public life, no matter what party happens to be in power. But, on the other hand, it was one of the finest features of this great success that the body of devoted public men on the National Battlefields Commission, under the chairmanship of Quebec's upright and indefatigable Mayor, Sir George Garneau, gave their services as freely as Mr. Lascelles, and saw



to it that the funds at their disposal were honestly spent to the best advantage.

Of course, the Pageant gave occasion for some French-and-English misunderstanding, which was, equally of course, accentuated by the mosquito press and sundry petty busybodies, who were by no means all French-Canadians. But here again the truth emerged in time to save the situation. When it was found that a Pageant managed by an Englishman, and at first performed by an unduly large proportion of Anglo-Canadians, was yet so French and French-Canadian that not a word of English was spoken in it from first to last, except by Phips's discomfited envoy, no reasonable suspicion could any longer be kept alive. The French-Canadians saw the matter in its true light and joined *en masse*. And when they did join they easily took the honours of the scene. They caught the spirit of it at once; and they excelled in the dramatic parts, both individually and collectively. They were, of course, quite at home, playing the favourite rôles of their own heroic history.

Since all ended so happily, and since every critical question only served to strengthen the growing friendship of the two races, thus brought into such intimate contact, there is no need to disguise the fact that the fate of the historic armies, and with it the fate of the Pageant and whole celebration, hung in the balance for several anxious days. The arguments in favour of having these armies were simply unanswerable. Some timid folk asked why should we have a Pageant with a celebration on a world-wide scale at all. But, two years before, the exclusively French-Canadian St.-Jean-Baptiste

Society of Quebec had, of its own free will, invited the whole Dominion to take part; a meeting of Quebec citizens, in which French-Canadians greatly preponderated, had unanimously asked that the invitation should be extended to include the whole British Empire, France and the United States; and the French-Canadian Prime Minister of Canada had brought in an Act of Parliament to nationalize the very fields on which the original armies met in alternate victory and defeat. Under these circumstances, no Pageant could stop short of, much less omit, the heroes of both battles of the Plains. All the world knew Wolfe and Montcalm. If they were left out, would not the world think there was something that had to be hidden? To the obvious objection that the world might only notice the first battle, the obvious answer was that here was the one golden opportunity to teach it about the second, and to draw its willing attention to all the other French and French-Canadian glories of Quebec. And to the final objection that the ultimate result was a French defeat, the answer was that the French Canadians and the British never fought each other alone, that, on the contrary, when they were alone together in Quebec, they fought and conquered, side by side, and that nothing could be more insulting to French-Canadians than to suppose that all their professed contentment with this ultimate result was mere lip-service to curry favour with a conqueror.

The historic armies were accordingly incorporated as the crowning scene of the Pageant. But then it took another week to decide how they were to march on and manœuvre. Some knave had started, and

some fools had believed, an idiotic newspaper nonsense-tale about a sham battle! The leaders of both races of course knew better. But that portion of the public, French- and English-speaking alike, which is always ready to believe any false news that happens to be bad enough, began to get excited. However, quite apart from the temporary mischief caused by this poisonous lie, the problem was sufficiently knotty at first sight. The French army could not march on from the Quebec side and the British from the opposite, without suggesting the first battle and Wolfe's victory. Nor could the position be reversed without suggesting the French victory of the following campaign. At last an idea struck one of the four nonplussed survivors of an interminable sitting that both armies should march on, side by side, and at right angles to the lines of advance and retreat of each army in either battle. This was immediately adopted; and two friendlier forces never met or parted on better terms.

To complete the significance of this crowning scene, Carleton and his French- and English-speaking defenders of 1775 stood on one flank, while, on the other, stood de Salaberry, the French-speaking hero of 1812, with his *Volunteers de Châteauguay*, among whom was a Quebec contingent, and Brock, the English-speaking hero of the same war, who was long in garrison at Quebec before he left to die in victory on Queenston Heights.

I have purposely dwelt with considerable insistence on the French-and-English question, because I am thoroughly convinced that there is nothing to fear from the truth. On the contrary, I am sure that the Pageant, the Battlefields and the whole



Tercentenary have promoted a better mutual understanding than ever existed in our joint history before. And I certainly think that due credit has hardly yet been given to the French-Canadians for their share in bringing about this devoutly wished-for consummation.

We must remember how naturally the mass of any people shrinks from being merged in constantly increasing bodies different from itself. It is not very easy for minorities to be generous. Is it always so easy for our own Anglo-Canadian minority in the Province of Quebec to be generous to the French-Canadian majority? Should we then be so ready to resent an occasional narrowness among the French-Canadian minority in the Dominion or the Empire? On the whole, it may be truly said that while there was a genuine and hearty desire, in all responsible English-speaking quarters, to give French-Canadians the fairest field and fullest favour, the French-Canadians, on their part, were at least the equals of the Anglo-Canadians, and under more difficult conditions, in losing prejudice and gaining generosity throughout the trying periods of the tercentennial year.

To give you a quite honest account of all that was planned and carried out I should confess our failures. But as they were mostly in details of organization I suppose you would not care to hear them catalogued. The moral of all failures is always the same: that the only way to organize any victory is to give experts time and means to lead disciplined enthusiasts to the desired end. In my humble opinion only three really important mistakes were made. Whenever you have thou-

sands of amateurs you should have a good professional staff to keep touch between leaders and followers, and between each part and the whole. We had generals and regiments enough ; but we might have had a stronger staff. Then, it seems a decided mistake ever to have contemplated a postponement till 1909, a doubly objectionable year, and ever to have thought of dragging in the incongruous opening of the Quebec bridge. The third mistake was probably a moot point to many far abler minds. But to my own it always seemed, and still seems, a detraction from the whole celebration to have left out the greatest of all the historic characters, William Pitt, the Empire-maker.

Taken for all in all, however, the Tercentenary was an unchallengeable triumph—brilliant to the eye, moving to the heart, deep to the understanding, and fraught throughout with untold significance.

The longest and driest part of my discourse is now over ; and we shall be able to turn, not perhaps without some relief, to the actual celebration and the living story of the Pageant.

## II—THE CELEBRATION

By Wednesday, the 22nd of July, Quebec was astir with the centred life of a whole people. The meeting of the scions of her mighty past with the international representatives of a mighty present had already quickened her to many-sided interest. Wolfe and Montcalm, Lévis and Murray and Carleton, once more trod her streets, in the

persons of their living next-of-kin. The Mayor of Brouage, the old French town which gave birth to Champlain, now looked on the capital of a New France to which Champlain himself gave birth. Admiral Jauréguiberry was as worthy a representative of France and her Navy to-day as his distinguished family had been of both in historic times ; and, for this double reason, he was *persona gratissima* in Quebec. Mr. Fairbanks, as Vice-President of the United States, had the official status of a Crown Prince. Clan Fraser, so justly noted for its soldiers and settlers, was represented by its Chief, Lord Lovat. And as Lord Lovat may be called the Scotch representative, so the Duke of Norfolk may be called the English one and the Earl of Ranfurly the Irish. It was not without its significance that the representatives of the two Protestant countries were Roman Catholics, that the Fraser name and blood are current among the French-Canadians, that the Duke of Norfolk is the Premier Peer of the British nobility, that both he and Lord Lovat served in the Boer War, and that Lord Ranfurly was a most popular Governor-General among the ultra-democratic New Zealanders. He was one of the three British Proconsuls present, the other two being the Earl of Dudley, once Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, now Governor-General of Australia, and, of course, Canada's own good friend and Governor, Lord Grey. Then, Newfoundland, eldest of all the British Colonies, was represented beside United South Africa, youngest of all aspirants to Confederation.

So here were representatives of the whole self-ruling Empire ; while the turbans of some Indian



officers reminded us of that other Empire, where more than three times as many people as there are in the United States are governed by Lord Minto, who served with distinction against the North West Rebellion, the first purely Canadian campaign, and who was our Viceroy when the first Canadian Contingents were sent to fight for the Empire beyond the sea. It was a great pity that India was not fully represented by some of her ruling princes. This was no fault of Lord Grey's, none of Lord Minto's, and, as was found out later on, none of the princes' own. Had another than the "official channel of communication" been used, or usable, we might have had all the Oriental splendour we wanted, coming at its own expense. And what a lesson in the width, depth and variety of Imperial grandeur and responsibilities! You will remember how the destinies of East and West were intertwined even so far back as the retrocession of Louisburg and the retention of Madras.

To crown all, the Fleet and Army, which the Mother Country still maintains almost alone for the defence of all, were represented by a squadron of her battleships and cruisers, and by her greatest living soldier, Lord Roberts, the only man who has ever commanded forces from every part of the Empire united for a single war.

But this was not all. Though thousands of visitors had been flocking in for a week, though fleets had been entering the harbour, though troops had been marching into camp without a break by night or day, though from the Heights you could see ships, tents and battlefields, and though every street and open space was swarming with eager

crowds, Quebec was still vibrant with expectation. Was not the Heir to the King of an Empire as large and thrice as populous as the whole New World coming to honour the founder of a country the size of Europe, and to dedicate the most sacred spot within it, where the fate of nations was decided?

He came in the full splendour of a perfect summer day; and his arrival befitted the occasion. He came by sea, as British rulers should. His ship, that all were waiting for, was the *Indomitable*, the latest model of combined strength and speed in the oldest and greatest Navy in the world; and therefore the best to fly the Royal Standard of a sailor Prince. On the greatest of all tidal rivers the British, French and American Squadrons lay at anchor to receive him. On the wharf where he was to land, and on and up from there to the topmost heights of walled and citadelled Quebec, stood double lines of Canadian soldiers, still immature as an organized army, but having a long and very honourable military past, and standing on ground made immortal by the two races from which they were descended. Suddenly, over the low foreshore of Point Levis, the tops of the escorting cruiser *Minotaur* appeared; and the next minute her long, clean-cut hull glided swiftly into view. As suddenly, the immense crowds, clustering round every point of vantage, stirred a moment, swayed intently forward, and changed from a concourse of individuals to a single expectant mass of humanity. One minute more, and the *Indomitable* herself also glided into view, the very embodiment of tense force held in leash. Immediately the fleet in the

harbour manned and dressed ship from stem to stern. Then the British, French and American flagships led the thunderous salute, which was instantly repeated by every vessel present, and by the grey fastness of the Citadel, crowning the heights more than three hundred feet above. Into this magnificence of welcome the *Indomitable* advanced, stateliest of all : her armoured shapeliness along the water-line, her well-trained crew on deck, and her multitudinous flutter of flags aloft, making her a sea-throne fit for a Prince whose finest title is The Lord of the Isles. Having reached her berth there was a heavy plunge and splash, as her huge anchor was let go, then the hoarse roar of her chain cable rushing through the hawse-hole, and then, almost before this ceased, the first strains of the National Anthem, rising from ship after ship. Thus, in the presence of his Heir and special envoy, the King's Majesty arrived in Tercentennial Quebec.

Thursday was devoted to Champlain. And it was much more than officially appropriate that the Prince should lead the ceremonies in honour of the founder of Quebec. Both have Norman blood, and both are known as good seamen afloat and statesmen ashore. Champlain sailed up the harbour in his famous *Don de Dieu*, with the flood tide flowing, a favouring breeze, and every stitch of canvas drawing. This little vessel, of only 120 tons, was as nearly a facsimile of his own as human wit could make her ; and his crew was also the same in numbers, in dress, and even in blood, as that of three hundred years ago. There was a curious contrast when she berthed next the gigantic



*Indomitable*, which, being of 18,000 tons, was just one hundred and fifty times her size. But there was an equally interesting coincidence in the fact that both vessels held the transatlantic record of their day. Champlain made the quickest passage then known when he went from Honfleur to Tadousac in eighteen days. And the *Indomitable* holds the present record, for having speeded home, from land to land, in sixty-seven hours. Another link between Champlain and our own day is that he was the first to propose a Panama Canal.

The Indians were on the look-out. They put off in their war canoes, and a parley ensued over-side. Then they paddled the strange, kind Pale-faces ashore. Unfortunately, not many people saw the Indians in their canoes close enough to appreciate the scene. Nothing could have been finer in its way. These Indians were no suburban human curios, but the genuine, full-blooded red men, two hundred strong, brought down from the Far North and West, both to learn and teach at the Tercentenary. Whoever loves canoes and the strength and beauty of the human form—and what Canadian worth his salt does not love both?—would have seen at least one perfect crew here to gladden his delighted eyes. Crested with waving war-plumes, and stark naked to the waist, every one of its eight six-footers was straight as an arrow and full of supple vigour as a bow. No sculptor could have wished for better models than these sinewy living bronzes, driving their canoe ahead with that perfect harmony of rhythm between craft and crew which made them part of the very poetry of motion.

On landing, Champlain first went into an exact

reproduction of the *Abitation de Kébeck*, which stood near where the original had been built three centuries before. When he came out he took his place in the long procession of Canadian history, which immediately began to file off. As it mounted the hill and marched past his statue—one of the very few public works of art in Canada—the spectator could see the whole line of our history in five centuries, from the sixteenth to the twentieth. First came the Heralds-at-Arms and Men of the Watch, exactly as in mediæval times. Then Jacques Cartier and his three crews, 110 men strong, the same as when he discovered Quebec. Then a gay, many-coloured cavalcade, the mounted court renowned in the annals of historic pageantry at the Field of the Cloth of Gold. At their head rode Jacques Cartier's King, Francis I. with his Queen and his bewitching sister, Marguerite of Angoulême. Next came Champlain's King, the equally famous Henry of Navarre. You all know the old refrain :—

Vive Henri Quatre !  
Vive ce roi vaillant !  
Ce diable à quatre  
A le triple talent  
De boire et de battre  
Et d'être un vert galant !

He excelled in arms and arts, as every national hero should excel ; and was admired and loved by women, as men who excel in arms and arts deserve to be.

Then came Champlain himself, de Monts, Pont-gravé, and their men, the founders of the country and its pioneers, greater even than the first dis-

coverers. Next, Dollard and his sixteen heroes of the Long Sault, who, as every Canadian knows, saved the infant Colony by an act of self-sacrifice which can never be surpassed, because they foreknew their earthly doom from the very moment they set forth to stay the furious invasion of the Iroquois. These were succeeded by explorers and founders of towns. And here we are reminded that the Anglo-Saxon is not the only adventurous race of modern history. The French were often original in their ideas and brilliant in their first moves into the unknown world. The pathos of their daring lives is that they were leaders without a national following, without the security of sea-power behind them, and without a free-growing colony beside them. But take them for what they were themselves, and they well deserve our lasting admiration. I could wish their names were better known in English-speaking Canada—La Violette, de Maisonneuve, Bienville, Iberville, La Salle, Marquette, La Vérendrye. Look at the portrait of La Salle if you want to see the spirit of exploration shining through the veil of the flesh!

A new era began in 1665, with the arrival of the Marquis de Tracy and the Régiment de Carignan-Salières, fresh from its victorious campaign against the Turks. These, like their predecessors and successors—except Duluth, St. Lusson and Mdlle de Verchères—will be met again in the Pageant. Duluth headed some *Coureurs des Bois*, those adventurous spirits whose vagaries used to make their paternal Government get as anxious as a hen that's hatched a brood of ducklings. But the Government were right in objecting to their real



excesses and the unsettling effect of their example. Then came St. Luson and the men who took possession of the illimitable West in 1671. Then Frontenac, whose striking personality dominates one of the best scenes in the Pageant. Then the female counterpart of him and Dollard—Mdlle de Verchères, who held the Iroquois at bay with a courage as undauntable as that shown at Rorke's Drift against an equally pitiless foe. Finally, there came the historic armies of Wolfe and Montcalm, Lévis and Murray, Carleton and Brock. As there were a few old people who could remember the Canadian Rebellion, and many more who could remember the proclamation of the Dominion, on the ground at the head of Mountain Hill which the procession passed on its way up, it was literally true that every single great phase of our history was present to the eye or living memory, from the sixteenth century to the twentieth. I say the twentieth advisedly, because the Tercentenary was not only commemorating history but actually making it as well.

That evening the illuminations blent all the works of Nature and Man into one vivid picture traced in fire. Against the intense darkness the characteristic contours of Quebec stood out in bold relief—heights, slopes and levels—with emphasis of concentrated brilliance on every salient feature. The outline of the Levis shore was revealed, in the same way, by tier upon tier, cluster after cluster, and many sinuous connecting lines of lights. While between the sheer black of its banks, from which these latticed myriads of diamonds were flashing, the dark St. Lawrence gleamed with a fleet so

phantom-like in all but its mere brightness that you would have thought the dread leviathans of day had been replaced at night by ships from fairyland.

On Friday morning all roads led out to the Plains of Abraham, where an international force of twenty thousand men was drawn up for the Royal Review. It was an inspiring sight in more than met the eye; though the sight itself was surely inspiring enough: all that disciplined human strength, trained for the noble duty of national defence, standing on part of the stage of universal history, and in the midst of a vast natural amphitheatre which is one of the scenic wonders of the world. Here were three Great Powers, once more represented in arms on their old field of honour; but this time in the rivalry of peace, and side by side with Canada's new army. I say army, not militia, to mark the transformation that is taking place, none too soon and far too slowly, from a mere collection of isolated units to something more nearly approaching a cohesive whole. The old militia had not even the isolated units for many necessary branches of an army; and an army is a living organism, continually undergoing waste and needing repair. So it was an excellent object-lesson to have the medical, transport, commissariat and other necessary non-combatant departments represented on parade.

The troops just filled the ground, drawn up, as they were, in two lines of quarter columns, infantry in front and mounted men in rear. The contour of the Plains made every man visible to the spectator; and, as you looked at the parade, you saw something of all the forces which have made,

and which must maintain, the Empire. The Heir to the Throne represented the King, from whom all officers receive their commissions, and to whom all that take arms swear allegiance by land or sea. The British Navy, that still protects Canada without receiving any support from Canadian resources, was represented by a Naval Brigade, some thousands strong, under Sir John Jellicoe, the hero of the relief of the Pekin Legations. The British Army was represented by the last soldier to hold the office of Commander-in-Chief and the first to appear in Canada as a Field-Marshal, Lord Roberts of Kandahar, Pretoria and Waterford. Every rank was also represented, from his down to the junior subaltern's, as well as every great part of the Empire, East and West, North and South, Old World and New. Of course the Naval Brigade, as belonging to the Senior Service, took the right of the line. Next to it, mass upon mass, came the Canadian infantry, so drawn up, according to its territorial districts, that, as you ran your eye down the dense ranks of red, khaki, or Rifle green, you saw Canada in arms from every single quarter of the land, all the thousand leagues of way between the Atlantic and Pacific.

The march past was managed with an almost German or Japanese exactitude. The three Naval Brigades went by first. Perhaps it is prejudice, but I always think the British sailors look more to the manner born than any moustached foreigners; and they certainly should, being the heirs of so many naval ages. First on their own element they were a good second on the soldier's, when they passed with just that well-balanced sway which



distinguishes men who have to use their sea-legs. The best march past of all was decidedly that of the Royal Canadians, who, as you know, constitute the Infantry arm of our Permanent Force. Their step, swing, dressing, distances and general precision left little to be desired. The Highlanders naturally excited the greatest sumptuary interest, and drew a hot and continuous fire of snap-shots from hundreds of cameras. And, after all, there *is* something in the philosophy of clothes, and a sartorial touch of distinction, with a great tradition behind it, is by no means to be despised, in its proper place. There was not much to choose between the best of the red, green, or kilted corps; and there was nothing worse than second bests on parade. The mounted troops naturally labour under disadvantages as compared with infantry; and their appearance was certainly less smart. But, on even terms, they would at the very least have held their own. The Royal Canadian Dragoons, who are regulars, were different; and the turn-out of their Royal Escort was practically perfect. The three men who most deserved the well-earned honours of this occasion were the Minister of Militia—Sir Frederick Borden; the Inspector-General—Sir Percy Lake; and the Chief of the Staff—General Otter. But the great personal military feature was, of course, Lord Roberts, who rode past early in the Review as Honorary Colonel of the Queen's Own Rifles, to the great delight of the immense concourse of spectators. He is also Honorary Colonel of the Royal Canadian Artillery, and, as you all know, an old gunner officer himself. He certainly had no

reason to be ashamed either of his old Arm of the Service or its new Canadian representatives. When the last corps had cleared the front, after passing the saluting base, the two regular batteries of Horse Artillery formed up at the extreme end of the Plains ; and then down they came, at full gallop, as hard as the horses could lay hoof to the turf, and swept past the Prince in faultless order, from the first line of guns to the last flying limber.

The Celebration continued throughout the last twelve days of July, and, as you see, I have only mentioned three days so far, and only one feature on each of these ! But if I am to keep within the hour and a half so kindly allowed me, and still tell you something about the Pageant, I must greatly reduce the number of events to be described and condense my remarks about those selected. I could easily talk of fifty interesting things. But I shall take only five, and say very little indeed about each one. They do not lack variety :—Lord Roberts on the Quebec Battlefields, Lord Grey's Empire Dinner, The *Messe Solennelle* on the Plains, the Prince at a French-Canadian village, and the Historical Ball.

There was little anyone could teach Lord Roberts about the Battlefields. Very few Canadians know them half so well after seeing them as many a recent distinguished visitor has known them before. We might well do more to learn our great history on the spot. When King Edward's Garter Mission was in Japan some of its members, who made a genuine "surprise visit" to an historic spot, were astonished at the ready answers given by any casual

inhabitant. Now, it is within the bounds of truth to say that surprise visitors might possibly find less local information in certain spots in Canada. Students of military history might like to know that Lord Roberts accepts as final the evidence which proves the victory to have been due to Wolfe's own initiative, secrecy and skill, working out a consummate plan based on British sea-power. There was a fine touch in his getting out of the carriage to walk up the hill in Wolfe's footsteps, and a still finer when he stood for some time all alone in the Ursuline Chapel, under the Lamp of Repentigny and half-way between the grave of Montcalm and the pulpit from which Wolfe's funeral sermon was preached by the chaplain of the British flagship a fortnight after the battle. You might also like to know that an Ursuline, now perfectly clear-minded at ninety-four, spent several of her early years in the convent with Mother St. Ignatius, who, as a girl, stood beside the grave when Montcalm's shattered body was lowered into it, that dreadful midnight, a hundred and fifty years ago.

The Governor-General's Empire Dinner at the Citadel gathered round one table, as never before in Canada or in all Greater Britain, a Prince of Wales, three great Proconsuls, several Prime Ministers, and many leaders in the main pursuits of life. Lord Grey, who has done more than anyone else to promote the personal touch across the North Atlantic, made a happy remark in the same connection when proposing the Prince's health. "Sir, in making yourself acquainted with every portion of the Empire you have given an example



which it would be well if those subjects of the Crown who have the time and money would increasingly follow." The Prince's reply was short and happy, with good points, well driven home. It was a pity that the Tercentenary hardly gave him full scope for his power as a public speaker. There is a prevalent idea that kings and other royalties never compose their own speeches, and could not if they tried. Sir Thomas Browne might have entered this among the *Vulgar Errors* of his day, and we might apply it as such to our own. The man who composed and delivered the "Wake up, John Bull!" speech at the Guildhall in 1901 is much fitter to compose other people's speeches than they are to compose his. And it is no fulsome compliment, but a critical truth, to say that George V gives a new distinction to the old expression of "the King's English."

There was an effective Imperial moment when Sir Wilfrid Laurier, in proposing the health of self-ruling Greater Britain, drew out of his pocket a letter from General Botha, who said, in allusion to the Conference of the Fathers of Confederation in South Africa, "it is our intention to follow in the footsteps of Canada as soon as possible." Here were two British Prime Ministers, one a French-Canadian, wearing, like the Prince's uncle, a medal won in defence of Canada, the other a Boer, who, only six years before, had been Commander-in-Chief of the hostile forces which Lord Roberts went to fight.

The *Messe Solennelle* on the Plains of Abraham was marked by unaffected sincerity and grandeur, from the first strains of the Priests' March, as a

processional, to the final elevation of the Host, when all those tens of thousands

. . . knelt upon the simple sod  
And sued *in formâ pauperis* to God.

The Duke of Norfolk and Lord Lovat, two great Roman Catholics from Protestant Great Britain, were present as worshippers. M. Louis Herbet, Conseiller d'État of the France that used to be "le soldat de Dieu" in Canada, was most conspicuously absent.

On Monday the 27th the Prince went down to spend an informal morning at the Château Bellevue, thirty miles below Quebec. Here he strolled about freely, meeting the *curé* and *habitant* in familiar intercourse, with such lively satisfaction on both sides as to prompt the suggestion that another and longer Royal visit of an intimate kind could hardly fail to have the happiest results.

On Tuesday the Parliament Buildings were given over to the Historical Ball, where every period was illustrated, from Jacques Cartier's discovery to the war of 1812. Two classes of people were a little more self-conscious than the rest—those who merely had "real" costumes and those who appeared as their own ancestors. Real brocades and ornaments cost money; and the former class was therefore as interesting as money in clothes can make one. The latter had the flesh and blood of the makers of their country to think of as well; and that might possibly be considered some small distinction for, one night only, even in the present age.

Is there any moral to my story? I think there is; but, when I have pointed it out, I think you

will say it is so very trite and obvious that you would have been just as wise without it. However, I shall venture to draw it, for all that.

Who is not stirred by Milton's thrilling apostrophe to Parliament?—"Ye Lords and Commons of England! consider what nation it is whereof ye are, and whereof ye are the governors: a nation not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit; acute to invent, subtile and sinewy to discourse, not beneath the reach of any point the highest that human capacity can soar to." That Parliament had nine generations of political wisdom less than ours; and it knew nothing of what a blatant public calls up-to-date civilization. Yet its members will bear favourable comparison with ours to-day in many essentials. What a damning indictment it is against the mass, when we have to commend individually our personally honest men! Free self-government before all else; but it will never answer our higher purposes unless we can produce a higher type of leaders. Another point in statesmanship that should touch us all most intimately is the relations between our two races. I have dwelt insistently on this already; but I return to it, to ask why more of our educated Anglo-Canadians will not try to see how French-Canadian questions appear to French-Canadian people. Remember that though French-Canadians often make English the language of the head, they always keep French as the language of the heart. Lastly, though some might think this beneath the dignity of statesmanship, why did we miss the golden opportunity of giving the children an object-lesson for life? The Germans send their



brightest school children to Kiel, to see the High Seas Fleet ; and their Reichstag votes their Navy Bill. The Japanese put their children in the front row whenever there is anything of national importance to see ; and they have come into the circle of great World-Powers at a single spring. Why did we have no cadets at our Royal Review ? There was nothing the Prince would have seen more gladly. Why were a few picked school children not sent from every Province to see Tercentennial Quebec ?

The world is still passing through a phase of evolution in which war is a determining factor. Patriotism is therefore the first of national duties. It is profoundly scientific in essence. It is also the most exalting national duty, being based on discipline, which, in its turn, is based, in the last analysis, on self-sacrifice. And we boast not a little of our Canadian patriotism. Yet the Review suggested just a suspicion of the modern football match, where thousands who never play the game look on and yell and criticize, while a handful provides the mob of them with entertainment. No one that loves Canada wants her to be taxed in purse and person beyond what is reasonable for national insurance. But no patriot can think we do our duty when our Permanent Force is far below one per thousand of our population, and when our Active Militia is far below one per hundred, has only twelve days' training, and is habitually short of a third of its officers. Cheap and nasty criticism of the Militia can be had in plenty without the asking. But the true spirit of service can not. And if it is objected that the

force is only playing at soldiers, the unanswerable rejoinder is that no public service in a free country can take itself more seriously, as a whole, than the electorate takes it.

As for the intellectual life—what is to be said of that which hardly exists? By the intellectual life of a country I mean pure science—not commercially applied science, good as this is in itself—and the art that grows naturally out of a people's life and is racy of the soil. We have the borrowed, the imitated and the hothoused varieties in abundance; but not the native art in literature, music, painting, sculpture and architecture. And the native cannot be forced: you can't get genius by Act of Parliament, not even at Ottawa, nor yet by puffs in the Press, not even at Toronto, Montreal and Quebec. It must grow from congenial soil; and when Canadians really want it they will get it, as others have, but not before.

Quebec is a thing of beauty, if ever there was one. And the architecture composes delightfully, in the mass. But all the architectonics are Nature's. Man's individual works are hardly art. The Basilica is rather quaint, the Anglican Cathedral looks like an essay in geometrical drawing, and most of the public buildings are only etiquette in stone. An hotel is the most impressive structure; but it could not be even advertised as the result of inspiration. Painting and sculpture are not much better, though fine statues are beginning. Music has something to its lasting credit in the air of *O Canada!* which has the open breadth, the strength and the soaring quality of sound that suits the nobility of a national anthem. That it

may find some great Anglo-Canadian poet to make it appeal, with the essential difference, to the larger part of our people, and that it may then entirely supplant *The Maple Leaf*—the flattest, stalest and most unprofitable tune and jingle ever squawked in public—are two consummations devoutly to be wished. But the Tercentenary called forth no music of its own, no poetry, and nothing in prose that was at all like original and creative literature. Well, we must try again. We must try as a whole people, yearning for that fit expression of aspiration and achievement which genius alone can give us.

### III—THE PAGEANT

Eight hundred miles from the open sea the mighty lift of an eighteen-foot spring tide will carry you through those Narrows of the St. Lawrence which the Indians called Kebeck. Here an ocean meets a continent, the Old World meets the New; and all the approaches are surrounded with befitting majesty. For a hundred miles you have been coming up a water avenue ten miles wide, bordered by the sheer Laurentians on the north and by gentler hill-horizons on the south. Then, thirty miles below the port, you enter the Orleans Channel, where the narrow view is closed in by lesser heights, and humanized by bright scenes of cultivation and white little villages. Suddenly the scene becomes vaster than before. As you pass the West Point of Orleans you can hardly believe that the leaping flash of Montmorency Falls, to the right, is a hundred feet



higher than Niagara. But in front is the Citadel, another hundred higher still. The Bason is like a lake, its farther shore—the well named *Côte de Beaupré*—continues down the North Channel of Orleans into the blue distance; and behind and beyond all are the Laurentians again, sweeping round, from where you left them below the island, in an enormous semicircle of eighty miles. But even this is only one-third of the panorama that greets you from the Plains of Abraham, whose tableland forms a long, narrow promontory between the St. Lawrence and the Valley of the St. Charles. For there you find yourself on a natural stage, in an amphitheatre two-thirds of which are formed by the far-spreading uplands that stretch away to the corresponding curve of the mountains on the south.

Like an ancient Greek choosing a site for a theatre that was to be part of the scenery surrounding it Mr. Lascelles chose the best among the good. His open stage for five thousand performers and auditorium for fifteen thousand spectators stood between the fields of the first and second Battles of the Plains, overlooking a magnificent and most historic reach of the St. Lawrence. Wooded ground, sloping down to the right, afforded cover to the multitude of actors, without hiding the view beyond. Through it runs the path up which Wolfe climbed to victory. A half-mile further up stream is Sillery Point, where the French first challenged him. And half channel over is where he recited Gray's *Elegy* when making his last reconnaissance in a boat the day before the battle. Close in under the cliff is Champlain

Street, along which Montgomery led his Americans to death and defeat in 1775. And a few yards from where he fell is the wharf where the first Canadian Contingent embarked for South Africa in 1899.

But the River, the great, fleet-bearing River, which has been the highway of history since Canada began, calls up more memories than the land, and remains the strongest of all links between the past and future of the country. Where Jacques Cartier sailed by in 1541 to build his fort at Cap Rouge, where many another eager pioneer, haunted by visions of the golden East, went seeking that westward New-World passage to Cathay which is still commemorated in the place-name of La Chine, now ocean liners go by with the hosts of immigration, equally eager, in a more sober way, but set upon finding homes where their forerunners only saw an obstructive waste. Such was the setting of the Pageant.

The scene opened with an empty stage, except for the wigwams of Stadacona, the Indian village that preceded Quebec. The farthest point of the stage overlooked the river a bow-shot from the auditorium. Presently a single Indian scout appears on it and scans the St. Lawrence. Suddenly he sees three sail, unlike what he had ever dreamt of. He calls out the alarm, and is immediately surrounded by the Braves. While this strange apparition holds the Indians spellbound Jacques Cartier and his men land and mount the hill, singing a folksong of *St. Malo, beau port de mer*, known then in Normandy and still in Canada to-day. Jacques Cartier is dignified and gracious,

and distributes gifts freely. The Indians are wonderstruck and friendly. They gaze in awe at the White Man's sign as his crew raise a huge cross, thirty-five feet high, with a king's escutcheon on it, and the legend *Franciscus Primus, Dei gratia, Francorum Rex, regnat.* Jacques Cartier then reads a few verses from the Gospel of St. John. The simple savages take him for a god; and their chief, Donnacona, leaves for France with him, amid the farewells of the whole assembled tribe.

After a pause, all eyes are suddenly drawn to the distant glittering advance of a royal cavalcade, as it issues from the dense Forest of Fontainebleau on to the glad light-green of the sunlit grass. For nearly half a mile it winds its brilliant length along, all gaiety of movement, colour and gallant life, from glinting hoof to quivering plume. The King and Queen ride under a canopy, while the hundreds of cavaliers and ladies of the court rein up in a respectful semicircle. There must be some diversion for the pleasure of such a Court; and the semicircle is hardly formed before the bushes are all astir with fauns and satyrs; who dance onward round the triumphal car of their own Queen, whose face—aglow with youthful loveliness of classic feature, Southern colour, a lustrous eye and flashing smile—gave this interlude a dominant charm that raised it into perfect harmony with the other glory of the scene. Then the courtiers are more curious still, as the first Indian they have ever seen steps forward, makes obeisance, and, in the clear ringing tones of a man who is himself a king, tells of his own people and their vast dominions, stretching out from Kebeck, which is the Narrows of a stream so unchal-



lengably first in all that land of waterways that *The Great River* is its only name.

The next scene shows Henry IV giving Champlain a commission to take possession of the country discovered by Jacques Cartier for Francis I. The whole aspect of the stage has been changed in the twinkling of an eye. This Court is in the Presence Chamber, enclosed by walls of high, white tapestry, inwrought with the golden fleur-de-lis. A smooth blue carpet is spread for the Pavane, which is danced by a hundred courtiers to the original music, before the King and Queen, who have entered with their guards and suite and taken their seats on the throne of France.

Again the scene is completely changed; and the inhabitants of the infant colony of Quebec are seen waiting for Champlain's return in 1620. He is received with unbounded joy by French and Indians alike. Champlain has left us such minute descriptions that it was easy to reproduce this scene exactly as it happened in reality—the ox-cart in which he and his girl-wife were drawn home in triumph, the pow-wow and calumet dance, and the songs that carried the colonists back in fancy to *la belle France*.

The arrival of La Mère Marie de l'Incarnation and her Ursulines in 1639, and the Marquis de Tracy and the regiment of Carignan-Sallières in 1665, made two scenes which showed effectively the continuity of the Roman Church. Every other participant in these and all other scenes was obliged to put on what we absurdly call a "fancy dress" when we mean an historical costume. But Bishop Laval and his suite, as well as the Ursulines and Jesuits, were not. The present hierarchy took the

keenest pleasure in ensuring a worthy representation of the religious scenes, in which many priests took the parts of their spiritual forefathers. Owing to this pervading seemliness everything was carried out amid an atmosphere of respect that speaks highly for the vast throngs who were looking on. It was almost as if the modern audience became the historic one that actually stood by to see the sword of France receive the welcome of her cross.

A salvo of artillery from the River announces that Phips, with his American invading squadron, is summoning Frontenac to surrender Quebec in 1690. His blindfolded envoy presently appears, and is amazed to find himself, not among a few cowering citizens, but in the presence of the Viceroy and his officers, who have just arrived after a splendid forced march. However, Lieutenant Thomas Savage is a stout fellow, too; and he pulls out his watch and gives Frontenac an hour to answer. Then Frontenac, whose personator, M. d'Artois, was the best single character in the whole Pageant, takes fire and rejects the summons with the historic words: "Tell your master he shall have my answer at once, and from the mouth of my cannon!"

The parting shots of Phips and Frontenac have died away. The sacred stage is once more empty; and all is silence. But it is the silence of eager expectation and suspense. The culminating moment has at last arrived for a sight such as no man has ever seen before, since history began. Nothing is visible beyond the stage. But everyone in the auditorium knows and feels that the French and British armies of the two Battles of the Plains

in 1759 and 1760, and the united French- and English-speaking armies that saved Canada from the American invasions of 1775 and 1812, are waiting on the slope between the edge of the stage and the edge of the cliffs for the bilingual words of command which will set them marching on to the actual scene of their immortal deeds, and in the actual presence of their great leaders' living next-of-kin and of a future King-Emperor George, the heir of the two Sovereigns in whose similar name Canada was made and kept a British land. The sharp commands float up; there is the stirring roll of drums and blare of bugles, with the measured tread of advancing feet. Then, for just one second, the standards of France and Britain appear over the crest, waving proudly, side by side. Next instant, Wolfe and Montcalm, Lévis and Murray, ride into view with their staffs and mounted standard bearers; then, with French and British shoulder to shoulder, in corresponding columns, the four armies of the three wars, twenty-seven regiments strong.

Montcalm's Grenadiers marched with Wolfe's Grenadiers of Louisburg; and so on, two corps together, from front to rear. Wolfe himself was personated by one of his next-of-kin, Lieutenant Passy, of the Royal Canadian Engineers, who, curiously enough, is of French blood on his father's side. The prevailing colour among the French was white, among the British, red. The Royal Roussillon, that stood the longest, fought the hardest, and lost the most, of course wore blue, as a royal regiment. And the Canadian Militia had coloured tuques and grey, *étouffe-du-pays* coats.



Fraser's Highlanders had the old short kilt and plain Tam-o'-Shanter bonnet with a single ostrich feather. The Royal Americans were, in many ways, the most interesting corps, as being the military ancestors of every Rifle Regiment in the British service, and as thus perpetuating, in the present Rifle Green, the original British-American backwoodsman's green jacket, in which the recruits joined when the regiment was first raised, in 1755, in the Colonies which now form part of the United States. The most interesting flag was the Regimental Colour of the 7th Royal Fusiliers, which was the only regiment of regulars with Carleton at Quebec in 1775. The original colour was taken by the Americans in the Revolutionary War and is now at West Point. When the Duke of Kent came out to Quebec in 1791, in command of the regiment, he brought a facsimile made by the Royal Princesses and presented by his father the King. This is still preserved and was copied exactly for the Pageant. So the Prince of Wales, who is the present Honorary Colonel of the 7th, saw here the facsimile of the colours made for his own great-grandfather, and made in imitation of those belonging to the same regiment which helped Carleton to save Canada for the British Crown.

This whole scene formed a most thrilling sight ; and one that was deeply appealing to those of either race and tongue. And it was most significant to see Wolfe and Montcalm, Lévis and Murray, together in the centre, with Carleton and Voyer on one flank, and de Salaberry, Brock and Tecumseh on the other. But more thrilling, more appealing, and more significant than all else was the call of the

blood across the centuries. And who that then felt it stir his pulse can ever deny that the crowded hours of glorious life which really make a man or a nation are the ones best worth the living, and that, by our answer to this ancestral call, on the very ground from which it came, we have gone far toward exalting our own day above the catalogue of common things ?

## CHAPTER IX

### AN URSULINE EPIC

#### I

**I**N the heart of Quebec is an oblong block of houses, about a quarter of a mile long and half as broad. The streets on three sides of it bear the names of St. Ursula, St. Louis and St. Anne. But saints' names alone are nothing unusual in Quebec. It is only the crooked little street cutting off the fourth corner that shows you the sole point of contact between a convent and the outside world. This oblong is the property of the Ursulines; the houses in it all face outward; behind them stands the convent wall; and within the wall the cloisters and a garden of some seven acres.

You wonder what the nuns think and talk about during their few spare moments in that little life apart, when they never go outside the precincts, and papers are so scarce inside. True, their friends and pupils tell them what is going on in the world; so a good deal of innocent gossip passes in to them through the double cloister *grille*. This, however, is only an interlude. But since before Confederation they have had one topic of absorbing interest to their whole community. And now they are on the very tiptoe of expectation for



the first rumour of decisive news from Rome, about the long-sought beatification of their first and greatest superior, La Mère Marie de l'Incarnation. They explain how many, many difficulties they have had to overcome; how dishearteningly slow their progress was for so many years, because they did not know the proper method of procedure; and how often they had to begin over and over again. At last the assessors appointed by the Court of Rome appeared to put the nuns through the final cross-examination. One sister, who had made a special study of La Mère Marie's life, can tell you how she occupied the witness box for thirteen days; and that it is the hardest thing in the world to get the very best of women made a saint. But now even Rome itself must be satisfied; and the Holy Father will soon proclaim a saint throughout both worlds. Yes: the Ursulines have something to talk about, after all!

But why should La Mère Marie become a saint; and what did she really do for Canada? The following pages are an attempt to answer this question from French and French-Canadian sources and a Roman Catholic point of view. They are, in fact, her eulogy. There is no devil's advocate to plead against her; no outside public in the jury; no doubting critic on the bench. But the well-attested evidence in her favour is so strong that it would be worth stating for its own sake; while, quite apart from every question of the beatific life, she claims attention from all Canadians because she was the prophetess, as Laval was the prophet, whose steadfast inspiration upheld Canada through the 'Three Years' Horror that began with the

Iroquois fury of 1660 and ended with the seven months' earthquake of 1663. It is only fair to add that, *eulogium* though these pages are, they are written by one who is only a quarter French by blood, not French-Canadian at all, and far from being Roman Catholic.

## II

When Louis XI lay on his death-bed, in his château of Plessis-les-Tours, he wished to send the holiest man he could find to bring the greatest saint of Christendom to console his last days on earth. Courtiers and populace all agreed on the same individual, the great-great-grandfather of La Mère Marie, who was accordingly sent to Rome and on to the wildest part of the Calabrian coast, whence he brought back the famous ascetic, St. François de Paule. No members of the family prized this signal honour more than the parents of Marie Guyard. Her father, who was a silk merchant, had such a reputation for piety and justice that his decisions carried more weight than those of the courts of law; while her mother was his equal in devotion and his helpmeet in good works.

Marie was born on the 18th of October, 1599, in the old royal city of Tours, amid *ce doux pays de la Touraine*, which Belleforest has called *le jardin de France et le plaisir des Roys*. "Do not ask me why I love Touraine!" exclaims Balzac, when describing the valley of the Indre from Azay to Montbazon. Here, and along the Loire, are all the finest châteaux: Amboise, with its terraces and

chapel ; Chenonceaux, with its gardens, its white walls, its towers rising sheer from the water, and its romantic memories of Diane de Poitiers and Catherine de Medici ; Azay-le-Rideau, a vision of beauty, set in the woods beside the winding river ; Loches, with its ancient towers and ramparts massively rooted into its steep hill ; and Chinon, where the statue of Rabelais looks down on the market-place and over the quiet quays beside the Loire, where Henry II breathed his last, and where Charles VII was called to the relief of Orleans by Joan of Arc. And the heart of Touraine is Tours, calm and beautiful on the southern bank of the Loire, which lingers past in slow meanderings. Here stood an archbishop's palace, here soared a great cathedral ; and here was set that exquisite little gem of Gothic architecture, La Psalette, all aglow with the sacred music which so took the ear of the young Marie and wrought her heart to ecstasy.

But her deepest and most thrilling form of ecstasy came to her in visions of divinity. She had always been a religious child, and every predisposing influence carried her on toward the fulness of self-surrender and devotion. The piety of her family was a Touraine tradition ; the first words she could articulate were *Marie* and *Jésus* ; she had hardly learnt to read before she showed a marked preference for books of edification ; her favourite work was succouring the poor ; her favourite amusement was "playing nun" ; and her favourite holiday was paying a visit to the Benedictine abbey of Beaumont, where the abbess was her mother's cousin. Her first vision was in



a dream, when, as she afterwards wrote, she saw Heaven open and Christ come toward her in human form : *Ce plus beau des enfants des hommes, avec un visage plein d'une douceur et d'un attrait indicibles, m'embrassa, et, me baisant amoureusement, me dit : "Voulez-vous être à moi ?" Je lui répondis : "Oui" ; et, ayant eu mon consentement, nous le vîmes remonter au ciel.*

No wonder that a child like this longed for the life of the Benedictines whom she saw so often and who were so kind to her ; nor that her cousin willingly promised to intercede with Madame de Beaumont for her future admission to the order. She then confided in her mother, who also encouraged her. But there the matter stopped. She was meditative, timid and reserved ; and it never occurred to her to open her mind in the confessional beyond what she thought a penitent should say there. She knew nothing of private spiritual directors, who would certainly have led her on. So the Benedictines lost a nun, to Canada's great advantage.

When she was seventeen her parents wished her to marry a silk manufacturer, almost as pious as her father. Her answer was idiosyncratic to the last degree : *Ma mère, puisque c'est une résolution prise et que mon père le veut absolument, je me crois obligée d'obéir à sa volonté et à la vôtre. Mais si Dieu me fait la grâce de me donner un fils, je lui promets, dès à présent, de le consacrer à son service ; et si, ensuite, il me rend la liberté que je vais perdre, je lui promets de m'y consacrer moi-même.* Both vows were afterwards fulfilled.

Nevertheless, her marriage was a happy one.

Madame Martin, as she had now become, was a very practical mystic, and a most capable partner in her husband's business. At the same time she lost no opportunity of shepherding his employees into the one true fold and making them her daily congregation. Doubtless, her pilgrim soul was often grieved by their stay-at-home contentment with the good green earth of rich Touraine, where many a Mimnermus probably went to church, even in those ardent days, when religion was a *casus belli* for the whole of Europe.

At nineteen she was left a penniless widow by her husband's sudden death and failure. Tall, handsome and of commanding presence, capable in management and pious in every thought and deed, she had no lack of eligible suitors. But she would never consider re-marriage for a moment; and she only remained outside the cloister for the next twelve years in order that her son should be old enough to be left with the Jesuits before she made her vows. Never for a moment did she relax her self-imposed ascetic rules for the mortification of the flesh. She literally clothed herself in sack-cloth, and practised so many other physical discomforts that her spiritual directors always had great difficulty in keeping her penitential macerations within due bounds. During four years she lived in utter self-abasement, as the servant of the servants at her brother-in-law's. This relative, who was at the head of a great forwarding business, was only too glad to promote her at the suggestion of her director; and she suddenly passed from below the menials to the local superintendence of sixty horses and a hundred men.

For eight years the business prospered exceedingly; and she completed an apprenticeship in practical affairs which served her well during her pioneering life in Canada.

But none of these alien years of successful business management saw any worldly interlude in her religious life. They were, indeed, only more steps up the *Scala Sancta* of her soul. Her visions were no longer childlike dreams, but such as led her Spanish prototype, St. Theresa, through the seven abodes of the spiritual castle—*el Castillo Interior o las Moradas*—and so toward divine espousal with the Son of Man. On the eve of the Incarnation, in 1620, she had recommended herself to God's providence in her usual formula—*In te Domine speravi, non confundar in æternum*—and had set out for her daily work. Then, as she walked beside the city moat, came the flash of apparition. Her whole being stood at gaze; while the panorama of her past was unrolled before her, with all her sins standing out in the shamed dark, against the accusing whiteness of the light of truth; and with the life-blood of her crucified Saviour pulsing to her feet.

The vision over, she entered the nearest church and begged the first priest she met to hear her full confession. Returning next day for absolution she determined that her true conversion was to be counted from this anniversary of the Incarnation; a circumstance which suggested her name in religion, La Mère Marie de l'Incarnation.

Some years after, in a re-birth of unquestioning hope, she was at last caught up again within the highest rapture of heavenly delight; as once before,



in her first dream-vision when a child. *Je conversais familièrement avec Notre-Seigneur, et mon cœur s'élançait par un mouvement extraordinaire vers ce bonheur que je ne pouvais comprendre. Jésus-Christ me dit distinctement ces paroles: Sponsabo te mihi in fide, sponsabo te mihi in perpetuum—Je t'épouserai dans la foi, je t'épouserai pour jamais.*

Divine espousals are so essentially characteristic of convent visions that they are always the favourite point attacked by those who sit in the seat of the scornful outside the cloisters. The adverse formula says that the devotion of all celibates is only the parental instinct of self-sacrifice gone astray, and that a Divine Spouse is only a nun's hysterical substitute for a more carnal object of affection. But this contemptuous view shuts out one obviously common-sense point of refutation, which is almost too profanely worldly-wise for mention here. It simply is that no woman would make it the object of her life to bring in as many other brides as possible for her own beloved spouse, unless her affections were truly spiritual and the object of them divinely infinite.

Opinions will always differ about the signs which mark the calling of a life apart. But all the world agrees that the essential fitness of such a life for the higher aspirations of mankind can only be tested by its resultant actions. So we, who are bent merely on estimating the good influence that La Mère Marie exerted on Canadian history, might judge her by her works alone, if it were not that her visions, faith and works together made a triune all-in-all. This being so, we cannot hope to understand any one part of her life if we wrest it from

the whole. We must reckon with faith and vision as practical determinants at every turn. And, to gain a still further insight into her peculiar case, we must call such a supremely competent witness of the beatific state as St. Theresa, whose evidence goes far to prove, by sympathetic analogy at least, how close the psychic correlations are, even if the visions are only subjectively existent. In the 28th chapter of her autobiography she gives her conclusion of the whole matter: "Like imperfect sleep, which, instead of giving more strength to the head, leaves it only the more exhausted, mere imaginings only weaken the soul. . . . A genuine heavenly vision yields her a harvest of ineffable spiritual riches, and an admirable renewal of bodily strength. I gave these reasons to those people who so often accused my visions of being the work of the enemy of mankind and the sport of my imagination. . . . I showed them the jewels which the divine hand left with me—they were my actual dispositions. All those that knew me saw that I was changed. . . . As for myself, it was impossible to believe that if the devil were the author of this change he could have used means so contrary to his own interests as the uprooting of my vices and the filling me with masculine courage; for I saw clearly that a single vision was enough to enrich me with all that wealth."

When she was thirty and her son twelve, La Mère Marie committed him to the Jesuits and entered the Ursuline convent of Tours. The nuns were eager to hear her expound her visions, especially one of the Trinity, which is strangely like Dante's in the final canto of the *Paradiso*:

Nella profonda e chiara sussistenza  
 Dell' alto lume parvemi tre giri  
 Di tre colori e d'una contenenza :

In that abyss

Of radiance, clear and lofty, seemed, methought,  
 Three orbs of triple hue, clipt in one bound ;  
 And, from another, one reflected seemed,  
 As rainbow is from rainbow : and the third  
 Seemed fire, breathed equally from both.

She freely told all that she had seen beyond the veil of the flesh ; and by her human aptitudes, no less than by her other-worldliness, was soon in perfect harmony with the life around her.

The Ursulines were originally founded on St. Catherine's Day in 1537 ; two years after Jacques Cartier's discovery of Quebec ; a time when the full flood-stream of Renaissance and Reformation was beating against every bulwark of the Roman faith and government. Ignatius Loyola and Angela of Merici hurried to the defence of the dangerous breach made in Catholic education, and set to work to rebuild it under fire. In 1540 Loyola drew up the constitution of the Jesuits, in which the education of boys stood first of all in relative importance. Four years later the Sovereign Pontiff approved the constitution of the Ursulines, in which the first place was given to the education of girls. "I have just given you sisters," said Paul III to St. Ignatius, after signing the document. How this Pope would have rejoiced to see his famous dictum so signally borne out a century later, in the distant mission field of Canada !

The novitiate over, La Mère Marie chose the conversion of St. Paul for her profession ; and



accordingly, on the 25th of January, 1633, she made her final vows. At the time she seems to have chosen this day only because it reminded her of her own conversion, and not from any sense of missionary zeal. But two years later she dreamt of meeting a lady she had never seen before, and of taking her by the hand and going a long journey into a strange country, pointed out by an apostle who met them by the way. An idea that she was not to spend her life among the Ursulines of Tours kept on recurring; but it seemed so impious that she kept on as continually repulsing it. The other nuns began to notice her obsession; and one day she broached the subject to Father Dinet. This famous Jesuit, soon to become the King's confessor, said he thought the hand of God was pointing her to Canada. She had never even heard of such a country before; but it quickly filled her whole imagination. *Je ne vis plus d'autre pays pour moi que le Canada; et mes courses ordinaires étaient parmi les sauvages, avec les missionnaires.* A pilgrim's staff from Notre Dame de Lorette and a copy of the *Relations des Jésuites*—both coming anonymously from an unknown Canadian missionary—still further inflamed her zeal. But the convent life went on around her as usual; and she was at a loss to know whether or not she had been called elsewhere.

At this juncture another unknown friend was coming to her side. Madame de la Peltrie, née Marie Madeleine de Chauvigny, was of the *haute noblesse* of Normandy. She had been well married and left a widow, though her own inclinations had always been toward the cloister rather

than the world. One day she read Father Le Jeune's appeal for a devout woman to convert the Indian girls of Canada : *et depuis ce temps*, says La Mère Marie, *son esprit fut plus en Canada qu'en elle-même*. But her road thither bristled with worldly obstacles. She had run away from home and taken refuge within a convent in a vain effort to escape her first marriage ; and now her family were bent on making her contract another. She was noble, rich, attractive, and much sought after ; and she was at her wits' end what to do. In her extremity she asked a consummate Jesuit director, who advised her to tell her troubles to M. de Bernières, a man devoted to the cause of missions, and throw herself upon his protection as her husband. This pious layman, who also desired a life-long celibacy, was astounded at her proposal. But his own spiritual director was of the same mind as hers ; and many common friends were instant in proving how desirable it would be to take such means to reach so good an end for the sake of the missionary cause. Finally, as both parties were equally unwilling to marry, it was agreed that no marriage should take place, but that the world should be allowed to believe them man and wife, in order that M. de Bernières should manage Madame de la Peltrie's large property in France, while she went out to Canada as the benefactress of the Ursulines. A visit to the holy man already known as "the archangel of human charity" made her resolve irrevocable ; and so the great St. Vincent de Paul must be reckoned among the founders of the convent in Quebec.

Meanwhile M. de Bernières was writing to La

Mère Marie about Madame de la Peltrie, and Father Poncet, who had sent the pilgrim's staff, was writing to Madame de la Peltrie about La Mère Marie. The two women were thus brought together under the happiest auspices, and immediately became fast friends. A third now appeared, La Mère Marie de St. Joseph, an Ursuline who also had read the *Relations des Jésuites* with awakening devotion to the same cause. Her whole family—de la Troche de Savonnières—rose in horrified protest against the idea of her going out to the dreadful heathen wilderness. But the three women stood together; and presently arrived in Paris, where the wildest rumours about their proposed Canadian mission had preceded them. They became the vogue; and when the Archbishop refused to let a Parisian Ursuline go with them he was besieged by great ladies, headed by the Duchesse d'Aiguillon; and when he fled the capital to escape this importunity, the Queen herself pursued him with royal messengers, though in vain. La Mère Marie had a long audience of the Queen, who seemed much interested in this daring religious venture beyond the outer seas. Anne of Austria might well have sighed for some of the peace of mind which the Ursuline leader wore like a suit of living armour, for her own life was the unhappy sport of a king and two great worldly cardinals. The King treated her with cold neglect, Richelieu pressed her with unwelcome amorous advances, and Mazarin, whom she really loved, used her heart as a stepping-stone to power. Her harmless flirtation with Buckingham, told with such gusto in the immortal *Trois Mousquetaires*, was turned to



malicious account by Richelieu when first presenting Mazarin at court : "Your Majesty will like him : he has quite the air of a second Buckingham."

Several troubles beset La Mère Marie while still in Paris. M. de Bernières fell seriously ill, and her son came to implore her not to leave for Canada. The young man had been leading *la vie à vingt ans* for a few months, though his wild oats would have made a very absurd little handful in the eyes of any genuine *viveur*. The mother's influence soon prevailed; and he afterwards became the Benedictine Dom Claude Martin, of pious memory. But new troubles followed M. de Bernières' recovery and the arrival of the party at Dieppe. The de la Troche family sent post-haste to arrest the daughter they thought so mad. The trading company of New France said they had no more room left aboard their vessels. And the third Ursuline had not yet been found. But La Mère Marie persuaded the alarmed family to let La Mère de St. Joseph go, with their blessing on her undertaking. Madame de la Peltrie chartered a vessel of her own. And a most devoted third nun was found in La Mère de Ste. Croix, who joined from the convent at Dieppe.

On the 4th of May, 1639, the little flotilla set sail with ten passengers for the service of God in Canada : three Jesuits, three Hospitalières to found the Hôtel-Dieu in Quebec, our three Ursulines, and Madame de la Peltrie. They had hardly cleared the harbour when a new danger appeared, in the form of a hostile Spanish fleet coming up the Channel. The French were only just in time to sheer off, stand over for the English coast and hug the shore there till the enemy got hull-down astern.

The voyage was long and stormy; and just as the last verse of the office was being sung on Trinity Sunday an alarm of '*Ware ice!*' brought all hands on deck to see a berg threatening the destruction of the ship. Father Vimont even gave the general absolution. But La Mère Marie never flinched for a moment. Her letters tell us how carefully she arranged her dress, "so that it might befit her modesty when the end came;" and other witnesses relate how, with one arm round Madame de la Peltrie, she stood foremost to face apparent doom. At the last moment the vessel veered just enough to graze past the berg.

On the 1st of August the nuns were rowed up from the Island of Orleans in the Governor's barge and landed in Quebec amid the acclamations of the whole assembled colony.

## III

The landing of La Mère Marie de l'Incarnation was indeed an event of deep national importance. She is unquestionably one of the five founders of New France, and her fame with posterity is quite as secure as that of Champlain, Laval, Frontenac or Talon. The little band of colonists could not foresee this; but they recognized her at once as their fellow-pioneer, the leader of the first *religieuses* to answer the call of their new, wild, far-off home. Canadians were then in dire need of men, money and material from the *Mère Patrie* to safeguard their country's infant life against stark, constricting circumstances. Yet they freely gave a heartfelt welcome to a woman who brought no other wealth

than that which is the only inheritance of the saints on earth. Their hopeful faith in her was amply justified by history, both before and since her time. For, besides being one of the five founders of New France, she was the third of three great nuns whom the three great Latin races brought forth in the service of the Church of Rome at three most critical epochs. All three had a close affinity of devotion; but this was made effectual in the widest diversity of environment. The Italian, St. Catherine of Siena, was the last of the really mediæval saints; the Spaniard, St. Theresa, was the first great woman leader against the Reformation; while in La Mère Marie colonial France found the Moses and Joshua of what proved to be the Promised Land of Canada.

St. Catherine of Siena is one of the most intimately human and intensely sympathetic of all the saints. She was all things good to every man and woman she could influence; and no one that met her could fail to be influenced by her magnetic moral genius. Her letters are full of plain speaking against ugly sins; yet none are more wonderfully persuasive. She did in very truth become the spiritual "dearest sister" of each correspondent, and the "Slave of the servants of Jesus Crucified"; and no one better understood how many different ways of holiness could lead to the one Heaven, adapted to every variety of character: "in my Father's house are many mansions" was her favourite refrain. The world had need of her in that lax age of sundering strife, which is only too well described in the chronicle of Neri di Donato for 1373: ". . . The Brothers of St. Austin killed their Provincial



at Sant' Antonio, and in Siena was much fighting. At Assisi, the Brothers Minor fought, and killed fourteen with the knife. The Brothers of the Rose fought and drove six away. . . . So all Religious everywhere seemed to have strife and dissension among themselves. And every Religious, of whatever rule, was oppressed and insulted by the world. . . . It seems there are divisions over all the world. In Siena loyalty was not observed; gentlemen did not show it among themselves or outside; nor did the Nine among themselves, nor with people outside, nor did the Twelve. The people did not agree with their leader, nor exactly with any one else."

The youngest of the twenty-five children of a common dyer of Siena, St. Catherine was only sixteen when she had already lived down the opposition excited by her precocious ecstasies, her visions, her vows and her ascetic practices. Devoted followers began to gather round her; and she threw herself into the work of rescuing errant souls from this mad flux of evil, with all the effectiveness of the practical mystic. It was characteristic of her that when she started on a pilgrimage, at the age of eight, she took bread and water with her, lest the angels might forget her on the way. Her success in personal persuasion was the wonder of her own age, as it has been of all succeeding. The consummation of her visions came on the last day of the carnival of 1367, when she was divinely espoused to her Redeemer. Henceforth she knew herself "bought with a price." She had previously become a Dominican tertiary, one of those devout women who live at home under religious rule.

She never sought the cloisters ; but, on the contrary, became more active in domestic and social life as time went on. She quickly got into touch with people of all classes, all occupations, all opinions. There never was a wider correspondence : with two Popes, several cardinals and many humbler "religious" of both sexes ; with the King of France and the concupiscent Giovanna, Queen of Naples ; with the reclaimed Brother William of England, and with that redoubtable freelance, Sir John Hawkwood ; with the members of her own humble family and with others as various as they were many. Yet it was only in 1377, when she was thirty, that she learnt to write. Before this she had been dependent on the secretaries who willingly came to her from every walk of life. She became an ambassador in bonds for the Pope. She went to Pisa and Lucca to persuade these towns not to join an anti-papal league. For the same purpose she went to Florence, where a Papal Legate was flayed alive, and where she just missed martyrdom herself in 1378, to a regret as poignant as Togo felt because Tsu-shima denied him a victorious death. She was sent as an Envoy Extraordinary to and from the Papal Court ; on what were practically international affairs ; and at Avignon in 1376 she certainly became a self-appointed Minister Plenipotentiary, and gained her ends by sheer moral suasion. This alone fixes her historical position firmly within mediæval times. It would almost be a modern parallel if the Tsar Alexander II had sent Father John of Kronstadt to checkmate Lord Beaconsfield at the Congress of Berlin, and if Father John had nominated himself

into the chair for the two Peace Conferences at the Hague.

By the irony of fate she failed only in world-politics. She bent all her energies, she literally gave her very life, in a vain attempt to unite Italy and the rest of Christendom round the universal Church, centred in Rome and reformed from within. She did, indeed, do more than anyone else to bring back Gregory XI from Avignon ; and Urban VI began with a fury of reform. But the one had the velvet glove without the gauntlet, and the other the gauntlet without the velvet glove. Besides, the times were hopelessly out of course for the nice readjustment of temporal and spiritual affairs from the obsolescent mediæval point of view. She was too late and too early for the work on which she had set her heart. She was too late, because the age of St. Francis was the last when any such scheme would have had a chance of acceptance throughout all Christendom. She would have made an excellent Franciscan in all departments of woman's aid, from the revivalizing tours with the saint—which did, within the Church, what Methodists and Salvationists have since done outside it—to the royal interview between "Beatus Ægidius" and St. Louis, whom she would have found a far more kindred spirit than the other King of France to whom she wrote. She was too early, because no Luther had yet roused Loyola and Theresa to lead a counter-reformation in that part of Christendom which was naturally Roman Catholic by temperament and circumstances. And, in her own generation, she could have little affinity with the intellectual Joachites, the followers of the



holy Joachim da Fiore, who thought the Church had not always been the same, and that it should develop dynamically in adaptation to the needs of a changing world. The Joachites were, in fact, empirical evolutionists, and not favoured by the upholders of static religion. Had they published a manifesto it might have waited till our own day before getting the stamp of *Nihil obstat, Imprimatur*. Protestants might suppose this privilege would never have been granted at all. But let them look at *The Priest's Studies* of Dr. Scannell, which actually recommends works based on the theory of evolution as applied to theology, and which passed the censor with flying colours in the very year of the "Modernist" Encyclical.

And so this most human of saintly women died at thirty-three, the very age of Christ, heart-broken at having failed in her Church and State reform; but leaving an example of mediating service between God and man that will quicken individual effort to the end of time.

St. Theresa's worldly circumstances were entirely different. She was born in 1515, of aristocratic family, at Avila, in gallant, proud, sententious Old Castile. As a child she had the true Don Quixote love of books about knight-errantry. At seventeen she was a pretty *débutante*; and doubtless spoke the language of mantilla, fan and eyes as well as others of her sex and people. Even when she entered the local Carmelite convent of the Incarnation, she acquiesced, though with qualms of conscience, in the rather worldly intercourse that went on there. "For twenty years I was tossed about on a stormy sea in a wretched condi-

tion ; for, if I had small contentment in the world, in God I had no pleasure. At prayers I watched the clock to see it strike the end of the hour. To go to the oratory was a vexation, and prayer itself a constant effort." It was only in her fortieth year, after her father's death, that the sight of her Saviour's wounds struck her so intensely that she fell in tears before the crucifix, while every worldly emotion died within her. In vision she saw herself as a clear but formless mirror, which shone with the inner light of Christ. She felt his bodily presence so constantly that she named herself Theresa of Jesus. An angel then appeared and pierced her heart with a fire-tipped lance : a mystic act which became a favourite subject with religious artists and is still represented in the frontispiece of all her books of devotion. She immediately began reforming the Carmelite practice, and, of course, met with strong opposition. Finally, in 1562, she opened a little house of her own in Avila, with four poor women living under the strictest rule. Here she spent her five happiest years, following every self-denying precept, and writing her immortal works. Philip II valued her manuscripts so highly that he kept them in the richest cabinet in the Escorial, and always carried the key about his person. She died in 1582, and was canonized by Pope Gregory XV forty years later.

There are many curious links, historical and psychological, connecting these three saintly women with each other and with their religious affinities. St. Theresa, who did so much of the woman's work in aid of the Jesuit effort against the Protes-

tants, was canonized in the same year as Ignatius Loyola. La Mère Marie has been the accepted *Ste. Thérèse de l'Amérique* ever since Bossuet first called her so; Pope Paul III told the Jesuits he was giving them sisters when he approved the institution of the Ursulines; and Jesuits and Ursulines worked together as the pioneers of education and conversion in the early days of Canada. St. Catherine of Siena is the true psychological link between St. Theresa and St. Francis, and the Franciscans were the first of all missionaries to America, whither they went with Christopher Columbus on his second voyage in 1493.

Instances might easily be multiplied; and many comparatively trifling coincidences added, such as that Diego de Yopez, Philip II's confessor, published the Life of St. Theresa in 1599, the year La Mère Marie was born. But what is most significant to the Church's universal work is that the three women were not really so much alike as complementary. St. Catherine was of lowly origin, only learnt to read after she was grown up, and to write three years before her death. She embodied the best traditions of mediæval sanctity, and yet was almost Pauline in her exhortation and persuasiveness. St. Theresa was highly born, well educated, and the first of modern female saints. She did not write so much to exhort and persuade directly as to reveal and justify. She did not live in the tumultuous world as St. Catherine did, and her only statesmanship took the special form of expanding and consolidating her Theresian Carmelites. The St. Catherine we know from her



quick-worded letters is a woman appealing to soul after soul to help the Mother Church with their own salvation and re-union. The St. Theresa of the autobiography and *El Castillo interior* is a steward of the mysteries of God, a high priestess who enters the Holy of Holies alone, and afterwards re-tells to the faithful the message revealed to her beside the Ark of the Covenant, in presence of the Cherubim.

La Mère Marie was neither highly nor lowly born, though very well connected on her mother's side. She was more statesmanlike than St. Catherine, more practical in worldly matters than St. Theresa. They were of mediæval and modern Europe: she was a pioneer and missionary in the sternest of the New-World wilds. There, when the colony was still in its impressionable youth, her cunning hand fashioned the moulds for the same work that her two sister saints had done within their own spheres of usefulness, and fashioned them in a spirit at once akin to and adaptively different from theirs. Her pen, too, completed their accounts of Church activities, from a nun's standpoint, by telling the first story of convent life in North America. It is true that she wrote no formal work, and that her letters are rather documents than history. And it must be admitted that her writings are not, and never will be, French classics, as St. Catherine's are Italian classics to a certain extent, and St. Theresa's are Spanish classics altogether. They are just a little like very good dispatches, and by just so much they miss the saving grace of a native style. They were generally written under great pressure of

time, amid many distractions, and partly as reports. So their very nature prevents vivid presentation, and keeps them on the lower literary level of description. The spiritual passages are always excellent; but here the lack of a sustained context and of the instinct for the one inevitable word combine to prevent the expression from doing full justice to the ideas. The saint, in fact, was greater than the author.

It is her life, rather than her letters, that is the important point even to-day. And this was of still more importance at the time she came to Canada. For she came as the inheritor of a great tradition, as the third of a trio of nuns who played a great interdependent part in the history of their Church, as the foundress of the first convent, as the first educator of Canadian girls, and as the first white woman to evangelize the Indians. And what heightened the importance of all this was that the French-Canadians were then, as they are now, by tradition, training and consent, the most Roman Catholic community in the world. She had no dire troubles within the Church to strain her heart to death, as St. Catherine had; no challenging Protestants to confute, like St. Theresa. Her spiritual warfare was the universal one against the powers of evil, and her earthly work was against savagery and the forces of nature. In both she was prepared to acquit herself excellently well. And her landing at Quebec was indeed an event of profound significance.

## IV

Quebec was then but a tiny outpost on the edge of an unknown, illimitable wilderness. It had been in precarious existence for only some thirty years. Its founder, the staunch and pious Champlain, had died a little over three years before, leaving it with barely a hundred inhabitants. It had only three small public buildings, Fort St. Louis, the storehouse of the *Cent Associés*, and the parish church of Notre Dame de la Recouvrance, from whose belfry he caused the angelus to be rung three times a day—a custom still religiously observed in Quebec. Beyond this one narrow foothold of France, on the mighty river which came from no one knew what vast inland wilds, Canada was little but a name. Only ten years before La Mère Marie arrived the Kirkes had taken Quebec without a blow; because they had a handful of men to serve the few tiny guns aboard their two little ships, while Champlain despaired of standing a siege on a barrel of fish and half a dozen sacks of potatoes. New France had hardly become even a footnote to history. With what an airy charm of royal condescension does Charles I add the unconsidered trifle of “The County and Lordship of Canada” to the *other* estates of good Sir William Alexander, Earl of Stirling and Baronet of Nova Scotia!

But, among her few, Quebec counted almost as many heroes as early Rome or Sparta. And bravest of the brave, the Jesuits. Here was an untamed, new, defiant world to wrestle with. And here the Church, Antæus-like, rose stronger from each fresh



contact with the primal earth. Nothing could stop her indomitable pioneers; neither cold nor heat, hunger, thirst and fatigue; not the lurking danger which dogged their every step, nor the fiendish death by torture which so many of them suffered; nor yet the silent, awful isolation in which their work was done. They crossed a waste of waters to enter an even wilder waste ashore. Quebec was, in fact, as much a point of departure and landfall for an inland journey as a coast sea-mark is for an ocean voyage. Within each new horizon, far and near, the forest veiled the mysteries of Earth as closely as the sea; and, like the sea, lay still in calm, or surged in wash and back-wash of green surf beneath the storm. And, whether in calm or storm, it closed impenetrably round each man who ventured within its labyrinthine depths. The Iroquois—so tiger-like in craft, stealth, spring and wild ferocity—filled with mortal dread everyone else whose way led through the woods. But not the Jesuit. He had no human hand to help him there; yet the bravest soldier was never more confidently eager at the front. As, in the time of Cæsar, every Roman legionary knew that the might of a whole Empire lay waiting for his call at need; and as, in Nelson's day, every blockading British man-of-war went boldly into action, single-handed and against any odds, sure that every consort would soon be sailing to the sound of the cannonade; so every Canadian Jesuit pressed forward undauntedly, among all the ambushes and strongholds of a pitiless foe, ever upheld by the confident belief that he was no mere lost and isolated man, but one of the pioneers and van-

guard of the advancing army of the Lord of Hosts.

The Ursulines held their first triennial election, and their choice naturally fell on La Mère Marie. Their first convent was a mere hovel, near the site of the present Notre Dame des Victoires, and their first Indian school in it was broken up by a terrible attack of small-pox. In 1641 the first stone was laid on the site of the present convent. But the next spring Madame de la Peltrie, burning to carry the cross still further into the wilderness, followed Maisonneuve to the founding of Montreal and left the Ursulines of Quebec almost penniless in their half-finished building. Even M. de Bernières answered La Mère Marie's appeal by advising her to send away her pupils and workmen, give up everything and come home, unless Providence should raise up a second benefactress. However, she immediately wrote back to say that having once put her hand to the heavenly task she would never give it up alive. She kept her Indian pupils, urged on her workmen, and, in every detail of duty and leadership, plainly showed how fully confident she was that Canada was only at the beginning of assured success, instead of at the end of utter failure.

After an absence of eighteen months Madame de la Peltrie came back, never again to leave Quebec. She found the new convent inhabited, the school open, and La Mère Marie as full of determined hope as ever. There was little comfort in the new home, a building 92 feet long and 28 feet wide. Two open fires barely took the frost out of the air—stoves were only introduced twenty-six years

later. Yet the devoted life went on with increasing vigour. New nuns came out: some from the mother-house at Tours; another from Ploërmel, in the Breton "Land of Pardons." In 1648 the convent was at last finished, after seven years of hard work and much anxiety from lack of funds.

Meanwhile, Quebec grew slowly: half mission, half trading post, and wholly bureaucratic. On New Year's Eve, in 1646, the first play performed in Canada, Corneille's *Le Cid*, was given before the Governor and the Jesuit Fathers. Two years later the Governor-in-Council appointed Jacques Boisdon—bibulous cognomen!—first and sole innkeeper, on the following conditions:—"That the said Jacques Boisdon settles in the square in front of the church, so that the people may go in to warm themselves, and that he keeps nobody in his house during High Mass, sermons, catechism or vespers." In 1663, the population had increased to 500 souls, of whom 150 belonged to religious communities.

The thirteen disastrous years from 1650 to 1663 were the nadir of Canada's fortunes. More than once the colony nearly lost its flickering life altogether. The Iroquois scourged the land like a plague. Not a man was safe outside a fort. All that were left of the once powerful Hurons crouched miserably under the protection of Quebec. La Mère Marie was ever foremost in succouring them and bringing their children into her school. She took lessons herself in Huron from Father Bressani, who had escaped death at the hands of the Iroquois as by a miracle, after having suffered the extremity of torture. But, just as her classes were well established, the convent was burnt



to the ground. The nuns hardly escaped with their lives, running out barefooted and half-clad into the intense mid-winter cold. La Mère Marie issued her orders as calmly as if going through her regular routine. She went all over the building to make sure that everyone was safe, paused one reverential moment before the altar, and then walked out as the flames met behind her.

Next day the Hurons assembled in full council to see how they could help the "Paleface Virgin Saints." To their grief they found that the whole merchantable wealth of their nation now consisted in two long strings of porcelain beads, each containing twelve hundred. But, headed by their chief, they went in procession to the Hôtel-Dieu, where they were received by La Mère Marie, surrounded by her Ursulines, the Hospitalières, and Father Raguenaud, who records the address delivered by Taicaronk. "Saintly sisters, you see here but the walking corpses of a mighty nation, which is no more. In the country of the Hurons we have been eaten and gnawed to the bone by famine, war and fire. Alas! your misfortune recalls our own, and with your tears we mingle ours. In our old home the custom was to give one present to unfortunates like you, to dry their tears, and then another to fortify their hearts anew. All that we have we offer you. First, a string of beads to comfort you, and root your feet so firmly in this land that all your friends across the great water will never be able to draw them out and take you away. And next, another string, to plant a new House of Christ to outgrow the old one, and be a place of prayer and teaching for our children."

After the chief had ended there was a long, sad silence, before La Mère Marie responded in words which breathe the very spirit of the Book of Ruth. She told the Hurons how she would never desert them, but fill her days with willing service for their need, and how, when she died, her body would remain among them in Quebec, as her heart and soul did while she was alive.

Other friends pressed to her aid. Father Vignal, her chaplain, though now an old man, set to work on the Ursuline farm near the famous Plains of Abraham, and was rewarded by a bountiful harvest, which fed the teachers and scholars for the succeeding winter. Madame de la Peltrie sheltered the whole community in her own house, which was no more luxurious than the convent, though she was a very rich woman. The Governor, the Jesuits, in fact the whole colony, did everything in their power. But their power fell far short of their good will. Men were scarce, money scarcer; so La Mère Marie and her zealous nuns cleared away the débris with their own hands, and prepared the site for rebuilding. The new convent rose quickly from the ruins of the old. Within a year the nuns were back: all except La Mère de St. Joseph, whose delicate frame at last had given way under repeated hardships, and whose epitaph might be fitly taken from the letter La Mère Marie wrote home: *Ma douce et angélique amie.*

In 1660 Canada was apparently doomed. Only four years had passed since the Iroquois had swooped down on their prey again and nearly killed out the last, palsied remnant of the Hurons at the Island of Orleans. The lines of war-canoes

had glided snake-like down the St. Lawrence to their vindictive massacre, under the very guns of Quebec, the crews screaming savage defiance at the bewildered Governor, who cowered behind the walls of the Château St. Louis. And now every threatening warpath was once more astir with painted Iroquois, wild for a final glut of blood. The rumour ran that their grand council had decreed the extermination of all the Christians in Canada, and that their whole assembled horde was coming hot-foot down the valley of the Ottawa. Night and day the shadow of death closed in from the vast encircling forest, darkening the terror of suspense. All Quebec stood to arms. The Ursuline convent was garrisoned by eighty men and twelve huge watch dogs, trained to hunt down and tear in pieces the hostile Indians. La Mère Marie, resourceful as ever, told off her nuns to different duties, and reserved for herself the most dangerous of all—the carrying of powder and shot in action.

As Canada turned despairingly at bay, her necessity brought forth a champion, the faithful, undaunted Dollard, Sieur des Ormeaux. He and sixteen others in Montreal volunteered to go up the Ottawa and hold the Iroquois by a life-and-death defence, long enough to let the colony have some time for preparation. At the Long Sault Dollard was joined by a hundred Christian Hurons under Anahotaha. The allies then took post in an old Algonquin fort, which, unfortunately, was too far from water. Symbol-loving souls afterwards saw a mystical assurance of salvation in the strange recurrence of the sacred number, seven. For seven



days and seven nights seven hundred Iroquois furiously attacked the seventeen Frenchmen who defended the stockade. The attackers fell in heaps under the steady fire. A letter of La Mère Marie's tells how those seventeen fought for Christ and Canada : *Dès que l'ennemi faisait trêve, ils étaient à genoux ; et sitôt qu'il faisait mine d'attaquer, ils étaient debout, les armes à la main.* Worn by unceasing vigils and tortured by thirst, they still held out. But resounding war-cries announced the arrival of another five hundred Iroquois ; and they then prepared to sell their lives as dearly as they could. The enemy advanced and called a parley, during which some apostate Hurons persuaded most of their Christian tribesmen that an immediate change of sides was the only way of escaping certain death by torture. This desertion reduced the garrison to the seventeen Canadians with only eighteen Indians. In the thick of the final assault some Iroquois got in so close that they could chop at the foot of the stockade without being exposed to the fire from the loop-holes. Dollard then tried to dislodge them with a musketoon full of powder. But this, unfortunately, miscarried. The musketoon blew up inside the fort, killed and wounded several of the defenders, and left a breach wide open. The Iroquois at once swarmed in from all sides, though, even then, they could not close with their steadfast opponents. Anahotaha, worthy comrade of Dollard, charged and killed five with his tomahawk. But, as he regained the ranks, he fell, mortally wounded, beside the burning palisade. "Lay my head on the fire," he implored with his dying breath, "the Iroquois must never get my scalp !"

Dollard fell next. A last desperate scuffle, and all was over. The Iroquois were dumbfounded at the resistance they had met with and disheartened by their enormous losses. Their next council broke up after deciding that a country defended by such heroes was too dangerous to attack. They slunk back to their wigwams; while a contrite apostate Huron escaped to carry the tale of death and victory throughout the waiting settlements. Thus ended Canada's Thermopylæ.

The colony dragged through the misery of three more years. Then came the memorable earthquakes, which threatened an almost greater ruin. One effect of this stupendous and widespread upheaval may still be seen at Les Eboulements, where the whole face of a mountain fell headlong into the St. Lawrence. In Quebec the shocks recurred violently for seven months, and the terrified people thought it was the end of the world. The first great shock scared the roisterers at the carnival out of their senses. The second threw all the Ursulines to the ground while they were singing matins. Throughout this long, heart-shaking ordeal trembling women and children kept coming to La Mère Marie, as to the one human sanctuary that could preserve them from the Avenging Angel. Not since the Great Famine, nearly four hundred years before, when long processions of naked Flagellants scourged themselves through every high street and market square in Europe, had there been such universal contrition. The priests could scarcely leave the thronged confessionals, even to eat and sleep. Again the cry of "Back to France!" went up, and was piteously

echoed from the whole stricken colony. But two winged souls rose to the foreseeing heights of prophecy, and two clear voices called on the people to stay their panic and have steadfast faith in Canada. One was the voice of Laval, the first bishop, who set a supreme example by founding, in this terrible 1663, the great seminary which still bears his name and carries on his work with undiminished vigour. The other was the voice of La Mère Marie, who, for the third time in her life, stood between a discouraged people and apparent ruin, and nerved them to one more effort for the salvation of their country.

The unshaken faith of both was fully justified. The tide of fortune was already on the turn. This very year New France became a Royal Province. And in 1665 de Courcelles, the New Governor, arrived. With him was Jean Talon, the great Intendant, well called the Colbert of Canada. The pitifully weak garrison was strongly reinforced by the famous *Régiment de Carignan*, fresh from its victorious Hungarian campaign against the Turks. The gallant Marquis de Tracy arrived as the personal Viceroy of Louis Quatorze. Two hundred and twelve new colonists of title or fortune came out to take up concessions of land. And, most important of all, perhaps, there was a very much larger number of more humble immigrants, who were destined to a long and successful career under the well-known name of *habitants*. With these arrivals a different *régime* began. The first great hero-age was over.



## v

La Mère Marie had a deep, though indirect, influence on the new order of things. All the women of the old order had passed through her school, all the girls of the new were her pupils. Her reputation for sanctity and wisdom extended over people of both sexes and all classes. And she never failed to throw the whole weight of this wider influence into the scale on the side of Laval, in his fights for the missionary system against the parochial one favoured by the Governors, and for Indian prohibition against the indiscriminate brandy traffic favoured by the traders. Laval was the living embodiment of the Church militant, and was inclined to stretch his authority rather far over spheres of public influence which are generally understood to be within the province of the civil power. But his missionary system, worked under his own eye, and through his seminary, undoubtedly met the needs of a new and extending population better than the fixed cures which the Governors vainly tried to establish. Laval wanted his shepherds to keep continual touch with him and each other, while they followed their flocks about the ever-opening pastures. But the Governors preferred to find each individual shepherd sitting ready for inspection inside an isolated fold. As for the brandy trade, it was simply debauching the Indians, body and soul. And when La Mère Marie supported Laval on these two burning questions she proved herself as statesmanlike in the first as she was philanthropic in the second.

Her letters show how many human interests she touched, and with how sure a hand she set each interest in its due relation to her belief and practice. She was an indefatigable writer : in one autumn she sent home over 600 letters. Her correspondents ranged from Royalty down ; but most of her spiritual letters were to her son or the Ursulines. In theology she had some lively passages with the Jansenists, who did their best to persuade her to adopt their views. But she was an everyday and deeply sympathetic eye-witness of the work of the Canadian Jesuits, and that was enough. In religious advice and prayer she was the constant support of an Ursuline of Tours, whom she had initiated before leaving France, and who was aunt to *cette touchante Duchesse de la Vallière, dont la destinée sera l'éternel attendrisement de l'histoire*. She had special devotions and penances in Canada, on behalf of the errant Duchess, who was, like herself, a native of Tours ; and the celebrated conversion at court was held to be greatly owing to the ardent intercessions at Quebec.

She evidently never thought she had any written message to leave to the world. She let all her spiritual memoirs, destined for her son's eye alone, be burnt with the convent, rather than run the risk of letting them fall into other hands in the confusion. Perhaps she felt that the divine afflatus would not take literary form in her as it did in St. Theresa. It is certain that she wrote less and less about the inner life, though her reasons for her growing silence are themselves excellently expressed. "Au reste, il y a bien des choses, et je puis dire que presque toutes sont de cette nature

qu'il me serait impossible d'écrire entièrement, parce que dans la conduite intérieure que Dieu tient sur moi, il y a des grâces si intimes et des impressions si spirituelles, que cela ne se peut dire. C'est en partie ce qui me donne de la répugnance à traiter de ces matières, quoique ce soient mes délices de ne point trouver de fond dans ce grand abîme, et d'être obligée de perdre toute parole en m'y perdant moi-même. Plus on vieillit, plus on est incapable d'en écrire, parce que la vie spirituelle simplifie l'âme dans un amour consumant, en sorte qu'on ne trouve plus de termes pour s'en expliquer." Nevertheless, in response to divine orders to comply with her son's renewed appeals, she rewrote the lost letters, on condition that he promised not to show them to anyone. Dom Martin has a prettily turned simile to express their influence on his life—"ces grandes grâces m'excitent à suivre ses traces, comme l'aigle mère excite ses aiglons à voler après elle."

Though her worldly interests were always strictly subordinated to her spiritual ones she wrote many admirable letters on public affairs. European news is discussed with a good knowledge of its bearings on Church and State. The troubles of the Fronde, the peace of the Pyrenees, the death of Charles I of England, all find their place in her correspondence. But Canada comes first. Indeed, her letters in 1654, 1655 and 1656 form the best documentary history of those troublous years. She notes the natural wealth of the country and the abounding fertility of the population. "M. Boucher a dit au roi qu'on peut faire au Canada un royaume plus beau et plus grand que celui de la France. C'est là le sentiment de ceux qui disent s'y connaître. Il



y a des mines en plusieurs endroits ; les terres y sont fertiles. Il y a surtout un grand nombre d'enfants ; ce fut un des points sur lequel le roi questionna le plus M. Boucher. Un pauvre homme en aura huit et plus, qui l'hiver vont nu-pieds et nu-tête, avec une petite camisole sur le dos, qui ne vivent que d'anguille et d'un peu de pain ; et, avec tout cela, ils sont gros et gras." No doubt some of these eels came from the Ursulines' fishery at the Anse des Mères, just above Cape Diamond. How many little *habitants* are still to be found in one family, and how many of them still get "gros et gras" on this very warming winter diet ! Who that knows the story of the French-Canadian will dispute the wisdom of this : "Au fond, tandis que les habitants s'amuse à la traite des castors, ils n'avancent pas tant leurs affaires que s'ils cultivaient le sol et s'attachaient au trafic de la pêche et des huiles de lous-marins et de marsouins." La Mère Marie knew a good deal more about the future of Canada in the seventeenth century than Voltaire did in the eighteenth with his *quelques arpents de neige*.

Nothing useful is too small for her attention, nothing great too difficult for her judgment. She sends home to Tours "une certaine bourre qui ressemble au coton, afin de tenter en plusieurs façons ce qu'on en pourrait faire." There spoke Marie Guyard and Madame Martin. And here, again : "C'est une chose merveilleuse d'entendre parler de la beauté et de la bonté de ce pays-là . . . les épis ont une grande coudée, et chaque épi donne plus de quatre cents grains." "Sa Majesté nous a donné deux belles cavales et un cheval, tant pour la

charrue que pour le transport." Talon's introduction of new industries—weaving, tanning and others—excites her warm approval, and she rightly concludes that "le pays est plus fait et les affaires ont plus avancé depuis que M. Talon est ici comme intendant, que depuis que les Français y habitent." The Marquis de Tracy is equally praised for excellence of another kind. "Nous allons perdre M. de Tracy . . . Cette nouvelle Eglise, et le Canada en général, perd plus en lui qu'il n'est possible de dire; car il a mené à bonne fin des expéditions qu'on n'aurait jamais osé entreprendre ni espérer." Marie was emphatically a woman of light and leading, both in Church and State.

With the Indians she was, of course, thoroughly at home; and the wisdom of many Blue-books is concentrated into her pithy comments on the grand-paternal royal edict which ordered them to be immediately "civilized" as well as christianized. "They must see the woods and follow their parents to the chase. It is the nature of the Indian. He cannot submit to constraint. Loss of liberty makes him sad, and sadness makes him sick. We have more experience on this head than anyone else, and we freely confess that we have not civilized one in a hundred. Nevertheless, if it be the will of our Sovereign, we shall attempt the task." On the other hand, she can find no words too strong to explain how successful the nuns were in converting them. "Quatre d'entre elles communièrent à Pâques; elles s'y préparèrent avec tant de désir de s'unir à Notre-Seigneur, que, dans l'attente de le recevoir, elles s'écriaient: 'Ah! quand sera-ce que Jésus nous viendra baiser au cœur'" "Thérèse la

Hurone" was faithful through three years of captivity with the implacable Iroquois, during which she openly confessed to her fellow-prisoner, Father Jogues, though she saw him tortured in a way that might have shaken many a stout heart. These five were Indian girls who had been a considerable time under convent influences. But the full-grown braves and squaws, once converted, were quite as staunch. The baptismal rite appealed to them with peculiar force, as the conditions under which its liturgy originally reached full growth in the fourth and fifth centuries were being reproduced in Canada. The Indians, like most early converts, came straight from ingrained adult Paganism. And so their initiation was very different from the short and simplified ceremony through which the infant heir of Christian ages is taken to-day. The Ursulines often gave the first instruction to the *audientes*. Afterwards came the immediate preparation of the *competentes*: a lenten education in the new supernatural, in which great emphasis was laid on exorcising the demons of the old. The command *dæmonia ejicite* was never forgotten. And no sooner were the heathen demons cast out by many ritual solemnities than the Jesuits warned the catechumen against the myrmidons of Satan, who took the warpath against unwary Christians. The good Fathers believed in object-lessons, and several times sent urgent messages to France for pictures of still more terrifying devils. Finally, the brave was baptized, during the regenerating joys of Easter, and sent forth with the armour of Christ fast girt upon him by all the symbols of the Church.



La Mère Marie often encouraged the braves to give their own views on Christianity : “ et lorsque j’entends parler le bon Charles Pigarouich, Noël Négabamat ou Trigalin je ne quitterais pas la place pour entendre le premier prédicateur de l’Europe.” No legitimate means of conversion were neglected. She nursed the sick, quite in the spirit of Luke, the beloved physician. And though there probably were some “blanket Christians” in that as in other ages, yet she never had cause to regret her continual hospitality. “Comme la faim est l’horloge qui leur fait juger de l’heure du repas, il nous faut songer à ceux qui peuvent survenir, et tenir de la sagamité toujours prête.” On the contrary, she found a genuine aid to conversion even in the serio-comedy of a regular *festin de gala*. “Pour traiter splendidement soixante ou quatre-vingts de nos sauvages on y emploie environ un boisseau de pruneaux noirs, quatre pains de six livres pièce, quatre mesures de farine de pois ou de blé d’Inde, une douzaine de chandelles de suif, deux ou trois livres de gros lard, afin que tout soit bien gras, car c’est ce qu’ils aiment. Voilà ces pauvres gens contents et ravis d’aise, bien qu’il y ait parmi eux des capitaines qui, à leur égard, passent pour des princes et des personnes de qualité. Ce festin, qui leur sert tout ensemble de boire et de manger, est un de leurs plus magnifiques repas ; c’est ainsi qu’on les gagne, et qu’à la faveur d’un attrait matériel, on les attire à la grâce de Jésus-Christ.”

The arrival of the Marquis de Tracy inaugurated a more sheltered life for the inhabitants of Quebec. But La Mère Marie was beginning to sink under the strain of the terrible years that went before.

Gradually she was forced to give up her activities, one by one. But what she could do she did with a will. She could no longer teach the Indians under the old tree in the garden ; so she had them brought indoors. She wrote a sacred history and a glossary in Algonquin, and a catechism for her old fierce enemies, the Iroquois. Her relations with these last bloodthirsty braves had gone through every phase. She had received their ambassadors with all due honour, and made an attempt to convert them. She had stood guard against them when they threatened Quebec. And now, having rightly drawn the sword at the proper time, she was again trying the persuasive arguments of the Church.

In 1671 she received a great shock in the death of her life-long friend. Madame de la Peltrie was suddenly struck down with pleurisy early in November. She took the news that it was fatal with perfect calmness ; called in the Intendant Talon to witness her will, and thanked him with as much grace as if he had been paying her a visit of state. M. de Bernières, nephew of her old protector in France, gave her the last rites ; and, on the evening of the 19th, as the *Angelus* was sounding across the square from the parish church, she died, murmuring the words so often on her lips during her illness—*Lætatus sum in his quæ dicta sunt mihi ; in domum Domini ibimus*—*I was glad when they said, we will go into the house of the Lord.*

The following Easter, the year Frontenac first came out to Canada, La Mère Marie was in the throes of a mortal malady herself. She had all the girls in the convent called into the infirmary to

receive her last benediction, which she gave to each one separately as they knelt beside her. She entrusted her last message for her son to Mère St. Athanase—*dites-lui que je l'emporte en mon cœur dans le paradis*. Nor was public duty forgotten. One of her last acts was to dictate a letter to an influential personage in France, urging the completion of her well-considered scheme for the re-union of all branches of the Ursuline Order throughout the world. To the great regret of everyone Bishop Laval was then absent from Quebec. But the veteran Père Lallemand, who had served in every post of danger since the time of Champlain, gave her the last consolations of the faith. For some hours on the day of her death she neither spoke nor heard—rapt in ecstasy between two worlds. The evening *Angelus* was sounding, as it had for her fellow-labourer five months before, when she opened her eyes for one final look at the Ursulines kneeling round her, and then gently closed them again for ever. All who were present saw a ray of celestial light rest on her face as her soul took flight for Heaven, and believed it to signify her consummated union with her Lord. The Ursulines commemorate this to the present day, by singing a special *Te Deum* on the last night of each recurring April. Père Lallemand preached the funeral sermon, pronounced the benediction, and the congregation dispersed. Then the Governor and Intendant, with the clergy and nuns, approaching the bier, were so struck by her expression that they sent for an artist to perpetuate it. The original of this portrait was burnt in the second fire; but a contemporary copy sent to France was afterwards



returned to Canada, and is now in the convent. The portrait taken, the coffin was closed and this inscription placed upon it : *Ci-gît la Révérende Mère Marie Guyart de l'Incarnation, première supérieure de ce monastère, décédée le dernier jour d'avril, 1672, âgée de 72 ans et 6 mois. Religieuse professe, venue de Tours. Priez pour son âme.*

The night she died in Quebec her Ursuline niece in Tours distinctly saw her laid out in a winding sheet, while a voice breathed close by, "Elle est morte." The other nuns were averse from believing this story next morning ; but the first ship from Canada brought the confirmation of it. The whole Ursuline Order deplored the loss of such a saintly life. The Jesuits and all who knew her bore equally ready witness to her surpassing virtues. While Dom Martin's filial piety and religious zeal prompted him to publish her life and letters a few years later : "C'est ici un livre de reconnaissance envers Dieu et de piété à l'égard d'une personne à laquelle je dois, après lui, tout ce que je suis, selon la nature et selon la grâce."

Her cult began forthwith and has grown ever since. Fifty years after, Father Charlevoix hoped to hasten the day of her beatification by a new account of her merits. In 1752 a Quebec Ursuline writes : "Nous avons eu quelque espérance de voir notre vénérable mère mise sur les rangs pour la béatification ; mais la personne qui avait pris la chose à cœur n'est plus. . . ." And so it went on, at intervals, for more than a hundred years. Everyone who examined her life freely admitted that she ought to become Ste. Marie de l'Incarnation ; yet nobody appeared with sufficient influence

at Rome to get a place on the calendar for this remote Canadian saint. In 1867, the year of Confederation—so long ago as that—Archbishop Bailargeon of Quebec succeeded in getting her cause definitely begun. Some of the *lettres postulatatoires* sent to Rome on her behalf are rather remarkable documents. The Canadian Zouaves, who went to uphold the Temporal Power in 1870, might perhaps be expected to address Pio Nono thus: “Nous, laïques, aimons à signaler que cette grande servante de Dieu est venue la première arborer sur nos plages le drapeau de l'éducation chrétienne, et que cette éducation, perpétuée par les imitatrices de son zèle, fait les femmes fortes et chrétiennes dont notre jeune pays se glorifie. Très-saint père, c'est au nom des mères chrétiennes qui ont donné leurs fils avec tant d'amour et de générosité pour la défense du saint-siège que nous demandons avec instance la béatification de la Mère Marie de l'Incarnation.” But the following is a curiously telling appeal, coming as it does from the Cabinet Ministers of Her Britannic Majesty for the Province of Quebec: “L'action bienfaisante de son œuvre se fait encore sentir de nos jours, et est pour toute la province une source de biens incalculables à tous les points de vue. . . . Chargés d'une grande responsabilité dans le gouvernement de cette province qu'habita la Mère Marie de l'Incarnation nous sentons le besoin de nous appuyer sur son intercession pour bien remplir les devoirs qui nous incombent.” In 1887 she was pontifically declared “venerable.” But for twenty years more the process for her beatification—which the Quebec Ursulines longed for even before the British conquest of

Canada—has not been ended in her favour. Yet it was known to be in its final stage of all in 1907. No wonder the faithful Ursulines are on the tiptoe of expectation for the latest news from Rome!

The process may have been wearily long; but what French-Canadian, viewing her with the transfiguring eye of faith, could ever have doubted the result? The impulse towards sanctification has come spontaneously, and from the mass of the people, who still feel the exalting touch of this most effectual mystic. No doubt she had a share of personal faults and human failings. An age like ours would not be lenient in criticizing either. But—unless all tradition, record and corroboration are untrue—even our age cannot deny her a befitting eulogy. Her actions and outlook were certainly bounded by the limitations of her Church. But, within those limits, she gave new lustre to the golden truth that there is more variety in virtue than in vice. And we Canadians of 1908, who are now entering the fourth century of our country's history, who, like the rest of mankind, prefer amusement to interest and incident to character, and who are now more than ever apt to mistake comfort for civilization:—we, in this twentieth century, can certainly not afford to neglect the example of all the zeal, devotion and self-sacrifice which went to the making of that well-wrought career.

## VI

La Mère Marie's influence has always remained inspiringly alive; and the tradition of her service has been greatly strengthened by many personal



links between the passing centuries. Only three nuns had died during the first Ursuline generation ; and some of the twenty-five on the roll in 1675 lived long enough to connect Frontenac's first administration with the first capture of Louisbourg in 1745.

Indian converts were as eagerly sought for as ever. Frontenac used to bring back the brightest Iroquois girls he could find whenever he went to Katarauqui, where Kingston is now. The Algonquins, Abenakis and Hurons were in still closer touch with the convent. The books of the "Séminaire," as the Indian classes were always called, contain many entries like these : "On the 15th of July, 1682, Marie Durand left the seminary after having been provided with board and clothing for a year." "La Petite Barbe, of the Mohawk tribe, who has been six years in the seminary, has returned to her parents at Ancienne Lorette." In 1686 an Indian girl called Marie Rose laid the foundation stone of a new wing ; she was "dressed in white and represented the Infant Jesus." An Abenaki called Agnes Wes-k-wes even found the call of the cloister more compelling than the call of the woods. Only death prevented her from taking the veil ; and the fame of her piety drew every Christian Indian near Quebec to her funeral.

Within four months of the day the corner stone for this extension was put in position the convent was burnt again. A brave lay sister, Marie Montmesnil, nearly lost her life in rescuing the precious relics. The *Hospitalières* again offered shelter in their cloisters, where the Ursulines intoned a *Laudate* and sang a *Memorare* to their perpetual

superior, the Blessed Virgin, in token of resignation and thanksgiving. The *Hospitalières* greatly cheered the homeless Ursulines by remembering to make a special celebration of the feast of St. Ursula the following day. As before, everyone in Quebec showed the greatest kindness; and a return visit of acknowledgment was headed by the Mother Superior, who called on the Marquis de Denonville at the Château St. Louis and on the Intendant at his palace. After going to see the eight sisters who had remained on guard in an outbuilding of the burnt convent the little deputation re-entered the Hôtel-Dieu, and their records state that "the peace of the cloister was delightful after a day of such fatigue and dissipation." In November they all went into Madame de la Peltrie's house, near which a barn was converted into a temporary chapel, "not"—as their annalist quaintly says—"in the style of the Renaissance, but in that of the Naissance." The makeshift cloister and chapel were all that was most uncomfortable. "I see everything here to make you suffer," said the kindly bishop. The nuns, however, rejoiced at re-union under any circumstances: *Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum.*

1689 was a year big with the fate of empires. The Great Imperial War between France and England had just begun. It was to be renewed at intervals for more than a century, to culminate in both the Old World and the New in 1759, and to continue till Trafalgar had confirmed the British command of the sea for more than another hundred years. In Canada Frontenac began by a bold swift stroke at New England. In the British colonies

Peter Schuyler was formulating the original "Glorious Enterprize" of conquering New France that Pitt found the means of carrying out seventy years later.

In the midst of these wars and rumours of war the Ursulines completed their present convent and celebrated their first jubilee. All of the original three were dead; but a nun who came out in 1640, and so was in her fiftieth year of service, took part in all the proceedings. Longevity has always been distinctive of this community. At every succeeding jubilee there have been nuns who had already assisted at a previous one. And the senior nun in 1908, the tercentennial year of Quebec, was not the junior in 1839, the bicentennial year of the convent. The Indians were already receding before civilization in 1689; and there were fewer at the jubilee feast than there used to be round the hospitable tables of La Mère Marie. The nearby friendly tribes had begun to wither at the touch of the town; the hostile warpaths stopped farther and farther west. The massacre of Lachine sent a shudder of apprehension through the whole colony. But no Indians ever again threatened the safety of Quebec. Frontenac, on the contrary, carried the war into the Iroquois country. And the Ursulines, who had drawn the sword at need in 1660, did so again for the common good in 1696, by equipping a tiny though efficient contingent of two men. But their favourite weapon was and remained conversion.

In 1690 New England made her counterstroke. On the 7th of October the vanguard of the American fleet was sighted below Murray Bay. Quebec stood aghast, defenceless; for Frontenac was much further



off inland than Phips was by the St. Lawrence. The Ursulines were instant in prayer, "seeking in every way to appease the divine judgment and obtain the favour of God for their country." And the townsfolk thought these intercessions had been accepted when contrary winds so delayed Phips that Frontenac arrived first and flung back defiance at the summons to surrender: "I have no answer to give, except from the mouth of my cannon." Phips at once began his bombardment, and the convent received its baptism of fire. "The first day a cannon ball burst through a shutter and finally lodged at the bedside of one of our boarders; another cut a piece of her apron off one of our sisters. Others fell in the garden and courtyard. . . . Our house was crowded with women and children, so that we could hardly pass to and fro, but had to take our food standing and in haste, like the Israelites when they ate the Paschal Lamb. . . . We lent our picture of the Holy Trinity to be hung on the steeple of the cathedral, to show under whose protection we were fighting." On the 21st—Trafalgar day—the festival of St. Ursula was duly observed. Father de la Colombière seized the opportunity to extol the heroism of the virgin martyrs as worthy of present imitation. And Bishop St. Valier had just intoned, with vibrant solemnity, *Maria Mater gratiæ . . . Et mortis horâ* . . . when the hush that followed the benediction was suddenly rent by the crash of artillery. But, this time, Phips was only covering his retreat; and Quebec went wild with exultant joy. Frontenac became a hero of the people, and has remained so ever since. The church built beside the St. Law-

rence, on the site of Champlain's *Abitation*, became *Notre Dame de la Victoire*. And, three thousand miles away, in famous France, *Le Roi Soleil*, in the heyday of his European renown, commanded a special medal to be struck in commemoration of this Canadian feat of arms—*Kebeca liberata, MDCXC, Francia in nova orbe victrix*.

The eighteenth century opened with famine, pestilence and war. Fever and smallpox carried off a fourth of the population of Quebec. Funeral knells became so frequent and so depressing to the spirits of the living that they were forbidden altogether. Five epidemics in eleven years scourged the town and turned the convent into a hospital. The last was in 1711, the year Sir Hovenden Walker's armada made its disastrous attempt against New France. The convent resounded with the noise of warlike preparations, close beside the cloisters. The nuns again prayed fervently for the French arms. And the British expedition, ill found and badly led, retired discomfited and alarmed by the many shipwrecks it suffered far down the river. *Notre Dame de la Victoire* was henceforth called *Notre Dame des Victoires*. Two years later the Treaty of Utrecht freed Bishop St. Valier from the Tower of London, where he had been nine years prisoner of war. This time the cannon roared in greeting, and every bell in Quebec was rung as the bishop landed amid the acclamations of the people, who all went down to the water-side to bid him welcome home. The convent annals of the 18th of August, 1713, record his first visit to the Ursulines since his captivity. "In the course of the afternoon we had the pleasure of

seeing our good bishop and hearing him express his joy. For our part, great is our gratitude to the God of all goodness, who has vouchsafed to grant us such consolation after our long and heavy trials."

In 1708 a very different prisoner of war had appeared at the convent. This was Esther Wheelwright, the twelve-year-old great-granddaughter of John Wheelwright, one of the most honoured of New England Puritan ministers. The child had been carried off in the raid against the little village of Wells, five years before. The Abenaki chief who took her had adopted her; and she had almost forgotten her English when Father Bigot came into the camp on a missionary tour. It was no easy matter to rescue her. An Indian chief thought paleface prisoners were trophies of war, quite as much as objects of ransom. And it was only after long diplomacy and many seductive presents that Esther was given up to the *Great Captain of the French*, the Marquis de Vaudreuil, father of Montcalm's Vaudreuil, who sent her to school at the Ursulines' with his own daughter. Was it the contrast between the savage restlessness of the forest, as well as the civilized restlessness of French society at the Château St. Louis, on the one hand, and, on the other, the calm of the convent, that revived her childish memories of home and school and the happy orchard beside which she was torn away that midsummer morning, more than half her life ago? Who knows? But when the peace that restored the bishop to his diocese had let her family write for her return to them, she had learnt a second separating language, had found a new



home and a new faith, and had taken the white veil among the Ursulines as Sister Esther of the Infant Jesus. She petitioned the Governor, as her adopted father, to allow her to make her final vows. The bishop approved ; and Father Bigot preached the sermon at her admission. Letters were exchanged with the family, and the portrait then painted for them in her nun's dress is now in the possession of the seventh generation from the one to whose members it was sent.

But Esther was not the only, nor even the first of the Puritan Ursulines. Mary Davis, carried off from Salem in 1686, entered the novitiate in 1698. And, twenty-four years later than this, Mary Dorothea Jordan also found her happiest earthly home in the "House of Jesus," which the French missionaries had so often described to the three little captives among the Indians as the great sanctuary of the "paleface virgins" in Quebec.

Forty-two years of comparative peace followed the return of the bishop from the Tower. The life of cloister, school and chapel went on with little disturbance from the outside world. Indeed, the outside world of Quebec was more moved by convent interests in 1739 than the convent was disturbed by worldly intrusions. A whole year had been devoted within the cloisters to preparing a *fête* worthy of the centennial year of the Ursuline order in Canada. The community now consisted of fifty-three nuns. Exactly fifty-three had died during the century. And their annalist rejoiced to think there was an evenly divided number to make an antiphon of praise in earth and Heaven. All pious observances were prolonged ; all relaxa-

tions were shortened ; silver plate was melted down to make a sanctuary lamp ; and a general "retreat" heralded the approach of the famous first of August. The canons of the cathedral celebrated ; the Jesuit Fathers preached ; the Bishop constantly attended ; and Pope Innocent X granted an Indulgence to all who took part—clergy, nuns and laity alike. The Indians were not forgotten. A special High Mass was celebrated for them, at which they sang the *Kyrie* and *Credo*. A feast of such abundance as to recall the best of those given to their predecessors by La Mère Marie brought their part of the ceremonies to a triumphant close. It was their last great entertainment at the Ursulines'. They had receded much further since the jubilee of 1689. At the time of the next jubilee the world was going very differently, far and near. The French Revolution had begun ; a British sovereign had held the allegiance of Canada for thirty years ; and the Indians were only at home beyond the ever-expanding frontiers of that *Western Country*, which was, in its turn, to be succeeded by a still farther-off *Far West* before the bi-centennial year had come.

The second quarter of the 18th century was the halcyon day of the old *régime* at Quebec. The kindly Marquis de Beauharnois governed the colony for fifteen years. A great "Father in God" was then bishop, Count Henri de Pontbriand. The *seigneurs* lived in homely affluence among their *centitaires*. One of them enjoyed the manor and vast domains of the baronies of Portneuf and Bécancour. His house and chapel bore the insignia of nobility. Royal letters patent gave him "the

right of arms, heraldic honours, rank and precedence, like the other barons of the kingdom of France." His daughter Anne had all the colony could give her in the way of social amenities and distractions. Yet three years of society disgusted her with what she called the "gay follies" of "bowing and courtseying in the middle of an illuminated hall." She became contented only when she took the veil, and could summon the community to its daily duties by ringing the bell at four o'clock in the morning—an office she performed without a break for forty years. Another nun of this period, who came from the most comfortable home the colony then had, was Geneviève de Boucherville, whose father's notebook contains the significant entry: "The land being mine, I think it my duty to settle there as a means of being useful to society." This anti-absentee landlord, Pierre Boucher de Boucherville, was the father, grandfather and great-grandfather of Ursuline nuns; for, besides Geneviève, three of the next and four of the following generation took the veil. His piety was proverbial, and its memory was kept alive for many years by the custom his descendants had of meeting to hear his "spiritual will" read aloud on the anniversary of his death. They were a long-lived family. Pierre Boucher was born during the lifetime of Shakespeare; yet his Ursuline daughter did not die till the lifetime of the Duke of Wellington!

The other classes of society shared the novel pleasure of this time of peace and comparative plenty. From the convent windows the nuns could see the snug little whitewashed cottages



strung along the Côte de Beaupré—that well-named “shore of the beautiful meadow,” which rose two hundred feet or more in one bold bluff from the St. Lawrence, and then, in evenly rising uplands, swept back to the Laurentians, fifteen miles away. Or they could look out to the left of this, across the valley of the St. Charles, over a still greater natural glacis, sloping up and up to the blue ramparts of the same Laurentian mountains further west. Here the cottages were clustering round the churches into little straggling villages, which tamed the wild woodlands with fruitful spots of greenery. Or they could see the harbour, in the right foreground of the Côte de Beaupré, with, beyond, the rich Island of Orleans, bearing at first such native produce that the early settlers chose it as the garden of Quebec, and afterwards bearing such crops that every traveller’s eye was taken with the scene of bright fertility at this seaward gate of Canada.

The very troubles of that time were those inflicted by prosperity. Church and State cried out against the increase of luxury. There were laments over the good old times of more frugality, when the *habitants* stayed on their farms, instead of crowding the wharves and warehouses to spend their savings whenever a ship came in from France with a cargo of men’s and women’s frippery. Young men of more stirring natures turned to the wilds for profit and adventure. The paternal Government was horrified to see hundreds of *coureurs des bois* “absent without leave.” And the Church was more justifiably grieved to find how many of them were active as “the devil’s mis-

missionaries" in the brandy trade among the Indians.

An education at the Ursulines' offered the acknowledged corrective to social excesses and the best preparation for the future mothers of the colony. Civil and ecclesiastical dignitaries were always willing to lend their countenance to such a school *fête* as the one recorded in the annals for the 23rd of August, 1752. Geneviève de Boucherville, now nearing her eightieth year, receives the distinguished guests with all the grace of the salon without any of its empty compliments. Duquesne, the last great Governor, and the Bishop and Intendant, with their suites, are there, surrounded by everyone whom the society papers would have mentioned next day, had there been any papers then. At the end of the reception room is a grove, from which the nymphs and shepherdesses issue in procession to greet the Governor-General with a triumphal ode, comparing his services for the king in Canada to those performed by his ancestors for the kings in France. There was no lack of poetastic incense; but Duquesne had won the right of patriotic homage, as had the bishop, who was addressed next. This good prelate's visitations into the further wilderness were duly chronicled in glowing verse. "All Olympus' faded hierarchy" was pressed into unwonted fellowship whenever the occasion seemed to warrant it, and some very quaint "conceits" were the result. When the Quebec Ursulines heard what yeoman service the bishop had done after their Three Rivers sisters were burnt out they gave him a place among the gods of Greece, quite in the

effusive spirit of the fashionable pastorals of the day. The translation made for a later generation of English-speaking pupils is even quaint than the original.

Among the gods, if poets' lays are true,  
 Deeds most surprising were not rare to view !  
 And all Olympus did the feat admire,  
 When bright Apollo cast aside his lyre,  
 Forbore to sing and seized the heavy spade,  
 Or with the mason's trowel mortar laid.  
 Like him, my Lord, you put the apron on,  
 And soften hearts, while you are laying stone.

But very different days were coming ; days when the heart of New France was failing it for fear ; when the land was eaten up with corruption and gaunt with famine.

Before the middle of the century there came a new Intendant, a man at once so consummate and so outrageous in all dishonesty that even the last hundred and fifty years of public life in the United States and Canada have failed to produce his superior in villainy. This was Bigot, whose sinister influence is seen, even inside the convent, in the letter he wrote the Superior, forbidding her to sell or give away any food during the famine, except through him. A few years later the younger Vaudreuil became Governor-General, and gave the plausible and insinuating Bigot a free hand, while spitefully thwarting the great and incorruptible Montcalm at every turn. No former miseries had been so bad as these ; for New France now had worse false friends at home than open enemies abroad.



In 1755 the Ursulines saw their sisters in the General Hospital burnt out, with loss of life. Messages were instantly sent offering a return of the kindness shown to the homeless Ursulines in the previous century ; and presently the Hospitalières arrived. One of their number had been burnt alive ; another was dying. She was nursed with all possible care in the infirmary, and when she died the Ursulines buried her in their own vault, "in order," as their annals say, "that her ashes, mingling with ours, may serve to make still more enduring that union which has ever bound us together."

The next three years were years of ever-increasing apprehension. The French arms were often victorious ; but victory became more and more barren. Braddock's defeat at the Monongahela was the last real check to the British advance. Montcalm's battles were desperate rearguard actions, in which his skill snatched victory for the time being from forces whose reserves were always closing up the ranks of his enemies and pushing the lines of converging invasion one step further into the doomed colony. The Ursulines were devotedly patriotic, and looked upon race and religion as almost one and the same. The contrast between New France and the English-speaking people was, indeed, a striking one. Not a heretic was to be found in Canada ; while Roman Catholic disabilities were a stern reality in England, and the *Bostonnais* were the strictest Protestants in the world. But, even apart from religion, French priests and nuns have always been French of the French abroad ; so much so, indeed, that their services to French influence were freely used by

atheists like Paul Bert and Gambetta, who agreed that "Anti-clericalism is not an article of export." Montcalm, a frank and unswerving believer, looked upon the final struggle as somewhat of an Armageddon, though he was man-of-the-world enough to know that the British side was not in the service of an Anti-Christ. His Ticonderoga letter to the Superior of the Ursulines shows the bond of sympathy between the cloister and the sword in that great crisis. "Continuès, madame, à m'accorder vos prières et celles de votre sainte communauté. . . . Je me flatte que celui qui a pris Chouagen saura repousser à Carrillon les ennemis de la religion. C'est Dieu qui a fait un vrai prodige dans cette occasion. Je ai voulu Le servir, je Lui raporte tout, et je reçois avec reconnaissance votre compliment et celui de votre Illustre Communauté."

Day by day new stories of British preparations against Quebec were told through the *grille* at the convent. The fall of Louisbourg left New France shrunken, starved and isolated in the grip of a hostile sea. Three hundred French ships were taken on the Atlantic that year. No mail came out from France for eight silent months of disappointment. And when Bougainville arrived in the spring of 1759 the convent historian significantly praises his skill and bravery in having "penetrated the enemy's lines." Even the scanty fare usual in the refectory had to be reduced to four ounces of bread a day. Clothes, books, household necessities—everything—were lacking. Montcalm had only a little horseflesh at his dinners; his army was on half rations, the *habitants* often on less. Only

Bigot and Vaudreuil fared sumptuously and gnawed the people to the bone.

On the 26th of June the British fleet appeared in the South Channel of Orleans ; and the Ursuline annalist that evening closed her entry with the words : "The colony is lost !" From the convent there was a full view of Montcalm's six miles of entrenchments along the Beauport shore, from the mouth of the St. Charles to the Falls of Montmorency. The British men-of-war could be seen feeling their way into the harbour ; Wolfe's soldiers landing in detachments at the Island of Orleans, and afterwards, in great strength, just beyond the Falls. At nine o'clock on the night of the 12th of July the bombardment from the Levis batteries, across the St. Lawrence, suddenly began ; and "at the first discharge from the English batteries the convent was struck in many places. We passed the night before the Blessed Sacrament, in such terrors as may be imagined." The next morning the Superior, La Mère Migeon de la Nativité, headed a sorrowful procession to the General Hospital, each nun carrying all she took with her in a little bundle. Ten volunteers remained to safeguard the convent, as best they could, under the brave Mère Davanne, with the assistance of their chaplain, Father Resche, and two of his friends.

The General Hospital had already become a sanctuary for 800 people, including the nuns of the Hôtel-Dieu, who, like the Ursulines, immediately took the harassing duty of nursing the sick and wounded in overcrowded wards and with hardly any proper hospital appliances. Wolfe's unsuc-



cessful assault on the heights of Montmorency sent in many patients. Among them was Captain Ochterloney, of the Royal Americans, who had been wounded in a duel the day before ; had left hospital to take part in the battle, saying he could never let a private quarrel stand between him and his public duty ; had been shot through the lungs while leading his company of Grenadiers, had refused to leave the field after such a defeat, and had been rescued from a scalping party by a French soldier of the Regiment of Guienne. Two days later a messenger came out, under a flag of truce, for Ochterloney's effects, which Wolfe sent in, with twenty guineas for the soldier who had saved him. But Vaudreuil theatrically refused to allow any money to be given for this gallant deed. So Wolfe replied, thanking Vaudreuil, and promising Madame de Ramesay, directress of the hospital, that he would grant her special protection if victory should crown the British arms. This promise soon became known, and the hospital was more crowded with refugees than ever. Towards the end of August Ochterloney died, having been tenderly nursed by the good sisters to the last. Both sides then ceased firing for two hours, while Captain de St. Laurent came out of Quebec to announce his death and return his effects.

In September hopes began to revive. It was thought the Canadian autumn would compel the British fleet to raise the siege. Wolfe's restless energy had to be reckoned with. But Montcalm's skill was depended on to keep him at arm's length. And so it might have, though ultimate conquest was only a question of time, if Vaudreuil's med-

dling counter-orders had not thwarted Montcalm's foresight. Suddenly, on the morning of the 13th, Quebec gasped at the desperate news that the red wall of the British army was on the Plains of Abraham, cutting off the town from the west as the British fleet cut it off from the east. Within four hours the French army had marched up from its entrenchments, formed line of battle, attacked, and been broken in defeat. The Ursulines in the General Hospital saw the fugitives flying for their lives down the Côte d'Abraham and across the valley of the St. Charles. By midday the overcrowded hospital had to receive hundreds more of their wounded friends. At midnight a detachment of wild-looking Highlanders took possession and guaranteed protection. The next morning the British wounded were brought in, and every nook and corner in the hospital and all its outbuildings was filled with friend and foe, now drawn together by the sympathy of common suffering, and become but man and man once more under the ministering hands of the good nuns.

While the Ursulines in the General Hospital were busily struggling to do this service in the thickest of all the crowding horrors of war, the little garrison left behind in the convent was racked by still further suspense. The dire news that Wolfe was on the Plains had reached them early in the morning. Their straining ears had heard the sharp, knelling clap of volley after volley from that steadfast British line; then the confused noise of hand-to-hand fighting, yells that might have come from Iroquois, followed immediately by loud, exultant British cheers, and, as they strained their

eyes to see if their ears deceived them, the foreboded truth struck them to the heart when a mob of white and blue and grey fugitives fled in mad haste for the bridge of boats leading back to the French entrenchments. Even as they watched they heard of another disaster from the street beside them. Montcalm had just ridden through St. Louis Gate, mortally wounded—and this news touched the quick of anguish. Some terrified women, seeing him pass by between two Grenadiers, who supported him in the saddle, had shrieked out: "Oh, Mon Dieu—le Marquis est tué!" And he had tried to reassure them by replying: "Ce n'est rien! Ne vous affligez pas pour moi, mes bonnes amies!" The surgeon told him he had only a few hours to live. "So much the better. I shall not live to see the surrender of Quebec." But he attended to the last details of his public duty before he let his memory turn to his beloved family circle among the happy olive groves of his home at Candiac. He sent a farewell message to every member; and then, as his life was ebbing fast away, he made his final peace with God. Often, in that dreadful night, he was heard praying and rendering thanks for the consolations of the Catholic faith. Just as the dreary day was breaking he breathed his last.

What desolation met the eyes of the nuns that morning! The long six miles of French defences stretched as usual along the Beauport shore to the heights of Montmorency. But no one manned them. The guns were dumb and deserted. There was no stir of life about the empty tents. Nothing moved along the road which had so lately



bristled with ten thousand bayonets. The houses were as desolate as the camp. Death had struck peace as well as war.

Bad news kept coming in all day long. All the other French generals had fallen in the battle, with no one knew how many officers whose daughters were pupils of the convent. In the afternoon the death of two Ursulines was reported from the General Hospital. One was La Mère Charlotte de Muy de Ste. Hélène, daughter of a Governor of Louisiana. She was the convent annalist who lived just long enough to see the fulfilment of her foreboding entry for the 26th of June: "The colony is lost." By a strange coincidence the other was Mary Jordan, a Puritan, whose former compatriots were represented by the American Rangers in Wolfe's triumphant army. But she was "La Mère de St. Joseph," heart and soul, when the battle was joined the day before, and she died, just after Montcalm, as French, as patriotic, and more intensely Roman Catholic than he.

The day wore on, and the nuns in the convent had more time than those in the hospital to realize what a desperate pass the colony had come to. A homeless and despairing people, a broken and fugitive army, and the last half-mile of the rock of Quebec, close beset by victorious forces on land and sea:—and this was all that was left of the Canada they knew!

That night a funeral procession stumbled its way through the encumbered street to the convent, bearing the great and unfortunate Montcalm to his last resting place in the chapel of the Saints. The town had been in such confusion all day that no

one could be found to make a coffin, except an old servant of the Ursulines, "le bonhomme Michel," who wept bitterly as he worked at his makeshift of a few rough boards. At nine o'clock the mourners entered by the fitful glare of torchlight. De Ramesay and every man in the garrison that could be spared from duty were there, with many civilians and women and children. One little girl, who held her father's hand as she felt the awestruck silence when that rude coffin was lowered into the shell-torn ground, afterwards became La Mère Dubé de St. Ignace, and used to tell the story of that memorable night to successive nuns and pupils, down to the Ursulines' bicentennial year of 1839; and one of her most attentive listeners, both as pupil and nun, is still alive to repeat the tale in Quebec's tercentennial year of 1908. *Libera me, Domine*, chanted Father Resche and his two companions; while the little choir of siege-worn nuns replied from behind the screen. It was one more fulfilment of the family tradition: *La Guerre est le Tombeau des Montcalm*.

On the 18th Quebec capitulated. Three days later the Ursulines returned to their shattered home. On the 27th an Anglican memorial service was held for Wolfe, in the same chapel where Montcalm lay buried, and the funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Eli Dawson, chaplain to H.M.S. *Stirling Castle*. The style of this oration is too inflated; but the preacher was right in his estimate of the immense importance of the victory. "Ye Heralds of fame already upon the wing, stretch your flight and swell your Trumpets with the Glory of a military exploit through distant

worlds! An Exploit which for the fitness of Address in Stratagem, the Daringness of the attempt, and the Spirit of its execution shall take rank with the choicest Pieces of ancient or modern Story in the Temple of Fame, where it remains immortal."

The Mothers winced at the unwelcome necessity of having to yield up their altars to what they thought unhallowed rites. And the conquerors had the usual Protestant predisposition to take the mass for superstitious mummery. But personal experience and many amenities on both sides made each more tolerant after that long, hard winter. General Murray, now in command of the British army of occupation, quickly won golden opinions by his justice and generosity. He and his men cheerfully gave up a whole day's rations every week for the benefit of the poor, and always paid religious processions of all kinds "the compliment of the hat." And it soon became known that, before leaving for England, Townshend, though obliged to borrow money from the fleet for the needs of the army, had yet sent Bougainville enough to help the French sick and wounded.

Murray established his headquarters in the convent, which was also used as an officers' hospital and had a guard of Highlanders. The sanctity of the cloisters was religiously observed, and not a single complaint was ever made against the British garrison. On the contrary, the officers and men did all they could for the nuns, shovelling the snow for them, seeing they got the best food that could be had, and generally making them as happy as possible under the circumstances. As



the winter began to set in the annalist records that the Highlanders, "exposed by the peculiarities of their costume to suffer severely from the climate, became objects of compassion to the nuns, who set to work to knit long thick stockings to cover the legs of the poor strangers." Captain Knox, of the 43rd, records another pleasant amenity in his journal for the 30th of November. "The nuns of the Ursuline convent having presented the Governor and other Officers with a set of crosses of St. Andrew, curiously worked, they were displayed in compliment to this day : in the corner of the field of each cross was wrought an emblematical heart expressive of that attachment and affection which every good man naturally bears to his native country."

Thus passed the terrible 1759. How different from 1659, when La Mère Marie de l'Incarnation was writing home to France her patriotic congratulations on the Peace of the Pyrenees and the rising glories of His Most Christian Majesty, *Le Grand Monarque* and *Roi Soleil*!

French hopes began to revive with the spring of 1760. The gallant de Lévis was gathering his forces at Montreal ; his army was to be joined by all the able-bodied manhood of the country as he came down ; and the *Fleur de Lys* was to float from the Citadel again. On the 21st of April Murray ordered all the inhabitants, except the nuns, to leave Quebec. All private property left behind was stored in the Récollet church, on the site of the present Anglican cathedral, watched by two delegates chosen by the townsfolk, and placed under a strong guard. On the 23rd the ice moved down and navigation opened. On the 25th Lévis' vessels

began to arrive at Pointe-aux-Trembles ; and a desperate struggle was seen to be imminent. On the 28th every British soldier that could be spared from actually manning the walls marched out to prevent Lévis from closing in to the commanding heights at decisive ranges. A desperate fight ensued ; far bloodier than the first battle of the Plains ; and in a few hours the little British army staggered in, beaten back to its walls, with the loss of more than a third of its numbers. The French army had lost even more men ; and the convent was presently filled with the wounded of both sides. Lévis opened his batteries : all the dangers of a siege began again, and at much closer quarters than the year before. The vanguard of a fleet was reported coming up stream under a press of sail. It rounded into harbour after dark ; and a French officer on the Beauport shore sent off a message to Lévis to say the French reinforcements had arrived at last ! The rumour flew round and fired the besiegers to instant action. But just as they were about to carry the town by assault they found they were mistaken, and that the whole British fleet was coming to relieve Quebec and cut off their own retreat. They at once raised the siege, retired in all haste on Montreal ; and there, brought to bay by irresistible forces on land and water, they laid down their arms forever. Three years later the convent annals record the momentous change of sovereignty in these few and simple words :—" On the 24th of May, 1763, a treaty of peace was signed between the Kings of France and England. Canada is left to the English. God grant religion may continue to flourish there ! "

This devout wish seemed at first destined to disappointment, in the sense desired by the annalist. The good and great Bishop de Pontbriand died before the final surrender, and the Canadian branch of the Church was bereft of its ordinary head at the very time that the State was wrested from its *Mère-Patrie*. For eight years, from 1758 to 1766, not a novice joined the thinning ranks; and the novitiate, consequently, soon ceased to exist. "To add to our difficulties, all commerce with France is forbidden: yet what credit could the Canadian merchants, even if not already ruined, hope for in London? And how many articles of prime necessity, especially for the Church and altar, and for the apparel of persons living in religious communities, are no longer to be found on the list of English manufactures, since their proscription by the law of the land!"

However, the nuns faced every privation with undaunted courage. They did Indian bark work, which they sold to the British officers' families. Perhaps they were taught by Esther Wheelwright, who was elected Superior in 1761, and who might still have retained the art she learnt in her five years' wanderings in the forest, between her Puritan home and the convent. They earned a little money from their own people by embroidery and gilding and other work useful in restoring religious service in the ruined churches. They were poorer than they had ever been, even in the worst days of a hundred years ago. The present of a little seed grain is thankfully recorded as likely to enable them to tide over the next winter without losing their pupils.



In 1761, there were thirty-seven boarders, and English names appear for the first time. Some years later the annals say :—"It has been a great consolation to us, in the midst of so many difficulties and trials, to see our classes always well filled, there being often as many as sixty boarders, French and English. The latter are naturally very gentle and docile; but it is sad not to be allowed to bring them up in our Holy Faith." There are very few Anglo-Canadian families, of any social standing during the first century of British rule, whose daughters did not get at least some of their education from the Ursulines. And was not St. Ursula herself the daughter of a Prince of Britain?

1766 was a turning point in Ursuline history. The novitiate was reopened; Monseigneur Briand, the Vicar-General, arrived out after being consecrated as fourth Bishop of Quebec; and the foundress of their Order was beatified as St. Angela of Merici. "The happy event was celebrated with as many outward demonstrations of joy as if the whole country had still been under Catholic rule." The breach between French and French-Canadian public life was already widening. In 1767 La Mère Marchand de St. Etienne writes to the Ursulines in Paris: "The news we have had from France this year grieves us profoundly. Although expatriated by the fate of war our hearts are as French as ever, and this makes us doubly sensitive to the decline of that dear motherland. I cannot help saying that it is as well to be in Canada, where we enjoy the greatest tranquillity. We are not in the least molested on the score of religion. We have a Governor, who, by his modera-

tion and benignity, is the delight of every one, and a bishop who is the joy and consolation of his flock." This juxtaposition of British commander-in-chief and French-Canadian bishop speaks for itself. A little later on La Mère de St. Louis de Gonzague writes:—"Religion is perfectly free. People say it is not the same in Paris, where religious communities suffer persecution. We are told that you were even obliged to celebrate the beatification of our Blessed Mother Angela in secret. We have no such difficulties here under British rule."

In 1773 the Jesuits, hereditary friends of the Ursulines, were suppressed in France. In 1774 the British Parliament passed the Quebec Act, favouring French-Canadian rights and privileges. In 1775, an army of American Revolutionists invaded Canada and besieged Quebec. Bishop, clergy and nuns all saw the peril of intolerant assimilation staring them grimly in the face; and all stood as firmly British as they did against the third American invasion, in the war of 1812. And in 1799, when Monseigneur Plessis preached a sermon in the Basilica to celebrate Nelson's victory at the Nile, no church in Canada responded with heartier alacrity than the Ursuline chapel to the Bishop's *mandement* ordaining a general thanksgiving for the blessings ensured to the French-Canadians by the just laws and protecting arms of the British Crown.

And this appreciation of British right and prowess was not wrung from any assemblage of mere frightened women, cowering for protection beneath the first strong hand; but sprang spontaneous from the well-proved heroines of four sieges and five battles.

## VII

St. Ursula is revered in the cloisters as a great patroness of learning. St. Angela founded the Ursulines as a teaching order in 1537. And La Mère Marie de l'Incarnation and her successors have always looked upon their school as the prime object of all their work in Canada. Ursuline teachers and boarders are always drawn from the best social classes in their respective communities ; and these female Etons exert considerable influence in different parts of the Roman Catholic world, with their 500 convents, their 12,000 nuns, and their 100,000 pupils.

Quebec society offered a fair field and much favour to the Ursuline teachers in the eighteenth century. Charlevoix found it very much to his taste in 1720. “. . . a little world where all is select. . . . A Governor-General with his staff, nobles, and troops ; an Intendant, with a Superior Council . . . a Commissary of Marine, a Grand Prévôt, a Grand Voyer ; a Superintendent of Streams and Forests, whose jurisdiction is certainly the most extensive in the world ; merchants in easy circumstances, or at least living as if they were ; a bishop and a large staff of clergy ; Récollets and Jesuits ; three old-established communities of nuns ; and other circles almost as brilliant as those surrounding the Governor and Intendant. . . . There are abundant means of passing the time agreeably. . . . Current news is confined to a few topics. News from Europe comes all at one time ; but then it lasts a whole



year. . . . The arts and sciences have their turn, so that conversation never languishes. The Canadians breathe, from their earliest years, an air of good will which makes them very agreeable in social intercourse. Nowhere else is our language spoken with greater purity. . . . There are no really rich people here. . . . Very few trouble themselves about laying up riches. They live well ; that is, if they can also afford to dress well. But they will stint themselves at table in order to dress the better for it ; and it must be admitted that dress is becoming to our Canadians. They are a fine-looking people, and the best blood of France runs in their veins. Good humour and refined manners are common to all ; and even in the remoter country places the slightest approach to boorishness is quite unknown." In 1757, Montcalm found the ladies "spirituelles, galantes, dévotes," and notes in his journal that "Quebec is a town of distinctly good society. . . . At two splendid balls I saw more than eighty charming ladies, all beautifully dressed." So, perhaps, the "good old times" which form the theme of a lament written from the convent in 1785 were not so very different from the new as the writer would have her Parisian Sisters believe. "There is liberty to profess our holy religion ; but there is little care for living piously, young girls are not brought up so well as they used to be. Some of our pupils are taken from us and allowed to go to the theatre before the age of fourteen. We hear many complaints of the vanity and luxury which are becoming prevalent in society ; yet there are many good people who persevere faithfully in the path of

duty." Society was probably getting more complex in Quebec, and throwing off its froth and depositing its dregs as it always has since social complexities began. But the fair field and much favour were there, for all that. Very few convent schools have ever enjoyed such opportunities, and none have used them better.

Yet in one important respect the Ursulines were at a very serious disadvantage. All communication with France was cut off by the British conquest in 1759, by the War of the American Revolution in 1778, and again by the long wars of the First Republic and Empire; while no French book was printed in Canada till 1765, and very few of any general educational value appeared there during the next fifty years. The only source of supply was from a French bookseller in Paris whose London correspondent managed to forward a few text-books, from time to time, as occasion served.

This separation from many forms of French life in those troublous times of universal questionings, and the difficulty of getting secular text-books, combined to throw the whole soul of the teaching more than ever into the religious sphere. But this overwhelming preponderance of one aspect of instruction did not crush out all other aptitudes, as some might think. Literature was certainly not taught on modern comparative lines; but there are many books in use to-day which are of an altogether lower world of literature than the Roman liturgy, with its profoundly intimate adaptability to so much human yearning, and its perennial grandeur of expression. How those Ursulines



would have rejoiced exceedingly to see the fulness of knowledge uniting with the charm of the best French prose in praise of the æsthetics of the liturgy, in Dom Cabrol's *Conférences* at the Institut Catholique de Paris on *Les Origines Liturgiques!* "Ainsi l'Eglise s'est servie des sens, des cérémonies extérieures, pour vous élever vers Dieu; c'est le premier degré de l'oraison. Elle s'adresse ensuite à votre intelligence et à votre cœur par ses formules; et si vous vous laissez pénétrer par cette influence, elle vous conduira jusqu'au plus haut degré de la prière, le ravissement et l'extase." This is an opinion of to-day, calmly given forth while France was in the thick of the debates on the Associations Bill in a Radical Chamber of Deputies. Châteaubriand was nearer their own day; so near, in fact, that he was among the pioneers of the renaissance of wonder in literature—a renaissance which his *Génie du Christianisme* applied to the scriptures of the Church. We re-open the little *livre d'offices*, read with him a few hymns and prayers, and are fain to confess "qu'une langue antique et mystérieuse (celle de Virgile et de Cicéron) une langue qui ne varie plus avec les siècles, convenait assez bien au culte de l'être éternel, incompréhensible, immuable."

But Châteaubriand is no longer an accepted expositor: he is not scientific enough for an evolutionary generation. Yet his famous book served its day well, revived a cultured interest in the liturgy, and preached a series of excellent lay sermons from a Christian reading of Keats's text:

Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know,



Then, by the time the literary revival of the liturgy was waning the scientific began. This went straight to root-and-branch questions of evolution, environment, accretion, and the survival of the fittest. And now science and literature alike acknowledge the supreme fitness of Bible and liturgies to fill a foremost place in the intellectual life. Yet it's a far cry from the convent to the *Modern Reader's Bible*, and it will be many a day before the Papal revision of the Vulgate supplies the half-way house.

However, the essential point is the full and frank recognition of the value of Bible and liturgy as source-books of science and art in the life-history of man. M. Loisy is hardly *persona gratissima* inside the cloisters; but what Ursuline would not agree with this sentence from his *L'Évangile et l'Église*: "Le développement historique du culte accuse un effort persévérant du christianisme pour pénétrer de son esprit toute l'existence de l'homme." Or with Renan's *dictum*: "La religion d'un peuple, étant l'expression la plus complète de son individualité, est en un sens plus instructive que son histoire." Or with Huysmans' artistic sensibility to Gregorian chants, while he was *en route* towards Catholicism: "la paraphrase aérienne et mouvante de l'immobile structure des cathédrales." For would she not triumphantly point to the great Tertullian as the archetype and prophet of all these latter-day cultivators of religion? Look at this French version of his *De Spect.*, c. xxxix, P.L., t. 1, col. 735, and be convinced forever:—"Vous avez des spectacles saints, perpétuels, gratuits; cherchez-y les jeux du cirque, regarde le cours des siècles, les temps qui

s'écoulent, compte les espaces, attends qu'on touche la dernière borne, défends les sociétés des églises, ressuscite au signe de Dieu, lève-toi à la voix de l'ange, glorifie-toi de la palme du martyr. . . . Nous avons, nous aussi, cette littérature, nous avons de la poésie, des sentences, même des cantiques en grand nombre, des chants ;—pas de fables, par exemple, mais des vérités. . . .”

But how could there ever have been any place for English-speaking pupils, and, above all, for Protestants, in such an atmosphere? The only answer is that there always has been room for both creeds and both races in all matters of secular instruction, and that the class-room *entente cordiale* has remained unbroken from the appearance of the first English pupils to the present day. As English schools became established, however, fewer Protestants attended. Nowadays the boarding school is mainly French-speaking and almost entirely Roman Catholic; while the Roman Catholic equivalent of Sunday-school work is carried on among the girls of the public schools, who attend the convent for that purpose only. Education moves within certain limits in all branches; but, within those limits, it is thorough. The facilitative amenities of life are nowhere better understood; and the feminine of “manners maketh man” is nowhere better put in practice.

Religion is very naturally made pervasively attractive to every Roman Catholic; and the nuns and pupils are generally the best of friends. Many a girl leaves in tears: but these do not recruit the ranks of the novices nearly so much as those who leave less regretfully, “have their



fling," and then return for consolation from a hollow world.

A childish impression is sometimes fixed for life by the beautiful commemoration which marks the fête-day of La Mère Marie, when every hand helps to strew her grave with roses. And what pupil ever forgets the end of her first Christmas term? Long before daylight, while the little girls in the junior dormitories are still asleep, soft, distant music floats through the open doorway, stealing over each warm coverlet, to take the ear between dream and waking. *Noël! Noël!* are the first words soaring on the wings of that glad melody. And, presently, the now expectant eyes discern the first tall, white, gliding form, with taper-lit blonde head, leading the undulant, long procession of the elder choir girls. Voices, violins and organ—a swelling tide of sound—flow on and in, until the very air of the whole vibrant room thrills with sympathetic harmonies. A few sweet, rapt moments of full ecstasia . . . and the choir is passing through the farther door . . . and the music, ebbing after it, lingers long on happier notes, before it dies away, down the dim corridors beyond, into the silence of remembered bliss.

The crowning glory of a convent education is, of course, the taking of the veil. The ceremonial used in Quebec is the one approved by the Theological Superiors of the Ursulines in Paris on Michaelmas Day, in the year 1625. The appointed *Sacristine* carefully divides all the garments of the *Postulante* into sacred and profane. The profane are the clothes which will be discarded during the ceremonial. The sacred are those which will be



worn at the beginning of the life regenerate. Then the *Postulante* is dressed up as lay women dress for worldly ceremonies ; and the cross-bearer leads the way into the chapel, while all the nuns follow, two and two, holding their lighted tapers in the outer hand. The long-drawn procession is closed by three abreast : the Mother Superior on the right hand, the Mother Assistant on the left, and, in the centre, the *Postulante*, radiant in bridal white, with wreaths of orange blossom in her hair, and flashing delight to every worldly eye with the jewelled ornaments of the life she is renouncing. Attending her are three little bridesmaids, also in white and also wearing wreaths of flowers.

In the solemn middle of the Latin mass the whole sisterhood turns towards the altar, as the Archbishop begins to ask the momentous question of vocation in French prose. The change of language is an abrupt surprise. Suddenly, insensibly, your attention is teased with memories of *Faust* :— the *Dom, Amt, Orgel und Gesang* the *Böser Geist*, and Gretchen's :

. . . . . Weh! Weh!  
Wär' ich der Gedanken los!

. . . . .  
Dies iræ, dies illa  
Solvat sæclum in favilla.

The *Celebrant* and *Postulante* are now alone, before the eyes of God and man.

Ma fille, que demandez-vous ?

*La miséricorde de Dieu, le saint habit de la religion,  
la charité de l'ordre, et la société des mères.*

Ma fille, est-ce de bonne volonté, et de votre propre mouvement ?

*Oui, mon Père.*

Ma fille, avez-vous ferme intention de persévérer jusqu'à la fin de votre vie ?

*Appuyée sur la miséricorde de Dieu . . . j'espère le pouvoir faire.*

The great renunciation made, the *Postulante* leaves the chapel, while the nuns remain in continual intercession. Presently she returns, robed as a sister ; and makes her vows of service. Then, like a living crucifix, she prostrates herself before the Throne of God. There, while her sisters chant thanksgiving to the Mercy Seat of faith, there—in a long, enraptured vision—she lies prone, all else shut out. . . . She is so still . . . so still in silent adoration . . . you hardly know if she is drawing human breath.

At length she rises, turns toward the rest of her community, slowly passes down the waiting lines, where each nun greets her with the kiss of peace ; and then, as they file out, she follows, last of all, never again to leave the cloisters in either life or death.

#### VIII

Who does not want to pass that massive inner door, which guards the inviolate cloisters of one of the most romantic buildings in the world, which has been a gate of honour for every Governor-General of French or British Empire, and for every Royal party that has set foot in Canada, and which the personal command of kings and viceroys alone can open ?

Visits are rare and visitors of high distinction ; and the whole convent is astir to give befitting welcome. A word through the double-screened wicket to the left, a word in reply from the invisible nun on watch, two strong turns of solid, double locks ; and the door is flung wide, and reveals a semicircle of bowing and smiling Sisters. You enter, and it instantly swings to ; both keys turn firmly, and you stand there a wondering moment, with the same sense of mingled strangeness and familiarity as you had when your first glimpse through a telescope at night carried you off to the scene of things unrealized.

The next minute a nun is asking if this is your first visit to Quebec, and if you had a rough crossing. The Superior is a little ahead, doing the honours with inimitable grace. The corridor is high and well-lighted ; it looks into the sunshiny garden ; the pace is quickened, and you move on, a willing captive to the charm of such unexpected gaiety. You turn a corner—what can you be coming to now—a ball-room ? The same *brouha-ha* of intervolving sound, and the same little puffs and gusts of laughter—only with less forced notes, the same fleeting little calms ! You step in, just in time to catch the point of that capital story about the shy visitor who got lost in the cloisters, and mistook the right door, and . . . and here, at your very elbow, actually is a nun with whom you have danced in many a ball-room, and who remembers perfectly how often that splendid two-step was encored !

Over at the other end of the room the respectful little semicircle has been instinctively re-formed,



as some more nuns come forward to be presented to the guest of honour and make sweeping curtseys that could not be excelled at court. A pathetically happy group is standing beside one of the deep-set windows. It is a nun with her father and sister, who have permission to follow *à la suite* on this occasion, and who are seeing her in the same room, instead of through the *grille*, for the first time for —“ever so long,” they say, indefinitely, though they remember well enough the exact dates of such rare events. But that nun pities her sister in the cold world outside, and is really sorry that as you are a man you can never experience the joys of her cloistered life.

This is the private reception room, where the visitors' book is kept; and the nun who holds it open while you write notices that by having paid two visits within a month you have broken all precedents, and she promises you the gold medal for attendance and good conduct. The room is typical of the whole convent. The floor is bare natural wood, spotlessly clean. No First Lieutenant ever had a smarter deck. There is some fine dark panelling round the walls, harmoniously plain. A door opens through the panel at the far end. It is quite indistinguishable at a little distance, and has an air of mystery about it. How the nuns laugh when you ask if that's the way to their *oubliette*! The only ornament, besides a few small pictures, is a huge, old-fashioned fireplace, with a chimney nook where you could build castles in the dying fire some midwinter evening. The mantelpiece and frame are of handsomely carved, smoke-brown oak. The dogs and fire-irons are

enormous, with a long-established air about them. The whole is flanked by cannon balls and shells—grim reminders of troublous times, and glorious trophies of the steadfast bravery shown during the four sieges through which the convent has passed.

The library has the appearance of being deep down, the windows being high, and the light coming only from above. You look round and quite naturally ask how many “tomes” there are—“volumes” seem such mundane things compared with these ranks of solemn folios. There is a case or two of modern secular books, some up-to-date Canadian histories among them. Here is the only known impression of the seal of the famous Company of New France, or *Cent Associés*, founded by Richelieu in 1627. The seal is three inches in diameter, the encircling inscription is *Me donavit Ludovicus Decimus Tertius*, and a figure holding the Cross stands against a background spangled with the *fleur-de-lys*. On the other side is a ship under sail, with the inscription: *In Mari Viæ Tuæ*. This ship and its fine motto, *Thy ways are in the Sea*, have been adopted by the Champlain Society, and the Quebec Tercentenary crest displays both sides of the seal.

But the most interesting of all is the wealth of correspondence: letters written during the last three centuries by people of every class, from a reigning sovereign to a simple *habitant*. Anne of Austria, Frontenac, Montcalm, Murray, Carleton—all who were greatest in Canada’s heroic ages—were correspondents of the Ursulines. But more appealing than the rest are the letters from two Parisian Ursulines during the Reign of Terror.

In spite of the horrors surrounding them and the fate which sent twenty-five of them to the guillotine, these faithful nuns did all they could to safeguard the property and revenue of their sisters in Quebec. Half of their letters are filled with accounts of the business precautions taken by their indefatigable *dépositaire*, La Mère de Ste. Saturnine, then in her eightieth year. The other half alternately freeze the blood and set one's veins on fire with indignation.

On the 13th of January, 1793, the nun who then signed herself "ex-Superior of the Ursulines of the Faubourg St. Jacques," wrote to the Superior in peaceful Quebec:—"Dear Reverend Mothers, you have doubtless heard with grief of the destruction of all the religious houses in France. Our monastery has not escaped the common fate. Your compassionate hearts would have bled to see the cloister-wall broken down, and ourselves forcibly driven out from our asylum. To our great regret we are all scattered . . . beg our Divine Lord to grant us grace to make a holy use of the heavy trial He has sent us. All the clergy we knew have disappeared; we cannot discover any who have escaped the massacre of the 24th of September. Our venerable confessor and our two chaplains were certainly among the victims. . . . I recommend myself to your good prayers as one already dead, for although my health is fairly good, which seems a miracle, considering my seventy-four years and cruel situation, yet I may not be among the living by the time this reaches you. The holy will of God be done. If I were younger I might try to accept your invitation." The letter



was not delivered till after her death, as presentiment had told her. But neither correspondent could have imagined beforehand what adventures that farewell message was to undergo. It was carried over to England by some refugees flying for their lives, and confided to the care of a shopkeeper, who mislaid and forgot it. Finally, one day in 1802, nine years after it had been written, an English merchant, who had found it in London, called at the convent and gave it to the third successor of the Superior to whom it had been addressed!

The annals contain some curious entries about distinguished visitors. Thus it is recorded that when King William IV paid a visit, as a young naval officer of twenty-two, the nuns found him "most affable and gracious, *although a sailor.*" Four years later, in 1791, came the next member of the Royal Family, Queen Victoria's father, then called Prince Edward, who was colonel of the 7th Fusiliers stationed at Quebec. The good Mothers were delighted with him. He took refreshments with the bishop in the Superior's room, and bought some bark work for which he insisted on paying twenty times its value. Again, in 1860, the greatest of all their public receptions was given to King Edward VII, then on his Canadian tour as Prince of Wales. The annalist records with pardonable pride that the Prince spent two whole hours in going over the convent, after the ceremony, and that "he showed as much interest in observing the plain apartments, the bare floors, the simple cells, as any one of us might have felt in seeing Windsor Castle."

The Refectory is where "plain living and high thinking" are practised *in excelsis*. Here are the signs and symbols of both. This room looks centuries older than the others. It is in perfect fitness for its present use; but it is long and comparatively low; quaint steps lead down into it from its garden door, the ceiling is massively ribbed with huge dark beams, and the whole appearance of it is distinctly mediæval. The tables are long, bare, immensely heavy; so, too, are the deep and narrow benches. You can't imagine that chairs and carpets have ever been invented. The table is set for supper. There are white water jugs at intervals; and heavy semi-globular pewter salt cellars on thick stems and solid bases. These are over two hundred years old. At every place there is a little birch-bark bread-basket, used to "gather up the fragments that remain." A lectern, like a witness-box in shape, serves for the *lectrix* who reads aloud during meals from some book of devotion. It is all so simple, and so unstudiedly natural. A nun explains the bill of fare, and the great difference between fast and feast days. You would mistake the feast for the fast days, if you had not heard about the latter first! But it seems that, beyond marking the difference in the calendar by difference in diet, the Refectory is merely a place to refresh one's body for the sake of one's soul. "Won't you give us the pleasure of your company at dinner?" laughs a nun who has not been cloistered many years; "you'll be better afterwards than if you dined at the club." And so you would.

As you approach the class-rooms there is a quick, settling shuffle of little feet, a tap with a wand,

a soft "Hsh!"—and there is the nun at her desk, and all the girls standing before her, exactly as teachers and taught stand for inspection all the world over. The prize-winners wear coloured scarves over their left shoulders; but they are wisely not "shown off" before the visitors. A half-holiday is asked for and granted in honour of a distinguished guest; and instantly every girl is dropping pretty, smiling curtseys to a running accompaniment of multitudinous *Mercis!*

"It would be such a privilege to be allowed to present the novices." So the party goes on to where fourteen are being marshalled in an adjoining corridor. Two broad sunbeams are pouring steeply down into the far end of the long room in which you are waiting; and as the timid little procession begins to move in, beneath the high window, veil after mist-like veil becomes an aureole in the transfiguring light. One face and figure arrest your eye. The colour comes and goes, shifting incessantly under the rich, warm, half-Italian complexion. The neck strains a little, and pulses fast; though the face is calm enough, and the delicately poised figure is almost still, it sways so imperceptibly. What is her beauty doing here, secluded and immured from every hope of triumph? Look again. She is evidently interested in all that is taking place; but, just as evidently, only in so far as these outside interests relate to her vocation. "Vocation" is the dominant in the rhythm of her whole expression. Some other novices catch their breath with shyness before answering your questions; but her words are as untroubled as her brow. Is this the "Blessed Damozel" that haunted the imagination of Ros-



setti with a vision of earthly beauty looking back  
on us

From the gold bar of Heaven ?

• • • • •  
The wonder was not yet quite gone  
From that still look of hers.

• • • • •  
Her eyes were deeper than the depth  
Of water stilled at even.

There is an astounding volume of sound from what must be four-handed piano-playing in the music room. No wonder : it is a fourteen-handed performance ! The solitary harp looks neglected in its corner. Is it out of favour, even in convents, nowadays ? At one time it was the chosen instrument to give languishing, romantic finish to a lady-like education. Perhaps its truer virtues will be recognized again, and the fit though few will re-awake its glamour as bards and angels are famed to do.

A hurrying little group meets you in the passage. They had forgotten the Indian pupil ! She is a curiosity now ; perhaps the last of her race to be taught there—within a few short steps of where Marie de l'Incarnation used to gather so many round the famous ash tree. She is a new-comer ; and the convent is almost as strange to her as to the visitors who cluster round. One of them knows some words of her native tongue. Her eyes look far out beyond her surroundings as she answers. Is it only a freak in the association of ideas that always makes certain Indian languages set your fancy wandering among wind-swept pines and "the voice of many waters" ?

But there are so many things to see! The corridors seem unending; they are so long, so many; weather-beaten grey outside, solid through and through, as if they had grown, rough-hewn, from the rock of Quebec, and had been hand-chiselled afterwards, just to humanize them. Every window gives a glimpse of the golden-tinged block-tin roofs, with a steep pitch and studded with little pointed windows. The stairways are innumerable. One is called after St. Augustine—a great hero in all convents—and on the landing is a statue of St. Joseph, which was placed there in commemoration at the jubilee of 1689. The Blessed Virgin Mary, of course, watches over the Community Hall, in her quality of Perpetual Superior. A bell is ringing—it is the same one that is rung at four o'clock every morning of the year. You confess that the last time you heard it at that hour you were coming home from a dance. "What different worlds there are in this one," says the nun beside you; and then adds quickly, "but innocent pleasures are very good for refreshing the mind—we take a great deal of pleasure in our garden." Another nun, with a turn for ornithology, regrets that as the town spreads further and further, all round the convent, the birds get fewer and fewer. "They would come back if they could: this is their sanctuary."

These things excite your own interest. But what interests the nuns most of all? Probably the Chapel of the Saints. A very ancient and highly venerated statue of Our Lady of Great Power stands benignant in the centre of the altar. The whole breadth of the wall on either side is covered with pictures and relics. In every other niche, too,

there are relics in pious plenty. Some of them were added during the lifetime of La Mère Marie, like those of the martyrs, Justus, Modestus and Felix, which her son, Dom Claude Martin, sent out in 1662. An Ursuline of Metz sent out a relic of St. Ursula herself. All that is mortal of St. Clement is here, by permission of Pope Innocent XI. In 1674 the collection was already so rich that it was decided to build a special chapel in its honour. Since then it has increased enormously in value to the devotee. Here are the trophies of the Holy War, of the war from which there is no discharge but death, the war against the Powers of Darkness and the principalities of this wicked world: relics of Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuits who so often befriended the Ursulines; of the "most lovable" Saint Francis de Sales; of the great St. Augustine; of the foundress of the Ursulines, St. Angela de Merici; relics of all ages and all countries, from the first century to the twentieth and from Canada to China; and, shedding a diviner virtue on them all, genuine particles of the Cross of Christ and of His Crown of Thorns.

Will objects connected with Marie de l'Incarnation soon be numbered with relics of the saints? You cannot help hoping that they will, so eager are her followers in this just cause. Her tomb is already a shrine for nuns and pupils. . . . But here is something different, something to bring you back to secular affairs, and waken memories of the heroes of world-history. It is the skull of Montcalm, a gruesome relic of that vivid personality. The chaplain keeps it in the same room as Father



Resche used during Wolfe's siege of Quebec. A curious link between a changeful past and present was supplied by the life of Father Daulé, another chaplain, who was born at the end of the Seven Years' War and died as France and England were about to send an allied army to the Crimea. You will find a deeper and less mortuary interest in the grave than in the skull. *La Guerre est le Tombeau des Montcalm*. At Bougainville's request the French Academy had composed a Latin inscription for a memorial tablet shortly after Montcalm's death; and Pitt had willingly given permission to have it sent out to Quebec and erected there. But many delays occurred; and the present tablet was only unveiled on the hundredth anniversary of the burial, at a service held with all the magnificent rites of the Church which the hero loved so well. The elaborate inscription recites Montcalm's titles to remembrance at full length. But it is little more than a good official document. Lord Aylmer, a British Governor-General, inscribed on the grave a terser tribute, from one soldier to another's fame.

HONNEUR A MONTCALM!

LE DESTIN

EN LUI DÉROBANT LA VICTOIRE

L'A RECOMPENSÉ

PAR UNE MORT GLORIEUSE.

No other spot of equal size in the whole New World touches the heart of universal history so nearly as this old chapel. It is just beyond the

cloisters : you remember how the nuns responded from behind the screen of their own chapel at the funeral of Montcalm. Enter alone, with the essential *genius loci*—half sacred and half secular—full upon you. Three stone walls are your house of defence against an intrusive world. The fourth is as physically firm as the rest ; but, by every appeal of altar, arch, pillar and aspiring height, it lifts you above all mere mortality and the flux of living pettiness. Look round you now. The sacred pictures glow with the inspiration of self-sacrifice in the cause of God. Some are themselves the tokens of daring devotion, having been saved from the fury of the French Revolution by a former chaplain at the risk of his life. A jewelled corona hangs from the ceiling by long silver chains. Within it burns a perpetual *ex voto* flame, to remind all time how human love and heavenly were blent there long ago, in the parted lives of Marie Madeleine de Repentigny and her dead affianced hero. And, facing each other from the two side walls, not forty feet asunder, are the grave of Montcalm and the pulpit from which Wolfe's funeral sermon was delivered. This consecration of an *entente cordiale d'honneur* unique in history is surely the fit reward of those two commanders whose whole careers were a dedication to their respective countries' service.

MORTEM VIRTUS COMMUNEM

FAMAM HISTORIA

MONUMENTUM POSTERITAS

DEDIT

## IX

“Quebec” is the ancient Indian name for the “Narrows” of the St. Lawrence, that mightiest of rivers, which has been the highway of empire since Canadian history began. And at these “Narrows” the Old World and the New, the past, the present and the future, still meet and intermingle as they never have and never do elsewhere. A half-mile from the convent the full flood tide of immigration is surging inland to the future home of a great nation now in the strenuous making. But no new-comer to this harbour of a hundred fleets can fail to notice the sheer, grey Citadel, crowning the seaward summit of those Heights of Abraham whose moving story has so long been a part of universal fame. Nor can anyone see this walled city, let the eye dwell on Nature’s exceeding strength and beauty within the vast mountain ring of the Laurentians, know these for the eldest of the everlasting hills, and then not feel how the most modern self transcends its wonted boundaries of time through all its endless kinship with the immemorial past and illimitable future.

Re-enter now the high-throned Upper Town, which is girt like a giant armed. Seek its heart once more. The sacred solitude does not chill you now, as it did when you came here first, out of mere bustling curiosity. Your feet no longer seem muffled in the dust of death. Greatness no longer seems departed; but omnipresent, immortally alive. For here, in this veteran chapel, which has braved so many dread ordeals with the heroic



Ursulines, the twin renown of Wolfe and Montcalm becomes a shrine of memory, where the pilgrims of all chivalry can find inspiration for the exalting service of every age.

One step beyond, within the cloisters, a living link brings this Valhallan past almost as close in the body as you have just felt it in the spirit. Here is an aged nun who perfectly remembers the tales of former days, told her so often by La Mère de St. Ignace, who saw Montcalm's shattered corpse lowered into the grave after the Battle of the Plains. While Mère St. Ignace herself heard the still older tales of Geneviève de Boucherville, who saw the perpetual Lamp of Repentigny first lighted more than two hundred years ago, and whose father remembered the time of Champlain, whose tercentenary of the foundation of Quebec is being celebrated in this present year of grace. The combined ages of these four human links already exceed three hundred and seventy years. Long may this mighty span continue to grow with the life of the survivor!

A few steps more, and you are again in the historic garden, with its intimate memories of La Mère Marie. Here, between her intercessions to the King of Kings, she formed the statesmanlike resolve to persuade Canadians that, if they would be steadfast through the appalling devastation of famine, war and earthquake, they could make Canada the Land of Promise for countless generations. And here the nuns still come to reinvigorate mind and body; and for the solace of the soul. Here is a haunt of ancient peace, in which to ponder great, still books of meditation. Here

is the old French cross, upheld by a pedestal made from the original ash-tree, beneath whose shade La Mère Marie taught and exhorted her faithful converts. Near by is the corner of wild garden, as wild to-day as when the little Indian feet brushed so deftly through its springing flowers, never treading one down because she loved them all to grow there as God Himself had planted them. And here, where the very ground seems native to the Golden Age, the nun who passes by in venerative mood might well apostrophize the first great Ursuline of Canada in words addressed to another spirit of the same deep constancy and calm :

Thy soul within such silent pomp did'st keep,  
 As if humanity were lull'd asleep ;  
 So gentle was thy pilgrimage beneath,  
 Time's unheard feet scarce make less noise,  
 Or the soft journey which a planet goes :  
 Life seem'd all calm as its last breath.

A still tranquillity so hush'd thy breast,  
 As if some Halcyon were its guest,  
 And there had built her nest :  
 It hardly now enjoys a greater rest.

But the garden wakens deeper memories than these. Are not its walls the harp whose unseen, æolian strings have echoed to the voice of cloister melody from morn till eve, year after year, and in five years of jubilee ? At dawn the Godward day begins :

*Ad Te de luce vigilo.*

During more secular hours there are the busy hum of school and rippling treble of an interlude

of play. But, where all is done *ad majorem Dei gratiam*, even these sounds become attunable to the dominant strain of a glad *Te Deum* or the full self-surrender of a suit preferred before the Throne of Grace :

*O Cor amoris victima.*

At dusk the whole Sisterhood commits soul and body to Heavenly safe-keeping for the night :

*In manus tuas, Domine.*

And is not all this but one accordant note in the full chorus of praise addressed by a single Church in a single tongue to the one true God—a chorus of praise unwearied for nineteen Christian centuries, and unwearied still, as, with the sun, it passes from choir to choir unceasingly, among the Catholic faithful the whole world round ?

And even when her Chapel is dim and silent, and the midnight garden is only a hushed seclusion at her feet, the watching Ursuline is brought home to the Divine Infinities by her very Convent. Here, from her roof-side window, again within the stupendous colosseum built by Titanic Nature round the arena of Quebec, she finds all that Earth can show her of Eternity :—the home of a vanished past, lost to all record or tradition ; the home, too, of deeds to stir the hearts of men while history remains ; the scene now of quickening life along the great ship-bearing River, in the busy streets, and among the girlhood at school beside her : and then the hills, the old, the everlasting hills ; and the primordial tides, throbbing so far inland with the full pulse of the Atlantic ; the wide, wide



sky; the universe of stars; the view of all immensity.

Murs, ville  
 Et port,  
 Asile  
 De mort,  
 Mer grise  
 Où brise  
 La brise—  
 Tout dort.

Ce bruit vague  
 Qui s'endort,  
 C'est la vague  
 Sur le bord;  
 C'est la plainte  
 Presqu'éteinte  
 D'une sainte  
 Pour un mort.

On doute  
 La nuit. . . .  
 J'écoute. . . .  
 Tout fuit,  
 Tout passe,  
 L'espace  
 Efface  
 Le bruit.

Then, when an angel lays his ear to this still convent, as we lay ours to catch the voice of Ocean whispering through a single shell, he surely hears those undertones of lowly human service which are the soul of all the harmonies on high.

## CHAPTER X

### THE HABITANT

A MILLION of happy, self-centred *habitants* still live, little knowing and little known, among the other self-ruling millions of the Empire. They were, originally, the *habitants* of lands "conceded" to Canadian *seigneurs* by the Crown of France, according to the theocratic feudal scheme of Richelieu. All emigrants were "good Catholics"—Huguenots being expressly forbidden; the firstfruits in their new home were apportioned to the Church; and every able-bodied man was also bound to answer the King's call to arms. The *seigneur* did homage for his lands, which he was obliged to settle on pain of forfeiture. The *habitant* paid seigniorial dues of *cens et rente*, ground his corn at the *seigneur's* mill, baked his bread in the *seigneur's* oven, and gave tithes of all fish caught in seigniorial waters. In those days Canada was administratively a part of France; and, as every acceptable feature of separate French life has since been guaranteed by every succeeding Constitution and fostered by every feeling of intense race-patriotism, it is little wonder, nowadays—with every French disability long since forgotten and every present benefit appearing daily in a French disguise—to find the *habitant* still more devoutly

French than ever. The term *habitant* is now generally applied to the whole country population ; but, as it excludes that other million of French-Canadians who live in towns or cross the line to work in New England factories, it still denotes the classes farthest removed from outside influences, most cut off by difference of language, readiest to look upon race and religion as one and the same, and always hearing, whether they will or no, the voice of the *Mère-Patrie* calling to them through every tale and song.

If, then, we wish to understand something of their peculiar differentiation, we must consider them as having lived under the care of a great theocracy ; as still speaking a pure form of French, with truly derived adaptations to Canadian needs ; and as still cherishing a folklore quintessentially French both in letter and spirit, and distinctively Canadian only through much selection and a little variant development.

Ordinary manifestations of priestly power are too well known to be dwelt upon here. We need only note that Canada has her share of them, and more. Every village has its towering church, its convent, school, and *presbytère*, with straggling clusters of little white cottages meekly grouped about them. The wealth of the Church is not only very great in itself, but simply overwhelming in comparison with that of the community at large ; moreover, it is free from all taxation. Yet, under the double stimulus of their own faith and priestly pressure, the people contribute enough to support a church living on pious offerings alone. There is, virtually, a State establishment in the Province of Quebec,



with "all accustomed dues and rights"; and Provincial, Dominion, and Imperial authority alike have all united in guarantees for its continued security. And the *habitant* has generally been content with most things as they are. He believes that his lines are laid in pleasant places, and he knows that, however far afield they run, they will always, and surely, turn within the guardian circle of his mother Church.

But, time and place and people all considered and the point of view once granted, there is no gainsaying the fact that the Church has fairly won her predominance over the mind and her pre-eminence within the soul. For the home-bound France of modern anti-clericals and perpetual colonial sterility has always been "le Soldat de Dieu" abroad, sending generation after generation of her chosen sons and daughters to go forth pioneering for the Lord of Hosts. And her first Canadian martyr-missionaries, and their successors in less perilous times, have set up a standard of leadership which still makes the "black robe" a mighty power in the land. Illustrations of this power abound everywhere. The place-names were, originally, as various here as elsewhere; but, as ecclesiastical power came home to the people so much more nearly than any other, the names of the local patron saints have now supplanted the place-names proper in quite two-thirds of the French towns and villages. St. Anne is the great exemplar of this victory in nomenclature. And the most important single instance is La Bonne Ste. Anne, the transatlantic Lourdes, where so many pilgrims gather that the entire population of London visit-

ing an English shrine would not proportionally outnumber these good Canadians. Equally apposite illustrations are by no means wanting in the comic vein. A *habitant*, who had unwillingly taken part in a very boisterous celebration of St. Patrick's Day, summed it all up by making the saint the eponymous totem of all *les Irlandais*—"C'est un terrible Saint, ce *Sin-Pattarraque!*" Another, after listening to my explanation of the points of likeness between the two different Churches, showed his appreciation of the Anglican position by the remark, "Eh, oui, Monsieur, c'est *une espèce de religion comme il faut.*"

But the all-pervading influence of the "black robe" is nowhere better shown than by the way in which Christian songs have become engrafted on Canadian folklore—and folklore is always the last refuge of paganism. The "noël" *D'où viens-tu, bergère?* is a perfect Christmas picture-poem, become a folksong for childhood. *Le Voyageur Chrétien* is for the full vigour of manhood. And old age has the quaintly solemn religious dance, *Il n'y a qu'un seul Dieu.* The words of this are a French translation of a Latin paraphrase of the *Series*, once used for the initiation of Druidic novices. At the words *Il n'y a qu'un seul Dieu* the chain begins to turn, each dancer continuing in the same direction until the first line of the half-way couplet—*Six urnes placées, remplies*, when all pause together to make profound obeisance to each other twice; then, at its second line—*A Cana, en Galilée*, the chain continues turning until the *series* ends with *les douze apôtres*. The order of enumeration is then reversed and the dance ends, as it began, with the

key-line so often used, *Il n'y a qu'un seul Dieu*. Strange that this *series*, of unknown antiquity even in Druidic times, should have come down, through all the Latinized conversions of the middle age, to find its last fulfilment here, in this Old-World corner of strenuous America! And yet familiar too, for many an immemorial ark enshrines new covenants, made more appealing to the human soul. The Druids began and ended with vain elaboration—"There is no *Series* for the number One: Fate itself, and Passing forth, the Father of Grief: Nought before, nor any After." But the Canadians, though with the same Druidic form, are worlds apart with the new indwelling Spirit there, and faithfully content with the twice-sung line—*Il n'y a qu'un seul Dieu*. "Nought before, nor any After"—but, with *Unus est Deus*, the soul flies back *per omnia saecula saeculorum* and forth again to all Infinity.

The *habitant* speech is a very genuine old French—not a *patois*, much less a degenerate form of any standard tongue. It is, indeed, the next-of-kin to Molière's own, carried oversea two centuries ago by the most conservative of emigrants, and still living in unconscious fidelity to the France of the *Grand Monarque*. Its imported variants are generally of Norman origin, or nautical and military terms applied to everyday life, a very natural transference in a colony founded by seamen and maintained by force of arms. New conditions soon called for new expressions. Some Indian words were adopted; and Anglicisms have since crept in at different times. But the natural growth of new Canadian terms out of pure Old French



has always been the truest form of development; and such terms have now acquired a legitimate technical precision in their New-World acceptations.

When a *habitant* says he will *acertainer*, he is not using an Anglicism, but an excellent obsolete French word: did not Francis I himself tell the Parliament of Paris, on April 9th, 1526, "Que nous sommes duement acertenés"? *Bachelier* and *bacon* have a similar history; the English words coming from the Old French, which are now obsolete in Paris, but flourishing in Canada. The emphatic *assavoir* is still used here; so is *fiable*, now only expressible in France by some such circumlocution as "digne de confiance." People sometimes say *cheux eux* and *ganif*; and astonished *habitants* always exclaim *cray-yez!*—"croyez," our own "who'd a' thought it!" In spite of locks, doors are always *barrées*, as in the time of the "gudeman" hero of "Get up and bar the door." A single line of Molière has two obsolete words still current in Canada: "Demain, *du grand matin*, je l'enverrai *quérir*." *Du* means *dès* and *habitants* still "go in quest of" what they want—*je va le kri*. As nearly all the emigrants came by way of the north of France, we naturally find many northern peculiarities reproduced among the *habitants*. Such are: *a* for *elle*; *i* for *il*, *ils*, *lui* or *y*; *amain*, "handy"; *espérer*, "to wait"; *houiner*, our "whinny"; *bers*, a cradle; and *escousse* as a space of time, instead of the space run in order to make a good jump. Pronunciation is decidedly broad and rather harsh; with *a* for *é*, *aw* for *a*, sibilant initial *dz* for *d*, and final *d*, *r*, *s*, and *t* often

sounded in places where they are now mute in modern French.

A few military terms are very common in ordinary life. The personal effects which we call our "things" are invariably known as "booty"—*butin*. The big round "steamer" on the winter stove is a *bombe*. A fur cap is a *casque*. And old *habitants* still talk of their village as *le fort*, in reminiscence of warpaths and scalping-parties. But nautical terms meet you everywhere. You steer your way about the country by the points of the compass. The winter roads are marked by buoys—*balises*; and, if you miss the channel between them, you will founder—*caler*, and become, like a derelict, *dégradé*. You must *embarquer* into, and *débarquer* out of, a carriage. A cart is *radouée*—refitted. A well-dressed woman is *bin gré-yée*—"fitted out to go foreign." Horses are always moored—*amarrés*; enemies reconciled by being *ramarrés*; and winter heralded by a broadside of snow—*la bordée de la Ste. Catherine*.

Indian words are comparatively rare. *Tobogane* and *mocassin* are familiar to every one. Others are more recondite: like *sassaquaw*, "no end of a row"; *micouenne*, the big wooden spoon for the camp kettle; *ouaouaron*, an onomatopœic name for the bull-frog; and *ouannaniche*, the land-locked salmon of Lake St. John.

The use of English idioms is a very real danger; and, unfortunately, this insidious form of barbarism has perverted the truer ways of speech. Most of the common Anglicisms are merely bad superfluities forced into use by the closer pressure of modern Anglo-Saxondom. Steamers and trains

being unknown until generations after the old French time we naturally hear of *stimeurs*, of "boarding" *les chars*, and even of a traction-engine as *une espèce de stime!* *Un Français de France*, who was superintending the erection of the Champlain monument in Quebec, could not get "un cric" till someone thought of *un djack-scrou*. The *habitant* will *clairer* his land, curse with all the English he knows, and sometimes get *un blackeye sur le nez!* When husband and wife go to town they can enjoy *sand-wedges* together, and she may buy *des gants de kid*, while he chooses a pair of trousers from *une grande variété de pantings*.

Canadianisms proper are quite different, and altogether justifiable. In a country of canoes and waterways certain words soon became locally specialized. *Aviron* is always "paddle"; *sauter*, to "run" the rapids; *bateau*, a slow jib-and-main-sail river cargo-boat of some 40 tons. *Portage* has actually been taken by the Academy, which stooped to conquer an immortality of ridicule as well, by seizing upon this wonderful example:—"Depuis Québec jusqu'à Montréal, il y a tant de portages"! *Refoul* is the strong Acadian contraction of "refoulement," describing the sudden tumult of subsidence as the mighty ebb rushes out of the Bay of Fundy. Life in the woods has turned *brûlé* into a noun, meaning a burnt patch. *Bois-brûlé*, however, is something very different. It means "half-breed," in allusion to the darkening of the "pale-face" complexion. A road through sticky black earth is a *pot-à-brai*, or sailor's pitch-pot. And "boucan," "the place where hams are smoked," has become *boucane*,



meaning smoke itself, of any kind at all. Lumbering is responsible for the *cage*—raft, *cageux*—raftsman, *crible*—“crib,” and *glissoire*—“shoot.” Sugaring has *l'érablière*—the “sugar-bush” of maple-trees; *la sucrerie*, where sugar is made; *dalleaux*, nautically “scuppers”—spouts for “tapping” trees; *mouvette*—a stirabout “paddle” for the *brassin*—thickening “syrup”; *cassot*—tiny birch-bark cornucopia, full of “setting” sugar; and *la tire*—both the “pulling” of half-hardened sugar and the “pulled” sugar itself. Snow and ice have their own vocabulary. Canadians go to *le patinoir*, not “le skating-rink” affected by Parisians. *Les bordages* are shore ice; *pont de glace*, any stretch of ice capable of bearing traffic across water; *croûte*, “crust” of snow, good going for *raquetteurs*—snowshoers. The chief drawbacks to the pleasure of winter driving are the *baraudage*, “slewing,” of the sleighs—*carrioles*; *bourguignon*—frozen clots after rain; *un chemin boulant*, where hoofs “ball up”; and *cabots*—not the bumpings of the carriage, as in France, but transverse gouged-out snow-ruts which cause the bumpings. And *frasil*, snow hanging suspended in water, is the natural foe of every miller. This “fraw-zee” is from “fraisil”—“coal-dust.” Extremes meet in similitude!

There are few words to show that the seamy side of life has called for special terms. But the frequent use of *zigonner*, “to saw a horse’s mouth,” is one proof of the lamentable fact that *habitants* are among the very worst horse-masters in the world. Unpleasing turns of thought, too, are revealed by the universal word for women—*les créatures*, by the bogey-name for the Devil—*la*

*Gripette*, and by the feminine form of "tom-fool"—*la bêtassee*.

But, in spite of these exceptions, and partly by reason of the general contempt for the opposite fault of affected fine language—*parler en termes*, the *habitant's* own new-found phraseology will pass with the best. Even his *distance de quelques arpents* is correct enough, where farms are staked out "on the square," and the side of an acre naturally becomes a fixed measure of length. *Fumez donc* is no bad form of inviting you to sit down and spend the evening; nor could people whose axes are worth half a chest of tools describe a penniless but capable man better than by calling him *un homme à la hache*. And what an old-time charm there is in the everyday remark about any honest pair of lovers—*le cavalier fréquente sa blonde*; in the high road being still *le chemin du Roi*; and even in the word *octroi*, the Canadian use of which, in the original sense of "assistance granted," takes us far back to the old largesse of princes. How deeply, too, must the patriarchal lore have touched a popular fancy which sees a yearly manna for the teeming rivers in the infinitude of those flies so aptly called *la manne des poissons*. And, surely, the name peculiar to Laurencian twilight is drawn from the very source of poetry itself; for, at the chill of sunset, the warmed hill-tops smoke with thickening mist, the afterglow burns through the dusking brown, and then, when darkness and light have met awhile—*à la brunante*, the Canadian day is over.

*Habitant* folklore is one more witness to the scientific truth that older forms live longest in self-

centred and remote communities. For the *habitant*, coming out from the remoter Northern Provinces while mediævalism still existed there, have ever since preserved their ancient lore in a new environment so very favourable to a segregated life.

Priestly influence banished *galanterie* from the *fête des noces* and pagan wakes from every *bel enterrement*. The *vaudeville* meanings are not given to *blonde* and *maîtresse*. The *cantica nefaria*, abhorred by St. Augustine, are rare enough. Ste. Anne is invoked in song for missing sailor sons: "Bonne Sainte, rendez-moi mon fils—Il vente—C'est le vent de la mer qui nous tormente." And pagan rites are only known in their Christian guise: *La Guignolée*, or cutting of the sacred mistletoe at the winter solstice, becoming a Christmas *quête* for the poor; and the summer fire in honour of the earth-gods becoming *le feu de joie de la St. Jean*. But unconverted relics of paganism still survive. Within quite recent years an old *magicienne* has sold favouring winds to sailors. Little trees are still put up on new houses, though without any conscious purpose of giving a new home to the dispossessed spirits of the wood cut down for building. *Marianne's* donkey changes skins at Michaelmas. Wise animals and talking birds abound. The miller tricks the Devil into a sack and ties him to the mill-wheel. The *voyageur* sings *bonsoir, Lutin*, and shares a common superstition with the fisherman, whose *blanc, blanc loup-marin* is a mermaid or werwolf. And the *plus savante* rival supplants *la fille du Roi* by means of the Black Art.



The chief interest, however, centres in the folk-songs. Impersonal and objective in themselves they have the unselfconscious native insight of all true folklore; and their appealing simplicity calls forth our sympathy at once and holds it fast with all the intimate and yearning charm of "Nature's old felicities." Not that they have any "natural magic" of their own; for Nature is only a conventional background to some of their vivid little dramas. What really gives them their vital popularity is their intensely social qualities; and it is this one companionable touch of Nature which makes them all akin. *Habitants* will always gladly turn away from the stern or beautiful immensity of Canadian scenes to sing their fancy back into that quaint, strayed, old-French life, where all their common joys and sorrows of to-day still find a home. Verse and music are inseparably one. The more ancient airs link the songs still more closely with the past; for folk-melody is far older than any modern music, and you may still hear Gregorian love-songs among the remoter *habitants*; while the more modern airs help to wing the verse both fast and far; for many of them are singularly pure, some of them excellently apt, and a few have learnt the spell which binds ear and heart for ever.

But, though man alone may form the burden of his song, the true Canadian folksinger is, in himself, always and everywhere a voice of Nature's own. And once, in particular, I happened to hear his own wild melody blent with hers in supremely perfect harmony. It was far up the fiord-river Saguenay, amid a scene of beauty hushed in awe. The warm, mid-summer night was wholly calm,

the great cleft gorges full of soft moonlight, which turned to gleaming silver at the touch of water, and floated there at rest, over vast, still depths. The two gigantic guardian Capes of La Trinité and L'Eternité flanked the little bay, where my tiny yacht swung quietly at anchor, as the last of the flood pulsed slumberingly along the shore. The white whales had come in here to seek their prey, and turned seaward again with a tumult of snorting plunges. A far-off loon had given his last weird, re-echoing laugh. And then there came another—and this time a human—voice, from nearer by, among the full-leaved shadows; at first in wayward snatches, like a bird's prelude; but soon rising to the full outburst of a heart caught unawares, and singing unconscious of the world around. And this lone strain of love importunate was then as much a part of Nature's wildness there as the cry of that calling night-bird, the mighty breaths of those leviathans, the deep pulsation of the tide, or the sheer silence of those everlasting hills.

## CHAPTER XI

### FRENCH-CANADIAN FOLKSONG

#### I

#### COLLECTION

COLLECTORS of folklore so often lament that they have begun their work too late, and they so often find themselves mere gleaners of the little that has escaped the natural decay in fields once white with a harvest which no one ever thought of reaping, that some sort of a prose variant of the *chanson des regrets* is usually expected to form a part of every well-conducted preface. Just now, folklore is quite one of the proper things to dabble in, and, as the general reader is nothing if not fashionable, it will be a consolation for him to know that, in turning his attention to Canadian folksongs, he will be sure to find enough irreparable loss to give him plenty of the dainty sweet of melancholy. As we read in Mr. Gagnon's delightful book—*Chansons Populaires du Canada*—of the difficulties of collection fifty years ago, we find only too convincing a proof of that state of rapid transition from the old order to the new, when the folk begin to be self-conscious and the collector realizes that opportunity is bald behind.

It is chiefly to the collection of Mr. Gagnon that



student and general reader alike must turn for information. He has given us of his best, and that best is so good that it is hard to see how anyone working on the same lines can ever better it; but then, as he says himself, "le nombre de nos chansons populaires est incalculable" and "ce volume en contient juste cent."

It is, of course, too late now to make any approach to an ideal edition, so far as collection is concerned; but a good edition for the student is still within reach, if only it is taken in hand at once and carried out with thoroughness. To be complete, such an edition should have maps of France and Canada in the time of the Grand Monarque, showing, as nearly as possible, the old and the new homes of the emigrants: it should also have folklore maps of both countries at the present day. An index, a bibliography and a glossary with philological introduction are quite indispensable. Verse and music being inseparable in the folksong, their mutual relations should be explained in a preface; but to ensure full justice to each, separate introductions should be written, that to the verse showing the place of the folksong in the beliefs, manners and customs and general life-history of the people. Besides this, every song should have its two foot-notes, one on the verse, the other on the air, where all variants, Canadian, French and foreign, should be cited with exact bibliographical references. It is fortunately unnecessary, nowadays, to insist upon a faithful text, that being taken for granted. But there are degrees of faithfulness, and nothing short of perfection should be accepted. When a song is taken down from oral tradition, not only should

every musical feature be exactly reproduced but every appropriate gesture noted as well. Then, after the perfect authenticity of the manuscript version has been proved, the editor should see that the printing follows it line for line, word for word and letter for letter. Even this is not enough to ensure absolute fidelity in all cases, for it is sometimes very hard to withstand the temptation to make up a complete editorial version out of authentic fragments : finding all the materials is not the same thing as the discovery of the building.

One word as to the collectors themselves. If there is one thing more than another which needs sympathy, tact and an insight into human nature, it is the collection of folksongs. The mere patience required is no small thing, as we can see from the difficulties Mr. Gagnon met with here in Canada, where, as in old Normandy, the songs were as plentiful as the apples. But the chief difficulty to overcome is the shyness and suspicion of the folk when they know they are being observed. Their first instinct is to deny all knowledge of superstitious practices, out-of-the-way customs or curious legends. And so, perhaps, the best collecting of all is done, as it were, by accident, by living among the people and gathering up the songs and stories they let fall from time to time. Mlle. Hélène Vacaresco, to whom we owe the splendid collection of Roumanian folksongs published in England under the title of *The Bard of the Dimbovitza*, "was forced to affect a desire to learn spinning, that she might join the girls at their spinning-parties, and so overhear their songs more easily ; she hid in the tall maize to hear the reapers crooning them ; she caught them from

the lips of peasant women, of lute-players, of gipsies and fortune-tellers ; she listened for them by death-beds, by cradles, at the dance and in the tavern, with inexhaustible patience." Another successful collector is the Rev. Elias Owen, who turned his position of inspector of schools to admirable account. "At the close of his examination he asked the first class, 'Now, children, can you tell me of any place where there is a buggan to be seen, or of any one who has ever seen one?' Instantly every hand in the class was stretched out, and every child had a story to tell. He then asked, 'Which of you can tell me of a cure for warts?' with like results, greatly to the discomfiture of his friend, the clergyman, who had fondly imagined that there was no superstition in *his* parish! The clergy are very liable to this illusion, because the people are apt to keep superstition out of their way, which in itself is a not uninteresting folklore item." But, perhaps, the best of all collectors was old Wilhelm Mannhardt. "It is on record that he was once taken for a gnome by a peasant he had been questioning. His personal appearance may have helped the illusion ; he was small and irregularly made ; and was then only just emerging from a sickly childhood spent beside the Baltic in dreaming over the creations of popular fancy. Then, too, he wore a little red cap, which was doubtless fraught with supernatural suggestions. But, above all, the story proves that Mannhardt had solved the difficulty of dealing with primitive folk ; that, instead of being looked upon as a profane and prying layman, he was regarded as one who was more than initiated into the mysteries—as one who was a mystery himself."



## II

## NON-POPULAR SONGS

Before coming to the folksongs proper it would be as well to consider shortly some intruders, which, though occasionally naturalized among them, are none the less intruders still.

The *Lyric* is so obviously non-popular that the merest mention is sufficient to put it out of court. Still, no hard-and-fast line can be drawn even between the lyric and the folksong, so insensibly does each sometimes approach the other. A lonely lyric may be born in an unhappy time, perhaps during an exile shared by many beside its single singer, and then—so sweet are the uses of adversity in the realm of song—all the exiles will adopt it, cradle it in their sorrow, and bring it home at last as their very own. Who has not heard and laid to heart the song of

Un Canadien errant,  
Banni de ses foyers ?

But this is an exception which proves the rule.

The *Vaudeville*, that product of the bourgeois versifier and joy of the bourgeois heart, is, in France, the greatest enemy the folksong has to fear. It has no recognized place in Mr. Gagnon's book and is not yet a power in Canada ; but it is not likely that the inter-communication between town and country and the exodus to the United States can go on much longer without profoundly affecting French-Canadian popular life and song. If only the vaudeville and its offshoots were entirely products of the bourgeois wit they would not be

half so dangerous as they are. But, while all is fish that comes to their net—political and historical songs, the poetry of the day, love-songs and drawing-room ditties, together with parodies of psalms, hymns and all sorts of religious verse—their choicest quarry has usually been the words of a folksong and the air of a popular dance. It is to such an origin that many vaudevilles owe their tremendous vogue. Like the Janissaries the folksong is kidnapped from its early home, reared among the aliens, and finally sent back to destroy its own kin.

The *Noël* is another strictly non-popular form. It is, at best, an adaptation, composed under the direct or indirect influence of the priesthood, and made up of the most heterogeneous materials. Some noëls are simply versified accounts of the birth of Christ and are almost entirely of Christian origin; the beautiful one given by Mr. Gagnon is of this nature and is a remarkable example of the fusion of the noel and folksong into a real poem. But most are composed of whatever was handiest to the adapter. So we find noëls derived from folksongs, from Christian hymns and Pagan formulæ, from vaudevilles, from love-songs, from drinking-songs, from rounds and rhymes for dancing, from fairy-tales, hero-tales and drolls, from mystery-plays, and from events of real history. All doubtless contain popular elements—the dramatic element, for instance, which they borrowed from the folksong, usually by way of the mediæval *mysteries*, *fêtes des fous* and *fêtes de l'âne*. But they are not themselves popular, because they never came directly from the lore of the folk itself.

Their popularity in Provence proves nothing ; for the Provençal Noël is most popular when it is least essentially a true Noël. A convincing proof of their non-popular character is the well-known fact that, from the sixteenth century on, they have been so common in printed collections. Moreover, in these collections the authors' names are often given, and we find them to have been mostly those of priests, organists and men of letters, who all had some learning to boast of and who generally show unmistakable signs of having looked at their theme through the spectacles of books.

Less popular than the *Noël* or the *Vaudeville*, and not much more so than the *Lyric*, is the *Drinking-song*. The French-Canadian so-called drinking-song, like its fellows elsewhere, is really not a drinking-song at all. It may be a specimen of pot-house jingle, like *Vive la Canadienne*, or a maid's lament that her lover prefers the company of his boozing companions to her own, or a gallant's toast to his mistress, or the expression of a rejected lover's determination to drown his woes in the bottle, or a versified account of a rollicking adventure in which the singer takes a conscious pride in saying

On dit que je suis fier,  
Ivrogne et paresseux ;

and does not scruple to send this very unabashed confession to M. le Curé :

can ing Fr only th	Dis-lui que sa paroisse Est sans dessus dessous, Que dans le P'tit Bois d'Aille On n'y voit qu' des gens soûls :
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product be any one of these, or something of the



same kind ; but it is not a drinking-song. A drinking-song, pure and simple, is a song in praise of wine, and whatever else is said in praise of love, or war, or other gallant delights only serves to enhance the importance of the theme. Perhaps the somewhat gross imagination of the folk cannot take flight except upon the wings of love and other of the finer passions, and perhaps an educated fancy and an allusive wit are necessary to give the more material things of life the little power of flight vouchsafed to them. But it is certain that such folksongs as this one, which is still sung by the harvesters in the remoter dales of Craven, are rare exceptions to a general rule :

This ale it is a gallant thing,  
It cheers the spirits of a king,  
It makes a dumb man strive to sing,  
Ay, and a beggar play !

Take almost any collection of drinking-songs and you will find most of them are lyrics of clever verse with a spice of real, or at least mock, learning in them. Adam Billaut, who wrote as his own epitaph

Ci-gît le plus grand ivrogne  
Qui jamais ait vu le jour,

declared, in another place, his intention of going

. . . dans l'Averne,  
Faire enivrer Alecton,  
Et planter une taverne  
Dans la chambre de Pluton.

In Boileau's account of a famous drinking-bout, though

Un docteur est alors au bout de son latin,  
wine is still the best aid to knowledge, for

On est savant quand on boit bien,  
 Qui ne sait boire ne sait rien.

Old Dr. Fischart, of bibulous memory, invokes the spirit of wine in a way quite alien to the Canadian folksinger :

Nun bist mir recht willkommen,  
 Du edler Rebensaft ;  
 Ich hab' gar wohl vernommen,  
 Du bringst mir süsse Kraft ;  
 Lässt mir mein G'müth nicht sinken,  
 Und stärkst das Herze mein,  
 Drum wöllen wir dich trinken,  
 Und alle fröhlich seyn.

And Goethe, in writing

Drum, Brüderchen ! Ergo bibamus,

was only following the time-honoured custom of innumerable versifying scholars in mixing dead and living languages together in the praise of wine. *Gaudeamus, laudamus, vivamus* are words constantly occurring in the refrains of drinking-songs ; so are Bacchus, Venus and many more ; and all are used with an evident knowledge of their proper sense and fitness. What M. Tiersot says of the French drinking-song may be said with even more truth of the Canadian—"la chanson à boire n'est pas un genre de chanson populaire."

### III

#### THE FOLKSONG PROPER

Impersonality is of the very essence of the folk-song. "Ce livre," says Mr. Gagnon, "n'est pas du tout mon œuvre. C'est l'œuvre de ce compositeur insaisissable qu'on appelle *le peuple*." And Signor

Pitré tells us that the Sicilians will not sing a song at all if they know who the author is. Even in the case of songs, usually of a humorous nature, where the author devotes the last verse to revealing or hinting at, his identity—

Qui a fait cette jolie chanson ?

the impersonal note is the dominant one. The author, instead of trying to impress his own point of view upon others, simply gives voice to the thought and feeling of his folk. And even in the love-song—though love is personal before all else—the impersonal note is clearly struck. The lover sings of his own joy and pain in his own way, but never without an undertone which tells of the burden common to his folk at large. It is partly a cause, partly an effect, of this impersonality that the folksong is often so vividly dramatic, yet without showing the least touch of self-consciousness. There is neither the desire nor the opportunity for an artificial pose. The Grimms declared that in the whole range of folksong they had never found a single lie ; and, indeed, there is no folksinger who, if asked, the reason of his singing, could not truly answer in the words of Goethe's minstrel,

Ich singe wie der Vogel singt,  
Der in den Zweigen wohnt ;  
Das Lied, das aus der Kehle dringt,  
Ist Lohn das reichlich lohnet !

It is this very truth to life that gives the note of melancholy. Children know this well and, when they want to be amused, never ask you to sing them songs, but to tell them stories ; for in the folktale the hero and heroine, after the fearful



joy of wonderful adventures, generally get married and live happily ever after ; whereas in verse they are more often united only by death. The folksong is, indeed, a "melancholy strain." "Songs are the words spoken by those that suffer" says a Greek folksinger in words of which Shelley's "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought" seem like a literary paraphrase. If the folk cultivate poetry as a gay science in any tongue at all, it is in the French, and, if French folksongs are sung with a lighter heart in any one land more than in another, they are so sung in Canada. Yet Mr. Gagnon has to quote the Grimms' dictum in prefacing the wedding-song *A la santé de ces jeunes Mariés* ; and he is certainly justified in doing so, whilst drawing our attention at the same time to another true saying, "La crainte est de toutes les fêtes," for we find these words in the very middle of the toast :

Je puis bien parler  
De tous ceux et celles  
Qui se prennent sans s'aimer  
Et meur'nt sans se regretter.

In another place he gives us the rollicking song of the *Trois Capitaines*, who are going off to the tavern on their return from the war. This is an occasion of more certain jollity than even a marriage feast. And the verses certainly have the ring of jollity in them. But the air to which they are sung is anything but gay. "Pourquoi ces couplets si gais se chantent-ils dans le mode mineur ?" asks Mr. Gagnon, and quotes Châteaubriand for the answer : "dans tous les pays le chant naturel de l'homme est triste ; lors même qu'il exprime le

bonheur." When Brizeux wrote the following lines he was thinking only of his own romantic part of France; but I should like to quote them here, as they seem to me almost equally applicable to our Canada :

Hélas ! je sais un chant d'amour  
Triste ou gai, tour à tour.

Cette chanson, douce à l'oreille,  
Pour le cœur n'a point sa pareille.

J'avais douze ans lorsqu'en Bretagne  
On me l'apprit sur la montagne.

Avec un air, une parole,  
Toujours l'exilé se console.

. . . . .  
Ce chant, qui de mon cœur s'élève,  
D'où vient qu'en pleurant je l'achève ?

Hélas ! je sais un chant d'amour  
Triste ou gai, tour à tour.

"Triste ou gai, tour à tour," that is just what Canadian folksongs are. But the general burden of the folksong all the world over is more nearly sad than gay. Though, perhaps, it was not in sadness that the Highland reaper sang, yet, "whate'er the theme," the melancholy undertone was there, and that the listening poet caught its meaning we know well from his haunting lines :

Will no one tell me what she sings ?  
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow  
For old, unhappy, far-off things,  
And battles long ago.  
Or is it some more humble lay,  
Familiar matter of to-day ;  
Some natural sorrow, loss or pain,  
That has been, and may be again ?

Sympathy, truth and melancholy, these three prime qualities give a mighty power to the folksong, alike in the world of action or of art. It is said that at the battle of St. Cast, as a Breton regiment was advancing to the attack, it suddenly halted in amazement: the opposing regiment of the British army was a Welsh one and the men were singing a song heard daily in Brittany itself! The order to fire was given; but both sides gave it in the same tongue! In a wild transport of enthusiasm discipline was thrown to the winds, the ranks were broken, and the long-lost Celtic kinship was renewed upon the field of battle! Even the faithful Swiss Guards were not proof against the intense longing aroused in them by the sound of their native airs, and it was found necessary to forbid the playing of the *Ranz des Vaches* altogether. The folksong is everywhere the home of fancy in a far-off land, and Canadians have never been without it wherever they have been. It went out to the new Far West in the pioneering days when the Red River Settlement seemed to be at the end of the Earth, and it went in our own day with the same hardy class of *voyageurs* to the banks of the ancient Nile. It was taken into exile by the Acadians. It was sung into battle by the heroes of Châteauguay. And the story is told of the quick response made by the 65th Battalion in the North-West campaign to General Strange who, on hearing a soldier complain of the weary march, said, "Ah! mes braves!

‘Malbroucke s’en va-t-en guerre,  
Ne sait quand reviendra.’”



In an instant the men took up the refrain, and the march continued without a murmur.

Little wonder that the poets and composers of all times have acknowledged the power of the folksong. The collections of the "grand siècle" were filled with the "airs de cour," and the separation of town and country songs was then complete. Yet the insight of genius prompted Molière to choose

J'aime mieux ma mie, ô gué!

which comes nearest to the folksong, for the "vieille chanson," of which le misanthrope says—

Ne voyez-vous pas que cela vaut bien mieux  
Que ces colifichets dont le bon sens murmure,  
Et que la passion parle là toute pure?

And, at a time when folklore was still more discredited in high places, we find Voltaire himself exclaiming—

O l'heureux temps que celui de ces fables.

On court, hélas! après la vérité,  
Ah! croyez-moi, l'erreur a son mérite.

In the present century, French writers, from George Sand to Pierre Loti, vie with each other in doing honour to the folksong. Readers of "Pêcheur d'Islande" will remember how Sylvestre and Le gros Yann, while fishing throughout the endless Iceland day, sang

Jean-François de Nantes, Jean-François, Jean-François.

Those who have read "Mon Frère Yves" must have noticed the fine effect with which an invocation to La Bonne Sainte Anne—the Guardian

Angel of the Sea—is given in the very words of  
*Les Trois Marins de Groix*—

La maman qui s'en est allée  
Prier la grande Sainte-Anne-d'Auray :  
"Bonne Sainte, rendez-moi mon fils !"  
La Bonne Sainte-Anne, elle lui a dit :  
"Tu le r'trouveras en paradis."

Il vente,

C'est le vent de la mer qui nous tourmente.

And it must have been with a burden of some love-song of "La Belle France" in his mind that Fréchette wrote to La Louisianaise :

Je sais un ville rieuse,  
Aux enivrements infinis,  
Qui, fantasque et mystérieuse,  
Règne sur ces climats bénis ;  
Ville où l'orange et la grenade  
Parfument chaque promenade ;  
Où, tous les soirs, les amoureux  
Chantent la sérénade  
Sous des balcons heureux.

But poets have done more than acknowledge the power of folksong. They have felt its inspiration and transformed its spirit into their own creations. Its influence may be seen throughout the whole of Homer. One of its saddest tales has been retold by Victor Hugo in the story of "Petit Paul," who, with Dante's Anselmuccio and Shakespeare's Arthur will live forever in the poetry of pity. Its ballads of the Borders have inspired Scott, Rossetti, Swinburne, William Morris, Mr. Kipling and many another. The ballad of *Chevy Chase* stirred Sidney—the flower of Elizabethan chivalry—more than

the trumpet-call to arms. And the greatest writer of the last century bears witness to the hold its vivid simplicity had upon his imagination. "The unsophisticated man," says Goethe, "is more the master of direct, effective expression in few words than he who has received a regular literary education." Everyone knows the folksong which in dialect begins

Min moder de mi slach't,

that Gretchen sings in prison ; and it is not hard to see that Goethe has poured the essence of the true German *volkslied* into her spinning-song—

Meine Ruh' ist hin,  
 Mein Herz ist schwer ;  
 Ich finde sie nimmer  
 Und nimmermehr.

We may find plenty of apt examples of the comparative treatment of a common theme by folksong and by lettered poetry in France. The *Lovers' Metamorphoses* is an interesting case in point ; for here we can set our Canadian variants beside the French ones, and then compare both with the poetry of Mistral and the music of Gounod.

But we need not push our investigations on this head any further, especially as no one denies the influence which folksong has always had upon the poetry of art. Before leaving this part of my subject, however, I should like to recommend anyone desiring an object lesson on the inspiration of folksong to read the last six pages of Part I in M. Tiersot's "Histoire de la Chanson Populaire," for in them he will find all that is necessary to



prove that the *Marseillaise*, both in words and music, is, in reality, nothing else than a folksong "writ large."

Turning now to the different forms of folksong we naturally begin with the nursery. Here we find the truest of all conservatives in the children, who hand down the traditional rhymes from generation to generation, with a marvellous fidelity unknown to their elders. The most primitive forms of folkverse are probably of onomatopœic origin; and the little folks, who could almost make a whole nursery rhyme out of this one portentous word, preserve the traces of this origin at every turn. With their poets the sound is an echo to itself—

Un i, un l—Ma tante Michel;  
 Un i, un um—Cagi, Cajum;  
 Ton pied bourdon,—José Simon;  
 Griffor, Pandor,—Ton nez dehors.

Other primitive forms survive in the refrains of more modern ballads, like the slogan of Hawick

Teribus y teri Odin

which is a curious Pagan invocation and now belongs to a famous Border riding-song. Others again are to be found in all kinds of trade-songs, like the ancient songs for grinding, weaving and reaping, or those specially composed to be sung by the rowers in the galleys. These last were doubtless like those in vogue among boatmen all the world over. The Sonaris when wading and hauling sing a sort of "Cheerily, my boys," with a chorus of "Yoho Ràm"; the Malagasy canoe men chime in

with an equally meaningless chorus of "Hé! misy vâ" at regular intervals; and our own *voyageurs* have plenty of choruses like "Ma, luron, lurette," which have no pretension to any definite meaning at all, and several others whose meaning it is hard for the non-elect to understand; for instance,

Tortille morfil,  
 Arrangeur de faucilles,  
 Tribouille marteau,  
 Bon soir, lutin!

Many entire rhymes are almost as primitive in form, though a little clearer in meaning, whether they are rounds for dancing like

Dans ma main droite je tiens rosier,

or enumeratives like

C'est Pinson avec Cendrouille,

or cumulatives like our old nursery rhyme about the cow with the crumpled horn that tossed the dog that worried the cat whose actions, in their turn, were the result of a long train of events. The chief points to notice in all these primitive forms of verse are that they are in no sense literary, but dependent for their very existence on the game, or dance, or other action they accompany, and that they are always of less importance than the music. The little value attached to the meaning of the words is strikingly illustrated by the Kookies of Northern Cachar and the Watchandies of Australia, who both sing in unknown dialects. And little *habitants* can hardly attach much meaning to the

words of the nursery rhyme, *un i, un l*, quoted above.

The popular *Ballad* may be generally taken as the typical form of the folksong. As their name shows, all ballads were originally danced as well as sung. A mediæval ballad of Poitou has this refrain—

Alavi, alavie, jalous,  
Lassaz nos, lassaz nos  
Ballar entre nos, entre nos ;

and peasants almost always use some sort of appropriate action up to the present time. I have seen the *habitants* in the back country of Temiscouata using a great deal of dramatic action in their songs, and I particularly noticed one of them who danced and sang a couple of waggish variants of *Malbroucke*. The refrain is the chief connecting link between the ballad and the simpler forms, and was often danced to after the ballad itself had lost its appropriate action. Refrains are found in every possible form, sometimes rising to the importance of a Greek chorus and sometimes represented only by a musical accompaniment hummed in the bass during the singing of the solo. This peculiar running accompaniment is common in the folksongs of the most diverse peoples ; and I remember a chance illustration of its wide diffusion which may be worth mentioning. At the Quebec Carnival Concert, as, on hearing the hummed accompaniment of a well-known Canadian folksong, I was turning to remark its likeness to the bass accompaniments I had heard hummed by a Zulu choir, I found that my neighbour was turning to tell me how much the



same thing reminded her of the songs she had heard sung all over Italy.

The refrain is one of the most distinctive marks of the ballad-form, and when we find songs like

Voici le temps et la saison,

or

Je me suis mis au rang d'aimer,

without any, we may generally class them with ballads, because they would bear the addition of one without any incongruity. But a refrain in itself is not enough to make a ballad, and its presence in even the earliest verse cannot be cited as proof of a popular origin. As a matter of fact, it is curious to observe in this connection that the oldest refrain known in English poetry occurs in the Lament of Deor, which is not a folksong at all, but an Anglo-Saxon lyric written twelve hundred years ago.

In its metre the Canadian ballad as a rule conforms to the fourteen-syllabled type, which Nature seems to have set up as a master-model for most peoples to follow. On this point Mr. Gagnon remarks: "La longueur du vers populaire est souvent de quatorze syllabes ou même davantage. Chaque fois alors que la rime est masculine—car les rimes parfaites s'y rencontrent quelque fois—la césure est invariablement féminine, ou, plus exactement, sourde. Conformément à l'usage, ces sortes de vers ont été, dans ce recueil, brisés à la césure ; ainsi les deux vers :

Par derrière chez mon père—lui ya-t-un bois joli ;  
Le rossignol y chante—et le jour et la nuit,

ont été écrits sur quatre lignes :

Par derrièr' chez mon père  
 Lui ya-t-un bois joli ;  
 Le rossignol y chante  
 Et le jour et la nuit."

The *Complainte* is nearer to modern poetry, in that its musical accompaniment is often only a sort of intoning, and its action is no more than any good reciter would make use of. And yet it arose in the Middle Ages, when music, action and verse were inseparably connected in the folksong. But its origin was different from that of the ordinary folksong. It was often a reshaping, in pithier verse, of the interminable *chanson de geste*, which was a transformation of the *cantilène*, which, in its turn, occupied a somewhat anomalous place between the *epic* and the *legendary lay*. Above all, it is a narrative, and, though nearly always on a pious or a tragic theme, is not at all the same thing as a lament or elegy. In the pious vein Mr. Gagnon gives us the admirable *Complainte d'Adam et d'Eve*, which is the fine Canadian variant of the folksong story of the fall of man. We may compare it with a Provençal version, *Leis gravis des meissouniers*, and trace its descent from the *cantilène* by noting its affinities with the rhymed legends of *Jésus-Christ et les deux hôteses*, *Marie Magdeleine*, *Sainte-Marguerite*, the *Complainte des trois petits enfants*, or that of *Saint-Nicolas*. In the tragic vein the verse more nearly approaches the ballad form, but the music still keeps the tone of a higher seriousness. No doubt it is partly owing to the serious tone of its direct narrative style that it has kept its traditional form so long, but it is certainly still more owing to the simple austerity

of its musical accompaniment that, even in far-off Canada, *Marianson, dame jolie*, is still an old-world *complainte* sung with all the

Stretched metre of an antique song.

It is a somewhat rough-and-ready way of classifying folksongs to simply group them together as *complaintes*, as *ballads*, or as what, for want of a generic name for the simpler forms, we might call *folk ditties*. But, as I shall note any peculiarities in individual examples as they occur, this grouping may be sufficiently exact for a general survey. As a matter of fact, too, any attempt to explore the maze of by-paths and cross-roads in a hurry would certainly lead us, more often than not, into places where we could not see the wood for the trees.

#### IV

### MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

In all times and places the folk have found a pleasant escape from the dulness of the daily round by singing at their work. In Russia they sing as they sew at the "besyedy" of a winter's evening. In Roumania the best singer stands in the middle of the circle of spinners, the rest joining in the chorus. In Flanders—at Bruges, Steenvoorde and other towns—the lacemakers have songs called *tellingen*, which serve the double purpose of helping on the work and keeping tally of the number of meshes done. I wonder how many songs go to the making of a piece of Canadian homespun—



*l'étoffe du pays.* I am sure no spinner, "en filant ma quenouille," could truthfully say

Je le mène bien  
Mon dévidoï,

if she did not sing as she worked. As a rule, work-songs refer as much to other callings as to the singer's own; and most of them have nothing at all to do with work—except to lighten it—but are variations on the endless theme of love. Lord Dalhousie's canoe men, as they paddled, used to sing the *Je le mène bien mon dévidoï*' just quoted, which is, of course, a spinning-song; but only as regards the refrain, for the song itself is one of the many variants of *Cécilia*. So here we have a sea-song adapted to the spinning-wheel, and then sung in this adapted form by *voyageurs*. The great thing always is to get a suitable rhythmical form. Talle-mant des Réaux tells a story of a Huguenot arquebus-maker who sang as he worked,

Appelez Robinette,  
Qu'elle vienne ici-bas.

The well-known theologian, Pierre Dumoulin, happening to pass by, remonstrated with him and advised him to sing psalms instead. The man, however, knew his own business best: "Voyez comme ma lime va viste en chantant *Robinette*, et comme elle va lentement en chantant *Lève le cœur, ouvre l'oreille*." It was more a matter of sound than sense with the worthy arquebus-maker, as it is with the Savoyard sweep, the words of whose cry, "avec sa bizarre vocalise descendante,"

Ramenez-ci, ramenez-là—ah!  
La cheminée du haut en bas—

are not separated from even those of

Who will buy my sweet lavender?

by anything like the immense difference separating their respective airs. In the words set to trumpet and bugle-calls the sense is even more an echo to the sound. In fact, the words owe their very existence to the call, as in *la soupe*, which has inspired "le lignard" to sing

C'est pas d' la soup' ; c'est du rata,  
C'est assez bon pour le soldat ;  
Pour le soldat français,

and Tommy Atkins to make up his British variant,

Officers' wives have puddings and pies,  
And soldiers' wives have skilly.

Weddings, of course, come in for their share of attention in Mr. Gagnon's collection. The folk-songs proper to the *fêtes des nocés* are serious enough as a general thing, witness *A la santé de ces jeunes mariés*. But the other songs popular at weddings have been so universally distinguished for their non-Christian tone, that, together with the equally popular Pagan dirges, they have rarely failed to draw down upon them the anathema of the Church. In 650 the Council of Châlons had to threaten song-loving women with excommunication—to say nothing of the cat-o'-nine-tails; and St. Augustin speaks of the "cantica nefaria" which were sung and danced to, even upon the tombs of the saints! The strange mixture of gravity and *gauloiserie* at weddings is well illustrated in the Gascon songs, which are sung on the way to and from church, at the feast, and even in

the bridal chamber itself. It is interesting to notice what an old-time view the Canadian songs take of the sanctity of betrothal: Petite Jeanneton evidently thinks that having her "petit cœur en gage" is no light affair. But she does not take so stern a view of the situation as the Bretons, who say—"Quiconque est fiancée trois fois sans se marier va brûler en enfer."

The Canadians have no dirges. This is natural enough; for the popular dirge is pagan to the core; and the Canadian folksinger takes an unusually Christian view of death.

Nor should we suppose from Mr. Gagnon's collection that they had any war-songs either. There are, indeed, scattered references to war; but that is all. The universally-known deserter sings,

Un jour l'envie m'a pris  
De désertier de France.

"Les enfants sans souci" are soldiers; but they are doing nothing more warlike than drinking "pots et pintes, vidant les verres aussi," and doing it in barracks, too. In *Gai le rosier*, the singer's lover is a prisoner of war in Holland, and Cadieux refers to the bush-fights with the Iroquois. But none of these are war-songs in any proper meaning of the term. Dr. Larue gives us two genuine Red River war-songs, both composed by Pierriche Falcon, who was one of the Bois-Brûlés of 1816, and fought the English as vigorously in arms as in verse. His songs are full of local colour, of the glory of the Bois-Brûlés, and of the defeat of the English—or rather of "les Arkanys," as the Orcadians were called there. They have a spice



of *gauloiserie* and the all-essential lilt. But nevertheless Pierriche Falcon, "ce faiseur de chansons," is many degrees below the Tyrtean level. As for military topical songs, like *C'est la Casquette du père Bugeaud*, which was composed in Algeria and sung at Inkermann, they are practically unknown in Canada. When Canadian troops sing in camp or on the march they choose a song like *En roulant ma boule*, which has a splendid swing, or one like Napoleon's favourite *Malbroucke*, in which war plays little more than a nominal part.

Chivalry, as we might expect with the scions of a gallant race, has left its characteristic mark on some of the best-known Canadian love-songs. This is hardly surprising when we remember that the love-song, as we know it, owes its very existence to chivalry, and that true chivalry is the fittest theme of song :

Servants d'amour, regardez doucement,  
Aux échafauds anges de paradis ;  
Lors jouterez fort et joyeusement,  
Et vous serez honorés et chéris.

Knights, lords, princes and kings are all familiar figures to us. In *En roulant ma boule* the "canard blanc" is shot by "le fils du roi." Another "fils du roi" hears the shepherdess singing "comme une demoiselle" by the famous "Pont d'Avignon." "Trois filles d'un Prince" are asleep beneath the "pommier doux," and they wake to sing, in truly chivalric style—

Nos amants sont en guerre,  
Ils combattent pour nous.

"Trois cavaliers barons" rescue the distressed

damsel, who rewards them only with a song, saying—

Mon petit cœur en gage  
N'est pas pour un baron.

Kings themselves—like Cophetua who married the beggar-maid, and Cormac who loved the Fair Eithne—think rustic courtship by no means beneath them. When

Le roi, par la fenêtre,

saw three “filles à marier” pass by, he hastened to join them, and then

Le roi prit la plus jeune,  
Dans la dans' l'a menée ;  
A chaque tour de danse  
Il voulait l'embrasser.

Even the good bourgeois goes a-courting like a knight :

Dans Paris ya-t-une brune  
Plus bell' que le jour ;  
Sont trois bourgeois de la ville  
Qui lui font l'amour ;

and when they are planning how best to win her, the youngest says—

Je me f'rai faire une selle  
Avec tous ses atours ;  
Et j'irai de ville en ville  
Toujours à son nom.

Then we have a whole complaint, *Marianson*, breathing the very spirit of the Middle Age ; and, besides these, there are many other vestiges of the age of chivalry remaining, sometimes in a phrase and sometimes only in a single word. But perhaps

enough has been said to show that in the songs of New France there still remains much of the picturesqueness of the Old.

There are very few songs in Mr. Gagnon's collection, apart from those connected with fêtes and ceremonial customs, which contain any important remnants of popular myths. The dancing of the sun at Easter is not mentioned, nor are some other beliefs still, or up to quite recent times, current in the country. But Marianne, when her donkey has been eaten by a wolf, tries to pass off the one given her by the miller as the old one with a new skin; for, in accordance with time-honoured custom, all good asses changed their skin at Michaelmas. Then, in *Digue Dindaine*, the sheep dance on the green in the most approved fashion; and Pinson and Cendrouille, when at their wits' end to furnish a wedding feast, are helped out of their difficulty by the dog, the crow and the rat, each animal bringing some suitable dish with him. There is no lack of talking birds; sometimes to tell inconvenient gossip—bilingual gossip, too, both in French and Latin—as in *Cécilia*; sometimes to recommend matrimony, like "le rossignolet" in *J'ai cueilli la belle Rose*; and sometimes to help the weaker sex to abuse the stronger, like the quail in *Mon beau ruban gris*. The old belief in the materiality of the soul is satirically alluded to in the compendious *Malbroucke*:

On vit voler son âme  
A travers les lauriers.

And metempsychosis of a sort is pressed into the service of love in *Si tu te mets anguille* and *J'ai*



*fait une maîtresse.* The *voyageur* who sings "bon soir, lutin" may think twice before encountering the powers of goblindom. And perhaps some fishermen of the Lower St. Lawrence may have more than a suspicion that, in singing "blanc, blanc loup-marin," they are referring to mermaids or other uncanny beings far more dangerous than the timid seal. In *En roulant ma boule* there is the wonderful bird producing jewels from its eyes and gold and silver from its beak, just as mythical beasts do in all other countries. And we can hardly attribute the prodigious convulsion of Nature produced by a carpenter's merely sitting down to purely natural causes—

En s'asseyant il fit un bond ;  
 Qui fit trembler mer et poissons,  
 Et les cailloux qui sont au fond.

Then there is the miller, who tricked the Devil into a flour-sack, which was tied to the revolving mill-wheel, much to his Satanic Majesty's discomfort. But the only song the action of which turns entirely upon supernatural agency is that of the "plus savante" rival, whose power over the elements enables her to supplant "la fille du roi" :

Ell' fait neiger, ell' fait grêler,  
 Ell' fait le vent qui vente ;  
 Ell' fait reluire le soleil  
 A minuit dans sa chambre.

Turning to songs connected with Christian festivals we are at once struck by the persistence with which both song and fête have kept the form of pagan moulds. Usually, when a pagan custom

was too strong to be killed it was adapted to Christian purposes; and this practice became so universal, that Villemarqué's saying that the cross was planted on the dolmen is as applicable to the whole of Christendom as it is to Brittany: he might have gone a step further, to say that the cross itself is almost as much pagan as Christian. The mixture of the two beliefs in folksong is very curious. No conversion to Christianity has ever succeeded in preventing paganism from living at least a legendary life, and often a life of real power. At the present day in Tinnevelly the Anglican missionaries cannot stamp out caste among the native Christians, nor prevent their wearing the *tâli*, a golden wedding token, with the cross on one side and a figure of Lakshmi, the Hindoo goddess of Fortune, on the other. In a Portuguese ballad the king hearing a lovely song asks, "Is it an angel in Heaven or a Siren in the sea?" Whole nations have adopted patron saints, not because of their sanctity, but from their real or imaginary likeness to popular heathen deities. No Northern folk would ever have had anything to do with St. George if his fabled fight with the Dragon had not resembled that of the mighty Thor with the Midgard-Serpent.

The adaptation of the old to the new is well seen in such songs as those till lately current in Canada in connection with *La Guignolée*. The *Guignolée* is of Druidic origin, and probably was in some way connected with the ceremony of cutting the sacred mistletoe at the winter solstice. At all events, it was part of a very popular sacred custom, performed by the high priest of an immensely

powerful class, a class of immemorial antiquity even in the days of Cæsar. And it has come down to us in Canada, through centuries of Old-World change, with enough of its ancient form to remind us of its original office in the sacred forest rites. Among the superstitions alluded to in the songs of *La Guignolée* is the curious belief in the efficacy of warming a woman's feet to give her a good child-birth; a practice which Mr. Gagnon thinks originated from propitiatory sacrifices, for he quotes from the "Soirées Canadiennes": "Il est probable que ces vers étranges

Nous prendrons la fille aînée,  
Nous y ferons chauffer les pieds!

sont un reste d'allusions aux sacrifices humains de l'ancien culte gaulois." In Canada *La Guignolée* has always been connected with Christmas almsgiving, the singers making a "quête" in search of all sorts of things, money included, which they afterwards distributed among the parish poor. Sometimes, if the "quêteurs" were unsuccessful at a house, they shouted uncomplimentary couplets, reflecting on the stinginess of the host and hostess. But they never sang, I believe, as the unsuccessful May Day "quêteurs" still do in Champagne—

J'vous souhaitons autant d'enfants  
Qu'y a de pierrettes dans les champs.

But, then, the children of Old France were never worth a hundred acres a dozen, as they recently were, by law, in the Province of Quebec!

The great religious round, *Il n'y a qu'un seul Dieu*, is even more interesting than *La Guignolée*.



It is danced as well as sung—"Les danseurs se comptent d'abord à haute voix, de façon à ce que chacun d'eux se trouve être désigné par un nombre pair ou impair. Le chant commence ensuite et la chaîne se met à tourner. On tourne ainsi constamment, tantôt à droite, tantôt à gauche ; mais quand les chanteurs en sont au sixième couplet, et chaque fois que ce sixième couplet se répète, tout le monde s'arrête, et, pendant que l'on chante : 'Six urnes placées, remplies,' les danseurs désignés par un nombre pair se tournent, d'abord à droite, puis à gauche, et font à leurs voisins de profonds saluts. Ceux que désigne un nombre impair font la même cérémonie en sens inverse : le tout avec la gravité d'une cérémonie religieuse. Puis lorsque l'on chante : 'A Cana, en Galilée,' les danseurs recommencent à tourner." This round is a French translation of a Latin imitation of a Druidic *Series* used in the education of novices. The Christian round, as given by Mr. Gagnon, concludes thus :

Il y a douze apôtres,  
 Il y a onze cents mill' vierges,  
 Il y a dix commandements,  
 Il y a neuf chœurs des anges,  
 Il y a huit béatitudes,  
 Il y a sept sacrements,  
     Six urn's placées, remplies,  
     A Cana, en Galilée,  
 Il y a cinq livr's de Moïse,  
 Il y a quatre évangélistes,  
 Il y a trois grands patriarches,  
 Il y a deux Testaments,  
 Il n'y a qu'un seul Dieu.

The Druidic *Series*, as given by Villemarqué, is summed up thus :

Douze mois et douze signes,  
 Onze prêtres armés,  
 Dix vaisseaux ennemis,  
 Neuf petites mains blanches,  
 Huit vents,  
 Sept soleils,  
 Six petits enfants de cire,  
 Cinq zones terrestres,  
 Quatre pierres à aiguiser,  
 Trois parties dans le monde,  
 Deux bœufs,  
 Pas de série pour le nombre un ;  
 La Nécessité unique,  
 Le Trépas, père de la Douleur ;  
 Rien avant, rien de plus.

“La Nécessité unique” is identified with Death—the Breton “Ankou,” the forgetting of all, not unlike the Nirvana of the Buddhists. “Les deux bœufs” are those of Hu-Gadaru, an ancient Breton god. In the “Quatre pierres à aiguiser” we have a Breton variant of the Welsh whetting-stone, which sharpened the swords of the brave, so that they killed an enemy with a single stroke, but reduced the swords of cowards to dust. The “Six enfants de cire” refer to the ancient and universal practice of witchcraft, not yet extinct, by which an enemy is made to fall sick and die through the melting of his waxen image. The connection of this with our modern habit of burning unpopular public characters in effigy is obvious. The number seven, like three and twelve, was peculiarly sacred. Here we have seven elements, seven suns and seven moons; three beginnings and three endings, alike for man and for the sacred oak; twelve months in the year and twelve signs in the Zodiac. The

“Huit feux, avec le grand feu” refer to the seven sacred fires perpetually burning in the temples and to the great fire, the Bel-tan, which the ancient Irish lit in May in honour of the Sun-god. Here again we have a modern variant in the *Feux de St. Jean*, which were lit on the Island of Orleans as late as 1810. In the “Dix vaisseaux ennemis” and the “onze prêtres armés” we may have a reference to the naval war in Armorica, when Cæsar put the Senators and Druids to the sword. The respective ages of these two rounds cannot be determined. But the Christian must be later than the conversion of Armorica in the sixth century, and the Druidic somewhat earlier, and both must have their origin in a pagan past so dimly remote that we cannot now discern a single feature of it clearly.

I give Villemarqué's notes as they stand for what they are worth, not supposing it necessary to warn my readers that the *Barzaz-Breiz* has fallen from its high estate of authenticity. If we want authentic Breton folksongs we must go to the *Gwerziou* and *Sonniou* of M. Luzel, where we shall find a scrupulous exactitude, not excelled even in Professor Child's monumental collection of the English and Scottish ballads. The *Barzaz-Breiz* is something quite different from these. It is not a faithful collection of folksongs edited from unpublished manuscripts; still less one that is faithful to oral tradition, for the Bretons repudiate all knowledge of its texts; nor yet is it a trustworthy literary history. But it is not to be thrown aside as completely useless, because it is no longer found to be what it was once taken for by everyone. It is a



store-house of information, picturesquely rearranged for literary effect ; in fact, a sort of historical novel on a large scale—belonging to the same class of Celtic literature as the works of “Ossian” Macpherson and Sir Samuel Ferguson. And if it had only been published in its true guise, like Ferguson’s poems, instead of in a false one, like Macpherson’s, its real value as an interesting and stimulating version of the genuine spirit of old Celtic poetry would never have been called in question.

## v

## CHRISTIANITY

Christianity, pure and simple, counts for very little in folklore of any kind, and perhaps for less in verse than in prose. The noëls are non-popular and the songs connected with Christian fêtes and ceremonies have come down strongly imbued with paganism and cast in pagan moulds.

Mr. Gagnon gives us, besides the noël *D’où viens-tu, bergère*, the two complaintes, *Adam et Eve* and *Le Juif Errant*, and *Cadieux’s death-song*, the first and last of which are inspired by Christianity throughout. *Cadieux’s* song, with its heroic ring and fervent piety, is just what we might expect from that age of Christian martyrs, “sans peur et sans reproche.” The legend of the *Wandering Jew*, with its many variants, has a folklore history almost as strange as the adventures themselves. But we cannot enter upon it here. Beside these we may place two *voyageur* songs, as given by Dr. Larue : *Le chantier d’Abacis*, a strain of Christian

resignation and thanksgiving ; and the song of the *Christian voyageur*, in which the singer points his morals in a way which would be highly diverting if it was not so transparently sincere. Beginning with a caution against the dangers besetting the way of the *voyageur* he breaks off to tell us that even Christians sometimes use strong language :

Mille fois il maudit son sort  
 Dans le cours du voyage.

After this comes a warning against the wiles of the Evil One :

Quand tu seras sur ces traverses  
 Tu es ici près du démon  
 Qui guette ta pauvre âme ;

and then a moral, drawn from the likeness of mosquitoes to the Powers of Darkness which all good anglers ought to thoroughly appreciate :

Si les maringouins te réveillent  
 De leurs chansons,  
 Ou te chatouillent l'oreille  
 De leurs aiguillons ;  
 Apprends, cher voyageur, alors,  
 Que c'est le Diable  
 Qui chante tout autour de ton corps  
 Pour avoir ta pauvre âme.

Next comes an exhortation to pray :

Quand tu seras dans ces rapides  
 Très dangereux,  
 Ah ! prie la Vierge Marie,  
 Fais-lui des vœux ;  
 Alors lance-toi dans ces flots  
 Avec hardiesse,  
 Et puis dirige ton canot  
 Avec beaucoup d'adresse.

Excellent advice ; which reminds us of that given by Oliver Cromwell to the soldiers of the New Model, when they were about to ford a river in presence of the enemy : "Trust in the Lord—and keep your powder dry." Prayer is again recommended at the end of the song as the only talisman against the perils of flood and field :

Ami, veux-tu marcher par terre  
 Dans ces grands bois ;  
 Les sauvages te feront la guerre  
 En vrai sournois.  
 Si tu veux braver leur fureur,  
 Sans plus attendre,  
 Prie alors de tout ton cœur,  
 Ton ange de te défendre.

Thus we can see for ourselves that there really is a class of purely Christian folksongs, and that Canada has produced some fine examples of it. But these very Canadian examples serve to prove how sterile this class has always been, even under the most favouring conditions ; for, though Mr. Gagnon and Dr. Larue are the last collectors in the world to neglect a folksong of Christian origin, though they have collected in a country conspicuous for the religious character of its foundation and famous, throughout its entire history, for the extraordinary zeal, devotion, discipline and widespread influence of an omnipresent priesthood, yet, in spite of all these advantages, the specimens they give us are few in number and of no great intrinsic value. "Le nombre de nos chansons populaires est incalculable" ; in Normandy the songs were as plentiful as the apples ; and, in all English-



speaking countries, the Borders have long been celebrated as the land of song. Yet neither in the French tongue nor in the English, neither in the Old World nor in the New, neither by priest nor by Puritan has the folksong ever been converted. If a universal collection of folksongs were made, and the different classes placed in order of genuine popularity, it would probably be found that in the class of purely Christian origin Canada stood an undisputed first. But it is quite certain that this class itself would be the very last of all.

## VI

## HUMOUR

There is another influence besides those already mentioned which greatly affects the characteristic tone of Canadian folksongs and which, if misunderstood, makes many of them the veriest "caviare." This is that blending of a witty humour with a natural turn for satire, so peculiarly French that we must give up trying to find an English name for it and call it simply *gauloiserie*. Not that we are wholly without descriptions of some such kind of humour. In a delightful little preface to Locker Lampson's volume of society verse Mr. Austin Dobson gives us a very good idea of the British variant of this peculiar natural trait. But variants are variants, and are apt to have elusively subtle distinctions about them.

Apollo made, one April day,  
 A new thing in the rhyming way ;  
 Its turn was neat, its wit was clear,  
 It wavered 'twixt a smile and tear ;  
 Then Momus gave a touch satiric,  
 And it became a "London Lyric."

And then, if we take this refrain of de Rougemont's we may get still nearer to an insight into the true *raison d'être* of *gauloiserie*—

Dans cette vie  
 Où tout varie,  
 Où chaque pas mène au tombeau,  
 Portons gaîment notre fardeau.

But let us stop here ; if we go on trying to get an insight into what *gauloiserie* really is, by taking it to pieces and examining its component parts, we shall defeat our own object ; for its essence does not depend upon the nature of its parts, but upon the way in which they are blent together into a living whole. Just as a joke that has to be explained is no joke at all, so *gauloiserie* is no real influence except to those whose sense of humour enables them to see and feel it in their studies from the life.

And in making a study from the life we have to remember another characteristic French trait—the social quality, which is so strongly developed in the whole nation and which, with its great power of assimilation, has gained for France, through her men of letters, the title of the Interpreter of Europe. All the world acknowledges the social virtues of French song—even perfidious Albion takes pleasure in "the gay French refrain," as she generally calls it.

And there is yet another point to note here—that we must speak of *gauloiserie* only with reference to the French language; for wherever a different tongue has survived within the borders of France, there the sad tone may still be heard above all others. The Breton fisherman can feel a passion akin to that of the wild, mysterious Flamenco songs of Spain, and a Breton maiden can sympathise with her love-forsaken Sicilian sister who pined away and died after being serenaded with *dispetti* and *sfide*, songs of challenging suspicion, affront and ridicule. The Flemish lover sings his song because he cannot rest until he has done it, although he knows beforehand the pain that the singing of it will surely cost him :

Ik vinde my bedwongen dat ik zingen moet,  
 Ja, dat ik zingen moet,  
 Een liedeken van minne die my treuren doet,  
 Ja, die my treuren doet.

The French themselves—les vieux Gaulois—take things differently. The Franks of Chlodion were so intent upon enjoying the songs and dances at the marriage-feast of one of their great chiefs that they never discovered the approach of Ætius till his legionaries charged down on them. Thus the Romans won their first battle in Gaul. It has been said :

Toujours content et sans souci,  
 C'est l'ordre de Crambambuli ;

and of this jolly order are the *gaulois* songs of Canada. One might suppose that in love, at all events, there would be little enough of the “sans souci.” But the French and Canadian Cupids are



rarely blind. I do not mean to say that either French or Canadian love-songs are strangers to melancholy altogether—Perrette knows only too well that sometimes :

Les enfants sans souci  
Ils sont bien loin d'ici.

Much less do I mean to say that they are strangers to the faithfulness of lovers. Does not the princess scout the idea that love can hang upon the issue of the fight, and is only to be given to the victors ?

S'ils gagnent la bataille  
Ils auront nos amours,

“Qu'ils perdent ou qu'ils gagnent  
Ils les auront toujours.”

But I do believe that there is little, if any, exaggeration in M. Tiersot's remarks upon the general influence of *gauloiserie*. “La satire est tellement au fond de notre esprit national qu'elle étend son influence jusque sur nos chansons d'amour. Rarement on trouvera dans ces dernières une déclaration d'amour vraiment sincère et sans arrière-pensée, un accord absolu de deux cœurs qui s'aiment.”

However unwelcome to the lover of poetry when it comes in as an intruder, *gauloiserie* is unrivalled in its proper sphere, whether in Canada or in France. Native Canadian *gauloiserie* is very little behind the French; witness the amusing account of how

Dans l'comté de Rimouski  
A l'élection nouvelle,  
Jacquot Hug's s'est présenté.

A sharp flavour is to be found in

Quand le mari s'en vint du bois,

and

Mon mari est ben malade.

But the quintessence of *gauloiserie* is in *Malbroucke*. *Malbroucke* himself, like his predecessor the Duc de Guise, is burnt in effigy with all the mock-heroics possible. The "beau page" tells "Madame" how the great man was followed to his grave by "quatre-z-officiers":

L'un portait sa cuirasse,  
L'autre son bouclier,  
L'un portait son grand sabre,  
L'autre ne portait rien.

And French illustrators have not left us in any doubt as to how the chief mourners carried their burdens. But *Malbroucke* is not to be appreciated in extracts.

To be gay and Gallic and to sing *Malbroucke* with gusto ought to be enough to prove Canadians true heirs of the singers of the "gay refrain," who, in their turn, are heirs of the Gallic legionaries that, in the time of Julius Cæsar, are said to have borne the lark upon their helmets as the distinctive emblem of their race. But there is a reverse to all this. The Gallic funeral ceremonies of *Malbroucke* seem very like a modern variant of the mediæval *Dance of Death*. Both old and new owe their popularity to the same cause; and he who runs may read the moral of both; which is, that the great King Death will mete out equal justice to all alike, to high and low, to rich and poor, to victor and to vanquished. What a satisfaction to be able to rejoice in the foreknowledge of a common

doom! Professor Pellegrini tells us that this guiding inscription appears upon the wall on the road to the cemetery of Galliate: "Via al vero comunismo." And *Malbroucke*, for all it does it with a smiling face, points out the self-same way. So perhaps *gauloiserie* may be somewhat grimmer than it seems, and its refrains not, after all, so very gay.

## VII

## LULLABIES

Having briefly noted the general characteristics of the songs, let us turn to a few particular classes of them. To begin at the beginning, the *lullabies* must be considered first; then the *nursery rhymes* of childhood, followed by the *love-songs* of youth; and lastly, we must by no means forget to notice the most typically Canadian class of all—the *songs of the voyageurs*.

The *Lullaby* has all the form and rhythm of a natural simplicity, its burden is made soothing with onomatopœic and reduplicated words, and the names the nurses give it in every tongue breathe the very spirit of rest and sleep—*né-né* in Dauphiné, *no-no* in the South, *lo-lo* among the Basques are some of the many variants of the universal French *do-do*. Monotony, calm and an ebbing flow of sound are universal. In Berry the nurse begins with

Dodo, berline,  
Sainte Cathérine,

in Dauphiné with

Néné, petite,  
Sainte Marguerite,



in Canada with an invocation to the same saint—

Sainte Marguerite,  
Veillez ma petite ;

and all French nurses sing

Do, do, l'enfant do,  
L'enfant dormira tantôt ;

and in every case we hope their singing is attended  
by the same good fortune—

Et l'enfant qui dort  
Fait des rêves d'or.

Monotonous, too, are the variations on the simplest  
themes ; variations *ad infinitum*, or, rather, so far as  
the nurse's memory and fancy can carry her. All  
Canadians have been sung to sleep by the chanted  
story of

C'est la Poulette grise  
Qui pond dans l'église,  
C'est la Poulette blanche  
Qui pond dans les branches ;

and so on with "Poulettes" of innumerable hues,  
many seen only in the land of dreams. Assonance  
plays a great part in cradle songs, and makes even  
stranger bedfellows than politics. Its whims and  
caprices make Alsatian "bonnes" mix bitter  
things with sweet in curious fashion. In the very  
same song where little girls are put to bed in  
Heaven itself we find that little boys are well  
whipped and then stuffed into a sack full of toads :

Rägä, Rägä, tropfe,  
d'Buäwe muass ma klopfe,  
d'Mäidlä kummen is Himmels bett,  
d'Buäwa kummen id Groddä seck.

And it is just as full of freaks in Canada :

Il est midi.—Qui-c' qui l'a dit ?  
 C'est la souris.—Où est-elle ?  
 Dans la chapelle.—Que fait-elle ?  
 De la dentelle.—Pour qui ?  
 Pour ces demoiselles.—Combien la vend-elle ?  
 Trois quarts de sel.

This constant mention of animals shows us what nursery favourites they have always been : witness, *Le Chat à Jeannette*, *La Petit' poul' grise*, *Le Bal des Souris* and *Les Noces du Papillon* for France ; and, for Canada, the wedding of *Pinson avec Cendrouille* and the unending enumerative which begins with *Une Perdriole*.

It is strange that Mr. Gagnon gives us no lullabies of the Virgin, unless we can take *D'où viens-tu, bergère ?* as one ; for they form an important class apart, and are met with in many countries. They are, however, somewhat like the noëls in tone, and often had a common non-popular origin. The famous one with the refrain

Millies, tibi laudes canimus  
 Mille, mille, millies,

could hardly have been of popular composition, even if it had been in some vernacular. But another Latin one might well have been a folk-song :

Dormi Jesu, mater ridet,  
 Quæ tam dulcem somnum videt,  
 Dormi Jesu blandule.  
 Si non dormis, mater plorat,  
 Inter fila cantans orat :  
 Blande, veni Somnule.

The last line reminds us that lullabies are long-lived beyond most other folksongs and trace their descent from pagan times. "Blande, veni Somnule" is at least a reminiscence of the direct invocation to Sleep, still common among many folk. The *vavvavισματα* of Modern Greece have many such invocations; so have the *som-soms* of Languedoc and Auvergne, like the one beginning,

Som-som, beni, beni, beni;

and so, too, have the *souin-souins* of La Bresse :

Le poupon voudrait bien domir;  
 Le Souin-souin ne veut pas venir.  
 Souin-souin, vené, vené, vené;  
 Souin-souin, vené, vené, donc!

There are no heathen invocations in our Canadian lullabies; but when a *habitante* calls upon *Sainte-Marguerite* she is invoking a favourite saint in the *White Paternoster*, and as the *White Paternoster* was invented as a charm against the Evil spirits which could be conjured with a *Black Paternoster* or other magical formula the connection with a survival of pagan beliefs is not far to seek. It is curious to observe the number of Christian customs which the folk has pressed into the service of White Magic. Even the "Angelus" has not escaped, the Provençals believing that it was instituted to scare away the evil spirits who might be tempted out by the approach of night!

But whether of Christian or of pagan origin, whether in Canada or in other lands, the simple *Berceuse* has all the intimate pathetic charm of one of "Nature's old felicities"; for there is nothing



that can take us back to our own first twilight fancies, and to the very infancy of time itself, like a crooning lullaby, whispering of all the little immemorial mysteries of cradleland.

## VIII

## NURSERY RHYMES

Though *Nursery rhymes* belong to a later age of childhood than lullabies they are really a still simpler form of verse, in fact, a mere jingling accompaniment to the action and air of some sort of game, and never make the slightest pretensions to poetry. Assonance is, of course, most important, and generally plays its pranks to the admiration of all concerned. Sometimes, however, opinions differ. To

Ride a cock-horse to Banbury Cross,  
or to be

A cheval, à cheval, sur la queue d'un orignal,  
or to go

A Paris, à Paris, sur la queue d'un p'tit cheval gris,  
or

A Rouen, à Rouen, sur la queue d'un p'tit cheval blanc,  
is all very well. But perhaps Quebecers might rather remain forever unknown to nursery fame than be immortalized in the couplet

A Québec, à Québec, sur la queue d'une belette!

As they have so much in common with lullabies it is natural enough that nursery rhymes with a suit-

able rhythm should enjoy an equal popularity in either form ; *J'ai tant d'enfants à marier, Ah ! qui marierons-nous ?*, *C'est le bon vin qui danse, C'est la plus belle de céans* and many other simple rhymes are sung beside the cradle as well as in the play-room.

The main feature of interest in all nursery rhymes is the wonderful fidelity with which both words and action have been handed down from generation to generation. A Canadian girl or boy singing

C'est le bon vin qui danse ici

reminds us at once, by the single word "vin," that this rhyme originally came from France—whence, indeed, all our nursery rhymes have come. When we hear a reference to "le pont de Nantes" or to the more famous "pont d'Avignon" we know they are singing of France in the olden time. The mention of "l'assemblée d'amour" takes us back to the mediæval Courts of Love. In *Le premier jour de Mai* we have a reminiscence of the fêtes for the rite of May. And the couplet,

J'ai trouvé le nique du lièvre,  
Mais le lièvre n'y était pas,

now sung in fun by children, might once have been sung in real earnest by some of their ancestors who lived by the chase. Turn where we may, we find ourselves in what has been well called the old curiosity shop of customary lore. English children singing

Eeny, meeny, miny, mo,

are using a variant of

Eene, meene, mieken, mäken,

in which German children still ask their play-fellows to join them in the Teutonic conquest of Celtic Britain :

Kumm will'n beid' nâ England gân !

It is easy enough to go back still further. In "Buck, buck, how many horns do I hold up?" we have the lineal descendant of an old Roman game, as described by Petronius Arbiter in the time of Nero : "Trimalchio . . . bade the boy get on his back. The boy climbed up and slapped him on the shoulders with his hand, laughing and calling out, "Bucca, bucca, quot sunt hic?" We can go beyond even this. But probably no one is disposed to deny the claims of the nursery rhyme to, at least, a very respectable pedigree.

## IX

### LOVE-SONGS

Everyone turns to Nature herself for the origin of the *Love-song*. But to fully appreciate the influences which have moulded it into the form it has taken in Canada we must remember that the natural tones of love have been modified, first by the pervading *gauloiserie* of France, then by the customs and ideals of mediæval chivalry, and lastly by the peculiarities of Canadian life. Now Nature, of course, needs no discussion, and, as the three modifying influences have been discussed before, we take Canadian love-songs exactly as we find them in Mr. Gagnon's book, and, noting that



there they may be somewhat exclusively addressed *virginibus puerisque*, we shall venture to characterize them generally as an almost perfect blend of Nature, chivalry, *gauloiserie* and what we may perhaps be allowed to call for the occasion *Canadiennerie*.

The *Chanson des Regrets* has no place in Mr. Gagnon's book. There is no *Péronnelle*, no Young Heiduck to woo and win and ride away, no Canadian wife to yield to the wiles of the *Demon Lover*, no Canadian Launcelot and no Canadian Guinevere. The Canadian maiden makes no such confession of the power of love as her Bressian sister :

Que veux-tu que je te donne ?  
 Je t'ai déjà trop donné :  
 Je t'ai donné une rose,  
 La plus belle de mes roses  
 Que j'avais sur mon rosier.

Neither does she sing her regrets at having found that power irresistible, like her Scotch sister :

But had I wist, before I kist,  
 That Love had been so ill to win,  
 I'd lock'd my heart in a case of goud  
 And pinn'd it wi' a siller pin.

But the *Chanson de Galanterie* is allowed in, though only on sufferance, and during good behaviour. Of course, *Le Comte Ory* and all his fellows are shut out. So are the gay *Tam-lins*, the *Sire Garins* and all the other gallants whose motto is

Quand tu tenais la caille,  
 Il fallait la plumer.

Mr. Gagnon's Canadian *galanterie* is of a very

harmless kind. In French folksong the very popular pastorals beginning with

L'autre jour m'allant promener,

or words to that effect, and recounting the adventures of a lord with a shepherdess, almost always end in one of four ways : " Si l'interlocuteur est un berger, il sera heureux ; si c'est un seigneur, il est renvoyé à son château ; ou bien lui-même est témoin des tendres confidences de la bergère et du berger. Un quatrième cas peut se présenter : celui où le seigneur a affaire à une femme mariée : il est alors sûr du succès." In Canadian variants the fourth case does not occur. But the second is well represented.

Le roi prit la plus jeune,  
Dans la dans' l'a menée ;  
A chaque tour de danse  
Il voulait l'embrasser.

The youngest of the three " fill's à marier " rejects his advances as a matter of course—

Allez, allez, beau prince,  
Allez plus loin chercher.

And *Petite Jeanneton* is just as virtuous :

Mon petit cœur en gage,  
N'est pas pour un baron.

But the romantic professions find plenty of willing victims :

Je voudrais bien d'un officier,  
Je marcherais à pas carrés,

sings one young girl who has dismissed *habitants*,

labourers, *colporteurs*, notaries, doctors and lawyers as one and all unworthy of her attention. And another relates that, having been sent to sea with a gallant sailor,

Il devint amoureux de moi.  
 Ma mignonnette, embrassez-moi.  
 Nenni, Monsieur, je n'oserais :  
 Car si mon papa le savait. . . .

A third damsel will not descend to particulars :

Ma fille promettez-moi donc  
 De n'jamais aimer les garçons.  
 —J'estim'rais mieux que la maison  
 Serait en cendre et en charbons,  
 Et vous mon père sur le pignon :  
 Vous vous chaufferiez les talons.  
     Le beau temps s'en va,  
     Le mauvais revient ;  
 Je n'ai pas de barbe au menton  
     Mais il m'en vient.

A comparison between the French and Canadian variants of *Marianne s'en va-t-au moulin* or, still better, *Petite Jeanneton* will at once show where the line is drawn in the different countries.

The *gauloiserie* which turns the love-song into a *chanson de galanterie* is seen in *Papillon, tu es volage!* and some others. But, as we saw in examining the influence of humour, there really are some Canadian *Chansons d'amour* which may be truly classed as love-songs, pure and simple. These have little of the sympathetic imagery of the Italian songs or the fiery and rather sententious passion of the Spanish, and they can hardly give us anything so touching in its artless simplicity as this :



Y a ben sept ans que ze se amoureusea  
 D'on bravou labori :  
 Rien que d'y va son labourazou  
 Me fa ben plasi.

They are generally coloured by a lighter fancy and sung with a more lilting measure. But they have as true a sincerity of their own as many of a greater intensity. In the *metamorphosis* the lovers delight in toying with the risks by the way, because they feel that the end is certain, and in *A la Claire Fontaine* we know that they will be all the more in love afterwards for having fallen out over the "bouquet de roses." The lover *Au bois du rossignolet* may be trifling a little, and so may the soldier who makes the not unusual military promise :

Adieu, belle Françoise,  
 Adieu, belle Françoise !  
 Je vous épouserai,  
 Au retour de la guerre,  
 Si j'y suis respecté.

Perhaps, too, it may be the "love that is too hot and strong" which "runneth soon to waste" that drives "le fils du roi" to exclaim—

Bergère on non je veux la voir  
 Ou que mon cheval crève !

But there can be no doubt about the intense longing in this appeal :

Amant, que j't'ai donc fait  
 Qui puiss' tant te déplaire ?  
 Est-c'que j't'ai pas aimé  
 Comm' tu l'as mérité ?  
 Je t'ai aimé, je t'aime,  
 Je t'aimerai toujours.  
 Pour toi mon cœur soupire  
 Toujours.

Nor can we doubt that "Versailles, Paris et St. Denis" would willingly be given in ransom for the prisoner of war in Holland, if his mistress had them to give. And we have only to turn to *Le Pommier Doux* to find, in the "Trois filles d'un prince," the very embodiment of unchanging love.

## x

## SONGS OF THE VOYAGEURS

The *Voyageur*, like all other workers, takes whatever comes to his hand, and is always equally ready either to sing a spinning-chorus, like *Je le mène bi'n mon dévidoi*, or to make up a canoeing variant of his own, like

Fringue, fringue sur la rivière,  
Fringue, fringue sur l'aviron,

which is an adaptation of *Va, va, va, p'tit bonnet, grand bonnet*. But the most interesting songs in his repertory are naturally those connected with his own mode of life. Love, war, religion and the hardships of his calling are their principal themes. And it is specially noteworthy how much the religious tone is deepened by the sense of ever-present danger—the *voyageur* at work, like the soldier on active service, being a living proof that godliness is commoner in the field than in barracks. *Cadieux's* song, *Le Chantier d'Abacis*, the *Christian Voyageur* and *Pierriche Falcon's* *Songs of the "Bois-Brûlés"*, already mentioned in connection with war and religion, are all true *Voyageur* songs. We are

indebted to Dr. Larue for several other specimens of this class. *Voici l'hiver arrivé* has admirable local colour : the free-and-easy shantyman, paid on the abominable truck system,

. . . travail ben tout l'hiver ;  
Au printemps on se trouve clair !

And so he sings with hearty good will—

Que l'diable emport' les chantiers.

But, for all that, he goes back to them again the following year. *A Bytown c'est un' joli' place* is a song of parting—

Nous n'irons plus voir nos blondes.

*Parmi les voyageurs* and *Salut à mon pays* are songs of return. Sometimes the "blondes" forget their *voyageurs*—

A présent m'y voilà  
En arrière des autres.

And sometimes, when they do so, they get paid back in their own coin—

A présent j'en ai-t-une autre  
Qui y est ben plus à mon gré.

Among *voyageurs*, as among soldiers and sailors all the world over, there are always some careless adventurers, who, wandering about for years in parts unknown, find, on their return home, that their families have given them up for lost and their wives have married again. Such a dramatic situation is never thrown away upon folksingers, who everywhere have innumerable variants on this single theme. The Canadian one is *Voilà les voya-*



*geurs qu'arrivent*, which ends without telling us what becomes of the two husbands :

J'ai donc reçu de fausses lettres  
Que vous étiez mort, enterré,  
Aussi, je me suis mariée.

It is a great pity to find this disappointing baldness here, as the same theme has often been so effectively treated in folksong ; sometimes with almost the artistic finish of "Enoch Arden" and sometimes with the insight and fine reserve of Guy de Maupassant's short story "Le Retour."

## XI

### VARIANTS

Variants begin at home ; and, though the local ones are often apparently of the most trifling importance, they are never to be neglected on that account. In a variant of *En roulant* the word "mitan" occurs :

Derrière' chez nous ya-t-un étang,  
Et la riviér' passe au mitan.

This in itself is a small thing. But the use of the word acquires a good deal of importance when we find that it is frequent in the Côte de Beaupré, the Isle of Orleans and the Côte du Sud in Canada, that it occurs in the songs of Picardy and that we know from what provinces many of the "colons" of the seventeenth century originally came. As

a matter of fact, the word "mitan" is used instead of the standard "milieu" in other provinces besides Picardy, and the *habitants* of the parts of Canada just mentioned are by no means all descended from Picards. But, all the same, this serves to show that no local variant should be overlooked, even when it is only a philological one. Some local variants are made simply by the freakish misunderstanding of the traditional words: for instance the old round—

C'est la plus belle de céans  
C'est par la main je vous la prends,

is perverted into

C'est la plus belle de Sion,  
C'est par la main nous la tenons.

Other variants of a minor kind have more to justify their existence. It is more natural for a St. Lawrence fisherman to sing

Dans les prisons de Londres  
than

Dans les prisons de Nantes,

and the mixed geography of

Il est dans la Hollande,  
Les Irlanda's l'ont pris

is not without sufficient reasons of its own.

Variant refrains abound: Mr. Gagnon gives us six for *En roulant* alone. Popular humorous songs, which so easily lend themselves to improvisation, are peculiarly subject to variations. The inevitable

*Malbroucke* has two Canadian variants touched with Indian local colour, one beginning

C'était un vieux sauvage,  
 Tout noir, tout barbouilla,  
 Avec sa vieill' couverte  
 Et son sac à tabac,

and both ending in much the same way :

Quatre vieux sauvages  
 Portaient les coins du drap,  
 Et deux vieilles sauvagesses  
 Chantaient le *libéra*.

There are plenty of variants of all kinds, besides these, many made up on the spur of the moment and as quickly forgotten, and others flitting about in oral tradition with more or less fixity of form. The *voyageurs* have their variants like the rest of the world; a good instance being the purely Canadian *Death-song of Cadieux*, which begins in the original version—

Petit rocher de la haute montagne,  
 Je viens finir ici cette campagne,

and in the Red River version—

Petits oiseaux, dedans vos charmants nids,  
 Vous qui chantez pendant que je gémiss,  
 Si j'avais des ailes comme vous,  
 Je vivrais content avant qu'il fut jour.

It is easy enough to see that nearly all Canadian folksongs are variants from the French, somewhat remote in a few instances, but very close in most. All nursery rhymes and lullabies may be taken as



of purely French origin : so may all songs of the type of *Cécilia*, *Le maumarié* and *La maumariée*, *Je ne veux pas d'un habitant*, *En roulant*, *Au jardin de mon père un oranger lui-ya*, *Dans les prisons de Nantes*, *Marianne au moulin*, *Perrette est bien malade*, and others too numerous to mention. The peculiar restrictions which prevented many Canadian variants from attaining a too luxuriant growth are well described by Mr. Gagnon. We may see how powerful these restrictions were by taking such a typical theme as *Le retour du mari* and comparing Dr. Larue's version with M. Fleury's four Lower Norman variants, or with those of Spain and Portugal, which are the most romantic ones of all. The Canadian variant of *Au jardin de mon père un oranger lui-ya* breaks off suddenly, whilst Fleury's Norman variants tell the whole story, like those of Bartsch, Bujeaud, Legrand and others. It is a noticeable fact in folk-history that the Norman "Coucou" has never been acclimatized in Canada.

*Mon père a fait bâtir maison* is sung in Saintonge and Aunis, *J'ai cueilli la belle rose* in Angoumois, Cambrésis, Artois and Le Nivernais, *Au bois du rossignolet* in Franche-Comté and Switzerland, *Gai le rosier* and *J'ai trop grand peur des loups* in Poitou, *Cécilia* and *Isabeau s'y promène* in Champagne, *A St. Malo, beau port de mer* in French Brittany, *A la Claire Fontaine* in Normandy and a dozen other provinces, and *Quand j'étais chez mon père, petite Jeanneton* all over France. It is interesting to observe how folksongs which have wandered from their native home often retain their more ancient forms in an outlying colony. This was the case with Greek songs, so it is said ; and it certainly

was with the Anglo-Saxon songs, for Beowulf is the oldest Teutonic epic. The Icelandic songs preserved much of the folklore of the Old Norse. Some of the finest Portuguese ballads have been collected in the Azores. And in Canada we have versions of *A la Claire Fontaine*, *Le Pommier Doux* and other songs which are older and often more poetical than most of the variants now current in France.

The number of French folksongs represented by Canadian variants in our texts is certainly remarkable. But, to give a just view of the relationship between the collections of the two countries, we must not forget to mention that no trace is to be found in either Mr. Gagnon or Dr. Larue of many of the most popular and typical songs of France. Of course, it must be borne in mind that those two gentlemen were not collecting for folklorists, but for the general public—and the public has rarely been better served—but it is at least noteworthy, from every point of view, that they have given us no specimens of the following types: *Le mari benêt*, *Elle a choisi le vieux*, *La fille perdue*, *Le moine blanc*, *La chanson des regrets*, *Les trois tambours*, *La fille engagée au regiment*, *La courte paille*, *L'amant qui tue sa maîtresse*, *Martin*, *Les tisserands*, *L'occasion manquée—ou saisie*, *Les trois enfants ressuscités par Saint-Nicolas*, *La mère ressuscitée*, *L'enfant au berceau dénonce un crime*, *Renaud*, *La fille qui fait la morte*, *L'amant noyé* and *La Pernelle*. All these are found in M. Rolland's collection, which is only the beginning of a great work, and is by no means exhaustive even so far as it has gone already.

Looking further afield we find that we do not go quite so far as we might hope among the folk-songs of the world at large. We have no Canadian versions of the adventures of *Bluebeard* or of *May Colven*, while there are innumerable variants in French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, English, Dutch, Flemish, High and Low German, Norse, Swedish, Icelandic, Polish, Bohemian, Magyar, Servian and scores of other languages. To see what could be done with Teutonic folklore I went through the two thousand *volkslieder* of Erlach's collection; but only found about twenty which had any direct affinity with those in Mr. Gagnon's book. Of course, among the twenty were variants of the misadventures of *Petite Jeanneton*, who instead of being sent

. . . . à la fontaine  
Pour pêcher du poisson

goes of her own accord,

Wollt geh'n in den Wald,  
Wollt Brombeer' brocken ab,

and does so with very "variant" results. Equally of course were stories of the loves of lords of high degree for rustic maids, and the spirited answers of girls whom their parents ask to promise

De n'jamais aimer les garçons.

The *Weltkind's* answer is even more fiery than *la Canadienne's*:

Meine Glut ist nicht zu dämpfen,  
Bis ich einstens werde kämpfen  
Mit dem Amor, bis auf's Blut.



*Petite Jeanneton* is one of those folksongs which seem to be native to every soil; and an even greater vogue is enjoyed by the woeful *Maumariés*. If a world-wide celebrity were any compensation for the miseries of married life *P'tit Jean* would get some consolation from the knowledge that, even in far Cathay, he has fellow-sufferers; for there the "Hotung Lioness" makes her better half quake at every roar. The story of the prisoner and the gaoler's daughter is known everywhere and is always a most popular theme, whether the hero is simply "un prisonnier," as he is in Canada, or a peer of the realm, as he is in the *Loving Ballad of Lord Bateman*. The tragic history of *Marianson* is common to many countries, more particularly to Spain and Portugal, where the famous ballad of *Helena* has always been held in special honour. The variants of the *Metamorphoses of Love* have spread from the East over the whole world and are so universal that it would be difficult to find any language in which they are quite unknown. In Mr. Gagnon's two variants the lover has to follow his mistress through her changes into an eel, a lark, a nun and so forth. Some other lovers, even when they belong to the weaker sex, are much more severely tried. In the Border ballad of *Tamlane* the hero warns his love:

They'll turn me in your arms, lady,  
 Into an ask and adder;  
 They'll turn me to a bear sae grim  
 And then a lion bold.  
 And last they'll turn me in your arms  
 Into the burning glead;

Then throw me into the well-water,  
 O throw me in with speed;  
 And then I'll be your own true love,  
 I'll turn a naked knight.

In *Penda Baloa*, a negro ballad of Senegambia, the Fairy Lover turns into a crocodile, when once he has carried the girl into his enchanted kingdom. In *Alison Gross* a bewitched knight is restored to himself on Hallowe'en "when the seely Court was riding by." The dipping of *Tamlane* in water is a variant process of similar acts in an Indian tale called *Surya Bai*, in a Hottentot story, in one of von Hahn's Albanian folk-tales, and in the ancient Egyptian story of the *Two Brothers*. The classical versions, especially the story of Proteus in the fourth book of the *Odyssey*, hardly need mention.

The *metamorphosis* affords us a striking illustration of the wonderful diffusion of identical themes. But when we hear of Chenier's translating a Romaic folksong which had been taken down from oral tradition in the highlands of Greece, and which proved to be the same as Ophelia's song, which Shakspeare learnt from some English crowder, we are even more struck by the wonderful diffusion of identical variants. And anyone who might wish to make Canada his starting point and thence study the diffusion of theme and variants together on a universal scale may be recommended to begin with *Voilà les voyageurs qu'arrivent*, for, wherever soldiers, sailors and songs are known, there we are sure of finding versions of *Le retour du mari*.

## XII

## POETRY

Canadian folksongs have been considered in the foregoing notes mainly as an interesting subject of folklore study. But the question naturally follows whether they are worthy of attention from the point of view of poetry alone? I think it may be made clear that they are worth some study from the point of view of art, though it is equally clear that our admiration must be discriminating, for it is only within certain narrow limits that they rise into real poetry.

One limitation to their range ought to be specially noticed: it is the total lack of all genuine "natural magic." When the princess in the *Pommier Doux* wakes her sister with

Ma sœur, voilà le jour,

and is answered

Non, ce n'est qu'une étoile  
Qu'éclaire nos amours,

we get, indeed, a fine poetic touch; but without any of the sympathy with Nature which we see in this little Czech poem:

Star, bright star!  
Thou art from love's fetters free;  
Hadst thou a heart, my golden star,  
A shower of sparks thou wouldest weep for me.

The language of flowers is purely conventional and has nothing whatever of the Celtic glamour in it.



The Spanish gipsy can find his mistress fairer than the white carnation as it opens to the morning sun. But it never occurs to the Canadian *habitant* to use any simile of this kind. He sings glibly enough of "le bouquet de roses" and "mon joli cœur de rose." But it would be quite alien to his genius to employ the rose in a description of a girl asleep:

Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,  
As though a rose should shut and be a bud again.

He tells us very pleasingly of the apple tree, that

Les feuilles en sont vertes.

But this is a mere generality, quite devoid of the peculiar charm of Chaucer's "glad light-green." In a land of falling waters the best description of their beauty is only another general remark—

J'ai trouvé l'eau si belle,

though Nature is assuredly not less lavish in providing her similes in Canada than in Roumania, where they sing—

And through his slumbers, murmuring on, their watch  
the waters keep;

O! happy waters that may sing and lull him in his sleep!

The Canadian folksinger would never think of ascribing royal honours to the sunset, like the Greek Calabrians, who call it "o íglio vasiléggui"—ὁ ἥλιος βασιλεύει. Nor could he appreciate the golden promise of some rare, quiet, sunlit afternoon in our early March, when

Winter, slumbering in the open air,  
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring.

No, the Canadian folksinger has never consciously felt the joy of being "made one with Nature." He only finds poetry in Man, especially in the popular *noël*, the *complainte* and, of course, the *chanson d'amour*.

*D'où viens-tu, bergère?* is perfect as a *noël* and children's picture-poem. The form of question and answer at once arouses the childish interest, and the simple descriptive touches, all borrowed from the child's own little world, are strikingly dramatic to his wondering imagination :

Qu'as-tu vu, bergère?

Un petit enfant  
Sur la paille fraîche  
Mis bien tendrement.

Ya le bœuf et l'âne  
Qui sont par devant,  
Avec leur haleine  
Réchauffent l'enfant.  
Rien de plus, bergère,  
Rien de plus?

—Ya trois petits anges,  
Descendus du ciel,  
Chantant les louanges  
Du Père éternel.

"La belle *complainte* de Marianson" is the finest piece of poetry in Canadian folksong. It does not begin with any attempt at preparing its hearers to see things from the proper point of view, nor does it ever turn aside to explain its purport by the way; for the folksong always takes its hearers' intelligent sympathy for granted. But, with true dramatic insight, it sings the burden of its song

as shortly and directly as it may. And so it is, that, as a tale of fated woe, an echo from the days "of tourneys and great challenges of knights," terse, tragic and of an infinite pathos, it has come down to us, stripped of all poetic trappings and glorious in all the grand simplicity of naked strength. In her innocence Marianson has lent her golden rings to the false friend who, having had them copied, goes out to meet her husband on his return from the war :

Marianson, dame jolie,  
 Ell' m'a été fidèle assez ?

Oui, je le crois, je le décrois :  
 Voilà les anneaux de ses doigts !

Ah ! maman, montre-lui son fils :  
 Ça lui réjouira l'esprit.

A pris l'enfant par le maillot,  
 Trois fois par terre il l'a jeté.

Marianson, par les cheveux,  
 A son cheval l'a-t-attachée.

Marianson, dame jolie,  
 Où sont les anneaux de tes doigts ?

Il sont dans l'coffre, au pied du lit ;  
 Ah ! prends les clefs et va les qu'ri'.

Il n'eut pas fait trois tours de clef,  
 Ses trois anneaux d'or a trouvés.

Marianson, dame jolie,  
 Quel bon chirurgien vous faut-il ?

Le bon chirurgien qu'il me faut,  
 C'est un bon drap pour m'ensev'rir.



Marianson, dame jolie,  
 Votre mort m'est-elle pardonnée ?

Oui, ma mort vous est pardonnée ?  
 Non pas la cell' du nouveau-né.

The typical *love-song* of Canada is *A la claire fontaine*. Everyone knows it, everyone sings it and everyone can see how well it holds the mirror up to French-Canadian nature. Some of the French versions have a poetic turn of thought wanting in the Canadian :

Au milieu de la rose  
 Mon cœur est enchaîné;  
 N'y a serrurier en France  
 Qui puisse le déchaîner  
 Sinon mon ami Pierre  
 Qui en a pris la clef.

On the other hand the Norman verse—

Chante, beau rossignol,  
 Toi qui as l'cœur tant gai;  
 Je ne suis pas de même,  
 Je suis bien affligé,

will not bear comparison with the Canadian—

Chante, rossignol, chante,  
 Toi qui as le cœur gai;  
 Tu as le cœur à rire,  
 Moi je l'ai-t-à pleurer.

And then we look in vain among the current variants of France for the touching refrain—

Lui-ya longtemps que je t'aime,  
 Jamais je ne t'oublierai.

A deeper note is struck by the intense fidelity of the princess's love in *Le Pommier Doux*—

S'ils gagnent la bataille  
Ils auront nos amours,  
Qu'ils perdent ou qu'ils gagnent,  
Ils les auront toujours—

and by the self-sacrifice of the sailor in *Isabeau s'y promène*—

De la troisième plonge  
Le galant s'est noyé—

and a far greater passion breathes in every word of the "fils du roi" when, *Hier, sur le pont d'Avignon*, he heard the shepherdess—

Elle chantait d'un ton si doux  
Comme une demoiselle—

and her singing wrought in him

A dream of fire,  
All his hours ensnaring,  
Burns the boy past bearing—  
The dream that girls inspire.

Though these few citations may be enough to show that there really is some poetry, there is one more song which tells the story of the lover's varying moods so well that I cannot forbear to quote it, too. It begins with such an airy, *gaulois* charm :

J'ai perdu mon amant  
Et je m'en souci' guère ;  
Le regret que j'en ai  
Sera bientôt passé.  
Je porterai le deuil  
D'un habit de satin ;  
Je verserai des larmes  
De vin.

But the tone soon changes ; and, at the last, there comes the "long regret" from the other party to this "misunderstood" affair :

Si j'étais hirondelle,  
 Vers toi, bell' demoiselle,  
 Par derrièr' ces rochers  
 J'irais prendr' ma volée.  
 Sur votre main, la belle,  
 J'irais me reposer,  
 Pour raconter la peine  
 Que j'ai.

There may be a suspicion of lettered workmanship about all this ; yet in Maskinongé, the only part of Canada where it is known, it is truly popular ; and, taken as the folksong expression of yearning for an absent lover, it will almost bear comparison with even this delightful snatch of Old-World grace :

Celui que mon cœur aime tant,  
 Il est dessus la mer jolie.  
 Petit oiseau, tu peux lui dire,  
 Petit oiseau, tu lui diras,  
 Que je suis sa fidèle amie  
 Et que vers lui je tend les bras.

But, whether poetical or not, the Canadian folksong, in its proper home, is never without its own peculiar charm. We have already seen where it does and where it does not make its home : not within the shadow of the Church, though it has caught the Christian tone better than all others have ; not in any moonlit fairyland, though it can tread a fairy measure well enough ; not among mysterious forest-aisles, for it has no wild-wood fancy of its own ; nor among "enchantments



drear," for it has long since lost the thrill of fearful joy; nor yet with Nature, for it cannot see her beauties: but, at every season of the year, with the nurse at the cradle, the children at their play, the spinners at the wheel and the guests at the marriage-feast, and everywhere and always with lovers when apart; in summer time with the *habitant* out in the open fields and the knitters in the sun awaiting his return, or away with the *voyageur* in camp or in canoe; and in winter, when nights are long and cold, within the easeful farmhouse circle, or far-off, amid the silent snows and beneath great sleeping pines, with a cabinful of care-free shantymen gathered around their evening fire.

## CHAPTER XII

### A FRENCH-CANADIAN POET

SOME time ago, when writing the article on French-Canadian literature for the eleventh *Britannica*, I had the refreshing delight of discovering at least one true poet whose work was entirely new to me. Here was what I had been looking for : a poet whose sensitive verse could reveal the most intimate native secrets of French-Canadian life to anyone who had the understanding ear and eye and heart ; and, most delightful of all, do this in several poems completely free from rhetoric.

I soon told my friends the good news. But, to my surprise, I found that among the Anglo-Canadians who read French poetry only two had seen these poems, while a few French-Canadians knew nothing about them at all. Under these circumstances, I venture to take the liberty of supposing that there may be some others who would be glad of an introduction to *Les Floraisons Matutinales*. Par Nérée Beauchemin. Trois-Rivières. Victor Ayotte.

Folksong, Fréchette and Crémazie were long the three chief glories of French-Canadian verse ; and in the general opinion they probably are so still. Nothing, of course, can ever displace the

folksong. However great the stream of poetry may yet become, the folksong has been, is, and always will be the very waters of the fountain-head. But Fréchette and, still more, Crémazie are already suffering from the creeping paralysis which eventually numbs even the most applauded occasional verse that has a rhetorical appeal. No versifying rhetorician can ever hold more than the honorary rank of poet, and even this rank is only local and temporary. Change of time and place and people soon fades all poetry that is not wrought out of essential human nature in harmony with universal art. *La Légende d'un Peuple* is grand verse, but no epic. It has many passages of real poetry—here and elsewhere Fréchette was assuredly a poet, by turns with a rhetorician—but you are never quite sure whether he will give you enough winged words to carry you over a crisis; and he so often insists on your plodding prosily along the ground while he harangues you as if you were a public meeting. This may offend those who hold Fréchette to be the Canadian Victor Hugo and Hugo to be the prince of French poets. But perhaps these enthusiasts—with whom I gladly go a certain way myself—will forgive me a little when I add that Hugo's poetry is not at all the point at issue, though his rhetoric is. He wrote poetry great enough in quality and quantity for two reputations. But he also wrote a good deal of rhetoric, as did Fréchette and Crémazie.

Here is Hugo the rhetorician, the grandiose pulpiteer, as out of his element as an albatross on deck.



Nous contemplons l'obscur, l'inconnu, l'invisible.  
 Nous sondons le réel, l'idéal, le possible,  
 L'être, spectre toujours présent.  
 Nous regardons trembler l'ombre indéterminée.  
 Nous sommes accoudés sur notre destinée,  
 L'œil fixe et l'esprit frémissant.

A polytechnic audience would wallow in its clouds on hearing such "mind-stuff" as this, which might even persuade some M. Jourdain that he could speak verse as well as prose.

Now let us leave the platform and seek the world where poetry knows her supreme self for what she really is. And let us take Heredia as our guide: Heredia, whose consummate verse draws its whole breath of life from poetry alone; who sees, conceives, creates, and finally presents the very soul and body of things poetic, without one word of alloying rhetoric or mere description. I choose his oft-quoted sonnet, *Le Récif de Corail*. But apt quotation can no more stale it than repeated watching can tire one of any other beauty of the sea.

Le soleil sous la mer, mystérieuse aurore,  
 Éclaire la forêt des coraux abyssins  
 Qui mêle, aux profondeurs de ses tièdes bassins,  
 La bête épanouie et la vivante flore.

Et tout ce que le sel ou l'iode colore,  
 Mousse, algue chevelue, anémones, oursins,  
 Couvre de pourpre sombre, en somptueux dessins,  
 Le fond vermiculé du pâle madrépore.

De sa splendide écaille éteignant les émaux,  
 Un grand poisson navigue à travers les rameaux.  
 Dans l'ombre transparente indolemment il rôde;

Et, brusquement, d'un coup de sa nageoire en feu,  
 Il fait, par le cristal morne, immobile et bleu,  
 Courir un frisson d'or, de nacre et d'émeraude.

Eternities in rhetoric contrasted with a single evanescent seascape in poetry! But the eternities are only talked about, and in cold, dissected, abstract words; while the seascape is embodied in a concrete and immortal form. Here is a touchstone, indeed, to try our poet with! Can he stand the ordeal? Now, I do not maintain that Dr. Beauchemin's every verse is entirely on the side of poetry, that he has never written any rhetoric at all—very few French poets have done this. But I can show several poems in which no word of rhetoric spoils the fulness of their appeal to those who love poetry for its own sake. And I believe that these, his most characteristic, poems will give him an abiding place in French-Canadian letters.

Before introducing him, however, it may be well to remind the English-speaking reader of French that there is a deep difference between French and French-Canadian literature, and that individual Canadian traits, like Dr. Beauchemin's, tend to increase this difference. I do not mean that he is not in touch with the great French tradition, for he evidently is. But the difference between him and the modern French man of letters is more than that of mere regionalism and individuality combined. He is not satirical; yet satire is rooted in the Gallic nature. He has no special hobby in verse-forms; neither affecting modern variants of the "*rondeaux et autres telles épisseries*" which used to vex the soul of du Bellay nor letting his

sense sprawl through amorphic lines, as certain fantastic spirits did some little time ago. Then, if Boileau is right in saying that

Le français, né malin, forma le vaudeville,

Dr. Beauchemin must have been born benign. But, if born benign, his benignity does not run to all humanistic lengths, not even so far as Ronsard went. The all-round humanist was for Church and King; yet keenly for Jove and Amaryllis, too. Pico della Mirandola was a happy blending of this dual personality. But Dr. Beauchemin's ancestors left Jove and Amaryllis behind them when they came out to Canada in the century after the Renaissance. During the next hundred years the Old- and New-World French were being parted by a great gulf, which presently widened when one side was occupied by Voltairians and the other by a Bishop's "mandements." The Napoleonic age increased the distance, in spite of Béranger; and, from that time to this, French poetry has not made any national appeal to the French-Canadians, who now have a national poetry of their own. Their admiration for French literature is, of course, far more than an international amenity: it is part of the true love for the glories of a "Mère-Patrie." But, while sprung from France, they are wedded to Canada. They feel no pang of Port-Royalist regret:

Félicité passée  
 Qui ne peut revenir,  
 Tourment de ma pensée,  
 Que n-ay-je, en te perdant, perdu le souvenir?

And, so loving Canada, they cannot choose but love those poems of Dr. Beauchemin which show the



world her homeland ways in the light and glamour of a native genius.

They may feel pride as well as love ; for in this book Dr. Beauchemin certainly has shown the world a phase of its life well worth its discriminating notice. But King Demos is not discriminating, even in democratic Canada. You must cry your wares at the full pitch of your lungs, and rhetorically justify their manufacture by their money value, if you would gain his attention. What Voltaire wrote to console Grétry for Court indifference to the *Judgment of Midas* applies with perfect fitness to the court of Demos to-day :

La Cour a dénigré tes chants,  
Dont Paris a dit des merveilles.  
Hélas ! les oreilles des grands  
Sont souvent des grandes oreilles.

Yet if Dr. Beauchemin is not strident enough for the "grand public"—which is made up of such little individuals—he should have a by no means narrow public of his own. His appeal is wider than that which is made, on first acquaintance, by a poet like Omar—shall we say ?—or Verlaine, with his "chanson cruelle et câline" ; though it is no more melodramatic than theirs. And it should be specially wide in Old Canada, because he has a real spiritual affinity—with a French-Canadian difference—to the *Génie du Christianisme* and, still more, to Lamartine, whose *Crucifix* might, for its fervour, have been his own :

Que de pleurs ont coulé sur tes pieds que j'adore,  
Depuis l'heure sacrée où, du sein d'un martyr,  
Dans mes tremblantes mains tu passas, tiède encore  
De son dernier soupir !

Then, in his quality of country doctor, he is in close touch with the intimate side of natural humanity. And, like the Christian archetype of his noble profession, St. Luke, he is a most persuasive steward of the mysteries of God. What a world of difference there is between him and Dr. Cazalis, the "Jean Lahor" of *L'Illusion*; though both are poets and physicians. Dr. Cazalis, for all his orientalism, is doubtful even of Nirvana:

O nos morts bien aimés, où disparaissiez-vous ?  
Serions-nous vos tombeaux ? N'êtes-vous plus qu'en nous ?

We shall presently see how utterly foreign such questioning is to the other-worldliness of Dr. Beauchemin. Not even once could he regard our earthly existence as life in a hospital, like Mallarmé, whose cripple drags himself to the window to see delights he cannot enjoy :

. . . . .  
Voit des galères d'or, belles comme des cygnes,  
Sur un fleuve de pourpre et des parfums dormir  
En berçant l'éclair fauve et riche de leurs lignes  
Dans un grand nonchaloir chargé de souvenir.

No, Dr. Beauchemin is a race-patriotic, Christian poet of French-Canadian life, full of sympathetic insight into all the moods of man and Nature in the happy Laurentian valley where he lives and works. But I repeat that he is no provincial local genius. My quotations would soon correct any such impression. And I might add that some of his poetry which I have no room to quote is also of high quality and accordant with that of many good poets in the "Mère-Patrie," from the time

before La Nouvelle France was thought of down to our own day. Taillefer was no stouter bard at Hastings, when he

. . . alloit chantant  
De Charlemagne et de Rolant.

Ronsard would have no cause to blush for this far-off scion of the old masters in metres which could run, or pause, or ripple brook-like in praise of a French May morning centuries ago :

Comme on void sur la branche au mois de May la rose  
En sa belle jeunesse, en sa première fleur,  
Rendre le ciel jaloux de sa vive couleur,  
Quand l'aube de ses pleurs au point du jour l'arrose.

Dr. Beauchemin would make an exiled French-Canadian as homesick as ever Brizeux could make one of his own compatriots when he

Entonne un air breton si plaintif et si doux  
Qu'en le chantant ma voix vous ferait pleurer tous.

And, if the juxtaposition of such incongruous names can be forgiven for the moment, I would dare to point out that there is a connection between Dr. Beauchemin the poet and his normal antithesis in prose, Zola. The Promised Land of that Greater France which Zola yearned for in his *Fécondité* is nowhere better imagined and bodied forth than in the French-Canadian country so penetratingly seen and sung of by Dr. Beauchemin.

As this is a purely personal impression, with no attempt at formal criticism, I shall preface my quotations by one more point in our poet's favour. He is distinctly fond of animals. Perhaps he would



not quite subscribe to all the *dicta* in the *Ancient Mariner*. He certainly is a sportsman, on his own showing. But he is none the worse for that; as there is the same difference between true sport and wanton cruelty as there is between war and murder. I doubt very much whether he is anything of an evolutionist, who can see no difference in kind—though immeasurable differences in degree—between man and other animals, and who rejoices at every fresh piece of evidence which tends to bring all our fellow-beings nearer to ourselves. I also doubt whether, as a poet, he would go so far as Alfred de Vigny goes in *La Mort du Loup*, or so deeply as Verhaeren and Maeterlinck have gone, time and again. And possibly he might cry “Save me from my friends!” at what I have said already. But, no matter, he is fond of animals; and that is enough for me, so far as he is concerned. Yet I cannot help expressing the ardent wish that he and others like him would make some effort to touch French-Canadians to the quick on this subject, and change them for the better. No one admires the many good features of French-Canadian life more than I do. But I frankly hate the common French-Canadian behaviour to animals. There are plenty of brutal Anglo-Canadians. But, on the whole, I am afraid it is true that the French-Canadians supply most of the cruelty and the Anglo-Canadians most of the prevention wherever the two races live together. Why the Latin peoples, so advanced in many ways, are so backward in this respect is a long enquiry, and too much beside our mark for discussion here. But poetry is pre-eminently a sympathetic art; and so it is not altogether outside

my subject to express delight at finding a poet who loves all our fellow-beings—especially when I find him among a people who are mostly callous to this form of sympathy.

*Les Floraisons Matutinales* make a book of over two hundred pages, and their forty-five poems have, all together, a fairly wide range of theme. But the more purely French-Canadian ones outnumber all the rest and are much the most characteristic; and of these there are twelve typical enough to give a very good idea of the whole.

Dr. Beauchemin knows the way of the sea. The sea enters into the very heart of the history, life and language of the French-Canadians. So there could not be an apter poem to begin with than *La Mer*, which, in few words, shows his *curiosa felicitas* of expression, harmony of sense and sound, and real imaginative insight. I wonder if he remembered that beautiful line about one of the natural kindred of the sea which forms such a brief interlude in a rather repellent elegy of Propertius

Luna moraturis sedula luminibus.

But he requires no poet of the moon to make us heed the call of his own wild virgin sea—*das Ewig-Weibliche* of Nature, whose voice of many waters is the music of life and of death to all her devotees.

La mer fauve, la mer vierge, la mer sauvage.

La mer aime le ciel : c'est pour mieux lui redire,  
A l'écart, en secret, son immense tourment,  
Que la fauve amoureuse au large se retire,

Loin des grands rochers noirs que baise la marée,  
La mer calme, la mer au murmure endormeur,  
Au large, tout là-bas, lente s'est retirée,  
Et son sanglot d'amour dans l'air du soir se meurt.

The Canadian seasons are worthily celebrated in *Rayons d'Octobre*, *Les Clochettes*, *Giboulée*, *Le Merle*, and *L'Avril Boréal*. Dr. Beauchemin is fully of Heine's opinion, that landscape charms us because of the "unendlich seliges Gefühl" which its human associations call up from the depths of our being. And in *Rayons d'Octobre* he shows an almost Virgilian touch between things remembered and things seen :

Singula dum capti circumvectamur amore.

A mi-côte, là-bas, la ferme ensoleillée,  
Avec son toit pointu festonné de houblons,  
Paraît toute riieuse et comme émerveillée  
De ses éteules roux et de ses chaumes blonds.

Aux rayons dont sa vue oblique est éblouie,  
L'aïeul sur le perron familial vient s'asseoir :  
D'un regain de chaleur sa chair est réjouie ;  
Dans l'hiver du vieillard il fait moins froid, moins noir.

Calme et doux, soupirant vers un lointain automne,  
Il boit la vie avec l'air des champs et des bois,  
Et cet étincelant renouveau qui l'étonne  
Lui souffle au cœur l'amour des tendres autrefois.



Dr. Beauchemin also bids us listen to

. . . le bruit de la joyeuse airée.

But nowadays this is only

La chanson du cylindre égrenant les épis

—a rather harsh mechanical *staccato*, not like the throbbing harmonies of the old threshing-floor, which fill the grandsire's ear when he recalls the strenuous flails of his youth.

In *Les Clochettes* the poet comes blithely from the shrine of Our Lady of the Snows, and exults in his strength like a giant refreshed.

Nargue du froid ! Vive l'hiver !  
 C'est plaisir, quand la neige crie,  
 D'ouïr, mêlée au bruit banal  
 Du vent, l'allègre sonnerie  
 Du joyeux solstice hivernal.  
 Le carillon multisonore  
 Des clochettes au timbre clair  
 Tinte, étincelle, tinte encore  
 Et tintinnabule dans l'air.

*Giboulée* flashes diamond-and-pearl-frosted trees on the inward eye with many a vivid epithet and nimble turn of phrase. *Le Merle* is as dear to our author as any English blackbird ever was to Thomas Edward Brown. And all the world is young again in *L'Avril Boréal*.

Est-ce l'avril ? Sur la colline  
 Rossignole une voix câline,  
 De l'aube au soir.  
 Est-ce le chant de la linotte ?  
 Est-ce une flûte ? Est-ce la note  
 Du merle noir ?

Le chanteur, retour des Florides,  
Du clair azur des ciels torrides  
Se souvenant,  
Dans les bras des hêtres en larmes  
Dit ses regrets et ses alarmes  
A tout venant.

Quel souffle a mis ces teintes douces  
Aux pointes des frileuses pousses ?  
Quel sylphe peint  
De ce charmant vert véronèse  
Les jeunes bourgeons du mélèze  
Et du sapin ?

Tout était mort dans les futaies ;  
Voici, tout à coup, plein les haies,  
Plein les sillons,  
Du soleil, des oiseaux, des brises,  
Plein le ciel, plein les forêts grises,  
Plein les vallons.

Ce n'est plus une voix timide  
Qui prélude dans l'air humide,  
Sous les taillis ;  
C'est une aubade universelle ;  
On dirait que l'azur ruisselle  
De gazouillis.

Folksong has, of course, been an inspiration to Dr. Beauchemin, as it always has been to every national poet since poetry began. He well repays his debt by a new variant on the old theme of *A la Claire Fontaine*.

Il est une claire fontaine  
Où, dans un chêne, nuit et jour,  
Le rossignol, à gorge pleine,  
Redit sa peine  
Et son amour. . . .

*La Chapelle des Miracles* is in honour of La Bonne Ste-Anne de Beaupré. The universe of art is called upon to beautify this shrine of insistent faith and hopeful piety ; though not, be it well understood, at the expense of

Ces tristes *ex-voto* sans nombre  
Qui chargent la muraille sombre.

But *Le Viatique* is a much greater poem. It tells a simple, poignant tale of that borderland of life and death where God and Man and Nature meet so often, yet always under circumstances which transcend our human commonplaces by the whole vastness of infinity. Admirers of the Greek Anthology will remember how the glory of the stars made Ptolemy forget that he was earth on Earth and raised his spirit to the banquet-hall of Zeus. *Le Viatique* shows how the *habitant* soars to still greater heights with what the eye of faith reveals to him in common daylight and on the common road between his native fields.

La cloche, lente, à voix éteinte,  
Tinte au clocher paroissial,  
Et l'écho tremblant de sa plainte  
Tinte et meurt dans l'air glacial.

L'airain sonne en branle. On écoute.  
Pour qui le glas a-t-il tinté !  
Et le son grave, avec le doute,  
Tombe sur le cœur attristé.

Aux premiers branles de la cloche  
Les humbles seuils se sont ouverts.  
Un bruit de pas drus, qui s'approche,  
Frappe l'air lourd des champs déserts.



A genoux ! c'est le Viatique,  
C'est le dictame des souffrants,  
Le pain de l'au-delà mystique,  
Le divin chrême des mourants.

L'or pâle et la pourpre amortie  
Du crépuscule occidental  
Au-dessus de la sainte hostie  
Forment comme un dais triomphal.

C'est Lui : cette pompe céleste  
Proclame sa divinité,  
Et ce tant naïf culte agreste  
Nous dit sa pauvre humanité.

Quelques paysans en prière  
Suivent, leur rosaire à la main ;  
Les clous des souliers de misère  
Sonnent aux cailloux du chemin.

Oh ! bienheureux ce pauvre monde  
Qui devine, et croit sans les voir,  
Les choses qu'une ombre profonde  
Cache aux maîtres du haut savoir.

Du beffroi la grave harmonie  
S'éteint, triste comme un adieu.  
Ange gardien de l'agonie,  
Soutiens les pas du porte-Dieu !

We might fairly expect a good poem like *Le Viatique* from a French-Canadian, as we should from a Breton. And, of course, we expect every good poet to re-awaken the spirit of his native folklore, and to celebrate the delights of his native seasons. But there is another kind of poetry which we are always expecting and so very rarely getting from any quarter ; a kind which so seldom

rings true that we are generally forced to put up with rhymed rhetoric instead—a miserable, makeshift substitute. For a multitude of cogent reasons “patriotic” poetry is the most difficult of all. Patriotism is as excellent in a citizen as it is dangerous for a poet: all the more honour to the poet who succeeds, like Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Scott, Tennyson, Rossetti and Kipling; though some of these have failed occasionally, as nearly all others fail. No theme so noble has been slushed over with such floods of rhyming stuff and nonsense, except, perhaps, religion in the ordinary hymn. And the French, with their propensity for rhetoric, are fully as bad as we are. But Anglo-Canadians are worse off than French-Canadians, since, from the *Maple Leaf* down, we have enough rant and cant and twaddle to bray ourselves to death; while their *O Canada!* is really the song of a people. Yet, in other ways, French-Canadians have perpetrated such wretched stuff that it is particularly pleasant to find one more poet to number among the elect who can transmute golden deeds into golden words.

Dr. Beauchemin treats stirring subjects in his *Iberville*, *Québec* and *Louisbourg*. In *La Mer* we saw him as a poet of the sea, pure and simple. In *Iberville* he appears as a distinctively naval poet and a good one. He is quite at home on board, from keel to truck, and makes *Iberville* radiant as the “Happy Warrior” of a well-contested victory. In *Québec* he “looks before and after and sighs for what is not” in a reminiscent strain of poetic melancholy. But it is in *La Cloche de Louisbourg* that he soars into the full sweep of patriotic song;

and it is with a few stanzas of this moving poem in their ears that I would fain commend him finally to those who will, I most sincerely hope, soon form part of his growing audience. I need hardly add that his love for what was best in the hero-age of French Canada is not at all inconsistent with loyalty to that other Crown which has always been the great guarantor of French-Canadian liberties. And is it not matter for rejoicing that the fight for Canada was well enough fought out by both sides to make each respect the prowess of the other? And is it not also well that each should know now where it can find a worthy fellow-soldier in the hour of need? Besides, I am inclined to think that, should this occasion come, Dr. Beauchemin would be the first to call his compatriots with a stirring "Vive le Roi!"

### LA CLOCHE DE LOUISBOURG

Cette vieille cloche d'église  
 Qu'une gloire en larmes encor  
 Blasonne, brode et fleurdelise  
 Rutilé à nos yeux comme l'or.

C'est une pieuse relique :  
 On peut la baiser à genoux ;  
 Elle est française et catholique,  
 Comme les cloches de chez nous.

Elle fut bénite. Elle est ointe.  
 Souvent, dans l'antique beffroi,  
 Aux Fêtes-Dieu sa voix est jointe  
 Au canon des vaisseaux du Roy.



Les boulets l'ont égratignée,  
Mais ces balafres et ces chocs  
L'ont à jamais damasquinée  
Comme l'acier des vieux estocs.

Oh ! c'était le cœur de la France  
Qui battait, à grands coups, alors,  
Dans la triomphale cadence  
Du grave bronze aux longs accords.

O Cloche ! c'est l'écho sonore  
Des sombres âges glorieux  
Qui soupire et sanglote encore  
Dans ton silence harmonieux.

En nos cœurs, tes branles magiques,  
Dolents et rêveurs, font vibrer  
Des souvenirs nostalgiques,  
Douce à nous faire pleurer.

# Books by WILLIAM WOOD

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## A

### THREE BOOKS ON LIFE IN THE OLD LAURENTIAN PARTS OF CANADA.

#### 1. THE KING'S BOOK OF QUEBEC.

The vice-regal souvenir of the Tercentenary of 1908. Title approved and Dedication accepted by His Majesty King George V. Preface by His Excellency the Earl Grey, Governor-General. Historical Introduction by A. G. Doughty, Dominion Archivist. French libretto for the Pageant by Ernest Myrand, Provincial Librarian. Ten Full-page Colour Plates from Pictures specially painted by Frank Craig and George Reid. Fifteen Folksongs, with other Music. Many additional illustrations—Colour Plates, Photogravures, Facsimiles, &c. &c. Printed with Special Type on Strathmore Hand-made paper. 2 volumes, 4to. Ottawa: The Mortimer Company: 1911. *Edition de Luxe* of 500 copies.

[The great initial cost of this work was met by the private subscriptions of twelve patriotic gentlemen. Copies not used for presentation were authorized for sale, through the Dominion Archivist, at the net cost price of producing them:—\$25 in Paper Covers; \$35 Full-bound in Leather by Hand.]

#### 2. IN THE HEART OF OLD CANADA.

Includes the first monographs in English on the Quebec Ursulines and French-Canadian Folksongs, an article settling the vexed question of Wolfe and Gray's *Elegy*, &c. &c. 1 volume, 8vo. Toronto: William Briggs: 1913. \$1.50.

#### 3. ALOUETTE: LIFE ON THE SALT ST. LAWRENCE.

A book of travels at home, called after the *Alouette* or sea lark of Lower Canada. THE SALT ST. LAWRENCE extends from Quebec to Newfoundland, Cape Breton and the Straits of Belle Isle; and the author's LIFE on it includes acquaintance with most things afloat, from birch-bark canoes to first-class battleships; with pilots and lighthouse-keepers, smugglers and nabbers; with priest and people, *seigneur* and *habitant*; with tales of war by land and sea; with Indians and trappers, harpooners and fishermen; with seals and whales, seabirds and fish; and many other kindred of this the greatest river mouth in all the world. [Particulars of publication in 1914.]

## B

### FOUR BOOKS ON THE NAVAL AND MILITARY HISTORY OF CANADA—*all from Original Sources.*

#### 1. THE FIGHT FOR CANADA.

The first book to bring out the Naval side of the Conquest. Coloured Maps and Photogravure Portraits. London: Constable, 1904; one guinea, net. Last Edition, 7s. 6d., net. American Edition—Boston: Little, Brown & Co., \$2.50, net. Canadian Edition—Toronto: Musson, \$2.50, net. Each in 1 volume, 8vo.

#### 2. THE LOGS OF THE CONQUEST OF CANADA.

The first book entirely devoted to Naval campaigns in Canada. Charts and Plans. Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1909. 1 volume, 8vo. [Issued to Members only.]

#### 3. SELECT BRITISH DOCUMENTS OF THE CANADIAN WAR OF 1812.

The first systematic selection concerned with the Naval and Military aspects of the whole Canadian scene of action. Maps, Plans, Portraits and Facsimiles. Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1914. 3 volumes, 8vo. [Issued to Members only.]

#### 4. THE FIVE INVASIONS OF CANADA.

The first book to treat all the Invasions as one connected whole. Maps, Plans and Portraits. Toronto: Glasgow, Brook & Co., 1914. 1 volume, 8vo. [Price to be determined later.]

## C

### FIVE VOLUMES IN THE CHRONICLES OF CANADA, A SERIES OF SHORT STUDIES, in 32 volumes, 16mo.

Toronto: Glasgow, Brook & Co., 1913-14. [The following five volumes will not be sold apart from the complete set of thirty-two. Price to be determined later.]

#### 1. THE GREAT FORTRESS: A CHRONICLE OF LOUISBOURG.

#### 2. THE LAST STAND FOR FRENCH DOMINION: A CHRONICLE OF MONTCALM.

#### 3. THE WINNING OF CANADA: A CHRONICLE OF WOLFE.

#### 4. THE BATTLEFIELDS OF 1812: A CHRONICLE OF THE LAST FIGHT WITH THE UNITED STATES.

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204

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